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EDITOR'S PREFACE.

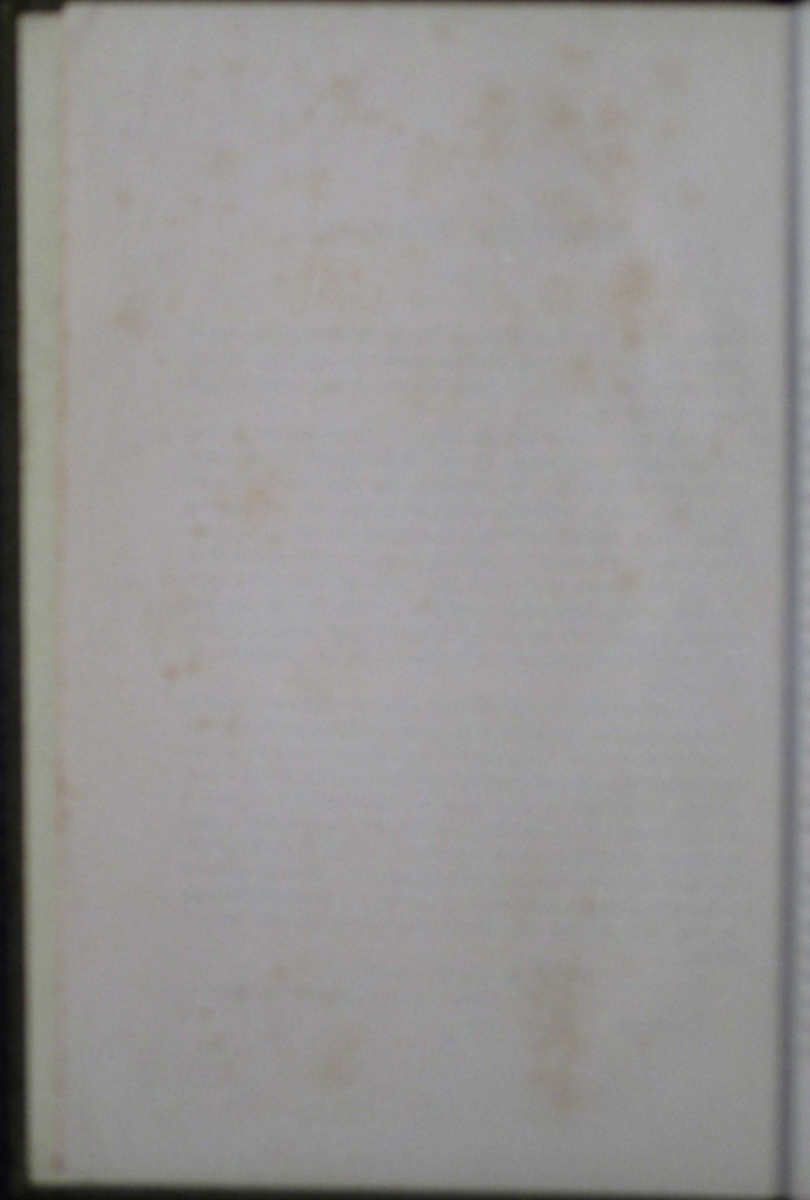
VOLUME IV. of the New Series of the *Professional Papers*, called *Occasional Papers*, has only just been published when it is followed thus rapidly by Volume V. ; indeed, it was a question which volume would be ready first.

The present volume consists solely of one paper—on Plevna, and the defence there made by the Turks against the Russians in the war of 1877-78. The subject is one that has been treated by several foreign writers in a partial manner, but no complete history of the defence of Plevna has appeared in our own or any other tongue. A want of the military student has, we believe, been met by the present publication, and although there is a great dearth of official information, especially on the Turkish side, the military engineer will find many details of great interest, some of which might be adopted with advantage in our own system of field fortification.

The Author's Preface explains how this paper came to be written, and we feel sure that the officers of the Corps will duly appreciate the very excellent way in which Captain G. S. Clarke has carried out the suggestion made to him, while their thanks will be given to him in no grudging spirit for his devotion to their interests, necessitating the sacrifice of the few leisure hours at his disposal during the past year, and a great amount of painstaking care in collating and sifting the available and frequently discordant material, and this at a time when, in addition to his ordinary engagements as an Instructor at Cooper's Hill College, he was busy writing his recently published work on 'Graphic Statics.'

ROBT. H. VETCH, Major, R.E.,
Secretary, R.E. Institute, and Editor.

December 1880.



AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

IN offering the following study to my brother officers, some few words of explanation are due to them and to myself. It may well be asked why I should have undertaken a work which so many of them are far more competent to carry out. In June 1879, on completing a translation (for the *Occasional Papers*) of a little work by General von Schröder, on Plevna, I was asked by the Secretary of the Royal Engineer Institute, editor of our *Professional Papers*, if I would abandon the translation in question, and, instead, write an account of the Plevna operations, utilising all the available materials. At the time, I was leading a more or less sedentary life, which was greatly in favour of the large amount of reading which would be necessary; and, moreover, to forego work thus placed in one's way, merely on account of its extent and difficulty, was not an acceptable alternative. It seemed that this particular work ought to be done, and that my position gave me some few advantages in carrying it out. I therefore consented, but not without many misgivings, and with the full consciousness of my great inexperience. Since that time the work has occupied all my spare time, and has only occasionally been laid aside under pressure of other matters. The latter portion has been, perhaps perceptibly, hurried, as I was under orders for foreign service.

The difficulties met with in dealing with the Russo-Turkish campaign are very great, and a history of it at all comparable to that of the Franco-German war will, it is feared, never be written—difficulties of language place restrictions on the literary intercourse between the countries of the two latest combatants and those of Western Europe, which are in themselves formidable obstacles in the way of such an achievement. In studying most modern campaigns, moreover, it is possible to check information from one side by that from the other, and to strike a just mean between the two. But from the

Turkish side, in the recent war, there is, and probably there always will be, far too little evidence. We cannot place Osman Pasha's report by the side of that of Todleben. And further, political bias on both sides has left unmistakable marks in many of the accounts of the war, and probably in few cases has there been more determined partisan writing. Under these circumstances it is not surprising that considerable discrepancies should be met with—discrepancies which do not always relate to mere matters of detail.

In the following pages I have striven to give a faithful account of the very interesting operations round Plevna, based upon such data as I was able to obtain. Very much still remains to be learned, and in time, perhaps, fuller information on some points will be available, but much will never be known. It has not always been possible to give full details where they would be of great value, and I have found myself occasionally obliged to be somewhat vague, when extreme definiteness was highly desirable. On the other hand, a considerable amount of detail was sometimes available on points of relatively less interest. It has not, in fact, been always possible to proportionate fulness of detail to historical importance.

I have endeavoured to treat the whole subject on the broadest lines, and to fill in the narrative with a sketch of contemporary events. From the 20th June to the 10th December, 1877, the whole interest of the campaign may be said to have centred on Plevna; and there were very few of the concurrent operations that were not either influenced by, or did not, on the other hand, exert some influence upon the drama there enacted.

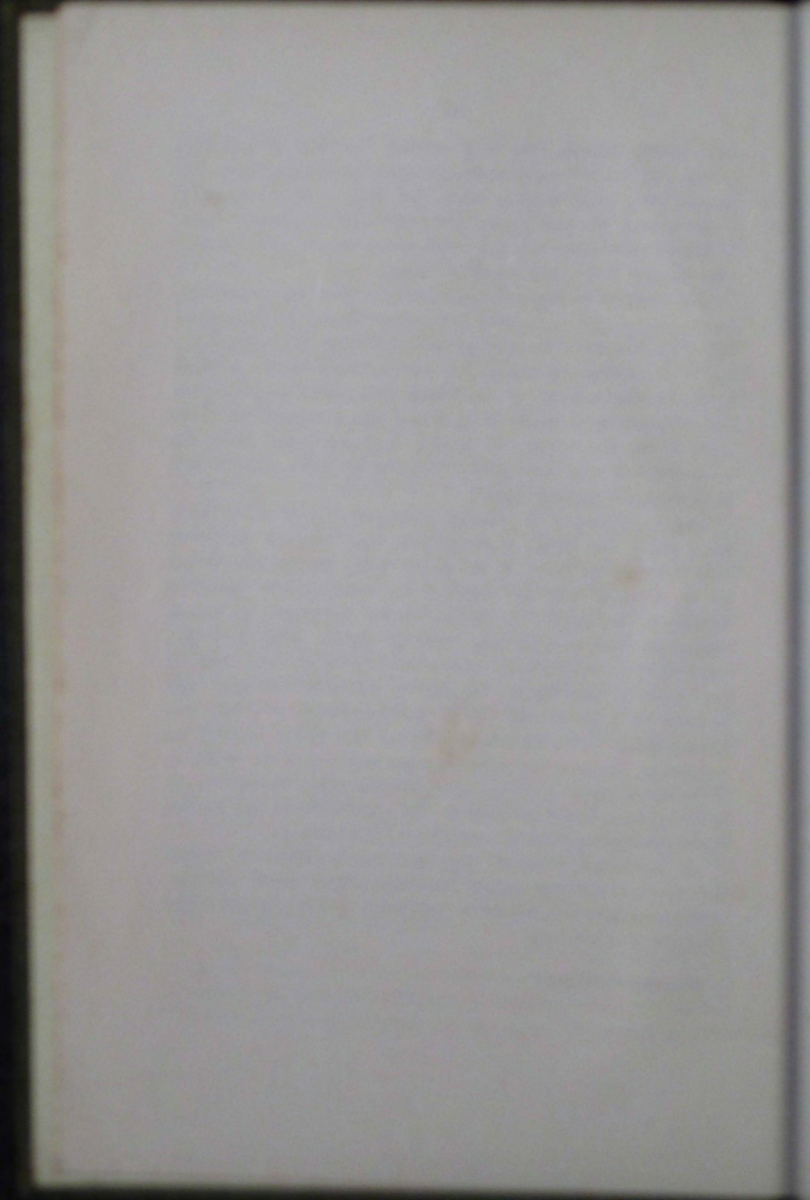
There is, perhaps, a danger that the Russo-Turkish campaign may not receive the full study which it certainly deserves, partly because its history will always be somewhat incomplete and unsatisfactory, and partly because the operations seem to give the impression of a species of strategic and tactical lawlessness, or of departure from the established precedents of warfare. Moreover, the *positive* teaching of this campaign is somewhat slight: it contains more of warning than of example, and perhaps it is more natural to follow the latter than to study the former. The two last European wars have one point in common: the course of both was a surprise. That the Turkish fortresses would play an important part in the Russo-Turkish cam-

paign might, perhaps, have been foretold; but that an open town provisionally fortified would completely arrest the invasion, reduce the invaders temporarily to great straits, and afford a grand opportunity to the invaded, was certainly not within the range of prophecy; while, in the Franco-German war, few people could have foreseen the complete collapse of the great armies of France.

The events of the Russo-Turkish war have given rise to much discussion abroad, and have lead to a reopening of many great questions. Three experiences of this campaign stand out in strong relief, and give rise to numberless reflections: 1st, the very slight results produced by the Russian Artillery on the Plevna earthworks; 2nd, the great and successful development of rapid and distant Infantry fire in the hands of the Turks; 3rd, the striking defensive power which the latter obtained from their works. Each of the above points is well worth a careful, separate study.

I have appended a list showing the sources of information drawn upon, nearly the whole of which have been obtained for me at different times by Major R. H. Vetch, R.E., the Secretary of the R. E. Institute, who has rendered me every possible assistance throughout the work. In addition to his supervision as Editor, the proofs have also all been read by Colonel Hale, R.E., and his criticisms, valuable and valued, have saved me from many of the results of inexperience. Chapter VI. has been very kindly read in proof by Major-General Sir H. Havelock-Allan, V.C., who was present during the third battle of Plevna, and closely observed the operations. Chapters VI. to IX. have also been read by Mr. E. Grant, of Bucharest, one of the *Times* correspondents before Plevna, who has given me much useful information. My grateful thanks are also due to all those officers of whose translations I have made use.

In conclusion, I would state that any corrections or further information which may suggest themselves to those officers who were so fortunate as to be witnesses of any portion of the campaign will be very gratefully received.



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CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

THE RUSSIAN AND TURKISH ARMIES—THE PASSAGE OF THE UPPER DANUBE.

	PAGE
The Russian Army	2
The Turkish Army	6
Russian first Mobilisation	8
Commencement of Operations—Russian Advance	9
Russian Position at beginning of June 1877	10
Turkish Disposition	10
Crossing of the Danube	13

CHAPTER II.

RUSSIAN ADVANCE—CAPTURE OF NICOPOLIS—FIRST BATTLE OF PLEVNA.

Topographical Conditions, &c.	18
Russian Plan of Operations	19
Turkish Movements	20
Crossing of the Balkans	21
Operations against Nicopolis	23
Plevna	28
Roads leading from Plevna	30
First Battle of Plevna	33
Losses	35

CHAPTER III.

GENERAL SITUATION AT THE END OF JULY—SECOND BATTLE OF PLEVNA.

Strategical Importance of Plevna	37
Situation at the end of July	39
Detail of Russian Force before Plevna	41
Second Battle of Plevna	45
Russian Losses	51
General Remarks	52

CHAPTER IV.

OPERATIONS IN THE SOUTH AND EAST.

	PAGE
Gourko's Operations in Roumelia	55
Situation on 30th July	57
Turkish Attacks on the Schipka Position	59
Mehemet Ali's Operations on the Lom	62
Suleiman's Operations on the Lom	66

CHAPTER V.

OPERATIONS IN AUGUST—TURKISH SORTIE—CAPTURE OF LOVTCHA.

Russian Reinforcements	69
Russian Strength before Plevna	72
Situation in August	72
Skobelev's Reconnaissance on Lovtcha	74
Russian disposition on 31st August	76
Turkish Sortie	77
Capture of Lovtcha by the Russians	79

CHAPTER VI.

THIRD BATTLE OF PLEVNA.

General Situation at beginning of September	86
Detail of Russo-Roumanian Force before Plevna	89
The Plevna Defences	92
Dispositions for Attack	94
Artillery Attack, 7th to 10th September	97
Fighting on the Green Hills from 8th to 10th September	100
The General Assault, September 11th	106
Fighting of 12th September	117
General Remarks	122

CHAPTER VII.

THE ALLIED CAVALRY WEST OF PLEVNA FROM SEPTEMBER 7 TO OCTOBER 7.

The Plevna Communications	143
Loschkareff's Operations from 7th to 19th September	145
Kriloff's Operations from 19th September to 7th October	150
General Remarks	155

CHAPTER VIII.

THE COMPLETION OF THE INVESTMENT.

Situation after the Third Battle of Plevna	159
Roumanian Attack on 2nd Grivitza Redoubt	166
Gourko's Operations West of the Vid	167
Attack on Gorny-Dubnik	172
Attack on Telische	179
Capture of Telische	182

CHAPTER IX.

THE CLOSE INVESTMENT AND FALL OF PLEVNA.

	PAGE
Cavalry Operations	184
Gourko's Movement on Orhanie	188
The Close Investment of Plevna	190
Detail of Force for the Investment	192
Skobelev's Trench Attack on the Green Hills	194
Fall of Plevna	200
Importance of Plevna	210

CHAPTER X.

THE PLEVNA TRENCH-WORK—TURKISH WORKS—RUSSIAN WORKS.

General Review of Turkish Works	215
Principal Features of Turkish Works	221
Details of Principal Turkish Works	224
Details of Russian Works	232
Tracing and Execution of Russian Works	237

APPENDIX I.

Nominal Strength of Russian Field Army	243
--	-----

APPENDIX II.

Strength of a Russian Infantry Regiment	244
Strength of a Russian Cavalry Regiment	244

APPENDIX III.

Detail of Regiments composing original Russian Army of Operations	245
---	-----

APPENDIX IV.

Advance of Russian Army into Roumania	247
---	-----

APPENDIX V.

Disposition and Strength of Turkish Army of the Quadrilateral in October	248
--	-----

APPENDIX VI.

Russian Reinforcements ordered to Bulgaria early in August 1877	249
---	-----

LIST OF PLATES.

- I. NICOPOLIS.
- II. RUSSIAN PLAN OF PLEVNA.
- III. OTT'S SWISS PLAN OF PLEVNA.
- IV. THEATRE OF OPERATIONS SOUTH OF THE BALKANS, IN JULY AND AUGUST 1877.
- V. LOVTCHA.
- VI. WESTERN BULGARIA.
- VII. SKETCH MAP OF GORNY-DUBNIK POSITION.
- VIII. TURKISH TRENCH WORK.
- IX. TURKISH TRENCH WORK.
- X. TURKISH REDOUBTS.
- XI. RUSSIAN TRENCH WORK.
- XII. TYPES OF RUSSIAN AND TURKISH TRENCH WORK.
- XIII. WORKS OF ROUMANIAN ATTACK.

DIAGRAM.

	PAGE
RUSSIAN ATTACK FORMATIONS	133

PLEVNA.

BY CAPTAIN G. S. CLARKE, R.E.

CHAPTER I.

THE RUSSIAN AND TURKISH ARMIES—THE PASSAGE OF THE UPPER DANUBE.

THE war of 1877-78 is of peculiar interest to the engineer. In the Preliminary. European theatre of war great battles are almost entirely wanting, and the principal operations reduce themselves to the attack of positions more or less fortified. The course of the campaign may be said to have turned on two remarkable instances of the successful defence of earthworks, that of Plevna by the Turks, and of the Schipka position by the Russians. Of these the first has (perhaps too exclusively) absorbed the general attention—doubtless on account of its long duration and dramatic close; but the second is full of instruction, and also deserves a careful study from an engineer's point of view.

Few of the many engineering concomitants of warfare are absent from this campaign. One of the longest of military bridges was successfully thrown across a deep and rapid river. Pontooning experiences of the most varied nature were gained. There were several offensive torpedo exploits; defensive submarine mines were extensively employed, and proved a very real protection against the Turkish Danube flotilla of which much had been predicted. Railway and road difficulties of all kinds had to be conquered. A mountain range had to be crossed in the depth of winter. In picturesqueness of incident and in variety of operations, few wars of modern times compare with that of 1877-78.

Of the general movements, losses, and behaviour of the troops on both sides, there is a large amount of sometimes discrepant information. But as to all the small details of design, time, labour, and general conditions of execution of the military works—details absolutely essential in

order that satisfactory conclusions as to future engineering possibilities may be drawn—the sources of information at present available tell us far too little. Thus, though there is little in the way of design to be learned from the Plevna redoubts, a detailed account of their tracing, construction under difficult conditions, damage under fire, repairs, and general maintenance could not fail to furnish us with valuable data for the future.

The great strategical importance of the Plevna position was a result of the point selected for the Danube passage. It seems necessary, therefore, to give a sketch of events previous to, and a short account of that passage. An estimate of the military strength on either side is also essential. In fact, the defence of Plevna cannot be properly treated as a distinct episode; antecedent and concurrent events must be taken into full consideration. Failing this, the historical balance is lost, and the real value of the military lessons cannot be justly weighed.

THE RUSSIAN ARMY.

Russian
Army.

Term of
Service.

The Russian Army at the outbreak of war was undergoing considerable changes in arms and organisation. It becomes difficult therefore to form a correct estimate of the force actually available. The organic law for the constitution of the Russian Army dates from January 31st, 1874. By this law universal military service was established, but did not come into full operation till 1875. Of about 700,000 men who annually become liable for service, the conscription absorbs some 25 per cent.—in 1876, 180,000; in 1877, 195,000; in 1878 and 1879, 218,000 men. This contingent is supposed to give fifteen years of service, of which six are to be passed with the colours. In reality the men are on furlough during the fifth and sixth years. For the next nine years they belong to the Reserves, passing finally into the Militia (*Reichswehr*) for five more years. The Militia further includes all subjects between the ages of 20 and 40 not drawn by the conscription. Independent of the army thus recruited, there is a large Cossack Cavalry and Artillery force with an organisation peculiar to itself, based on tribal conditions.

Armed
strength of
Russia.

The armed strength of Russia thus consists of :—

- A. The Standing Army and Reserves.
- B. The Militia.

A. The Standing Army and Reserves comprise :—

- (a) The Active Army, or troops actually with the colours, divided into Field and Local Troops.

- (b) The Reserves, or troops on furlough, but liable to recall at any moment. On mobilisation the Reserves are employed for three distinct purposes—viz. :—
1. To bring up Regiments to the war strength.
 2. To form Ersatz troops at the depôts ready to replace losses in the field.
 3. To form Reserve Regiments.
- (c) The Cossacks, mainly a Cavalry and Artillery force, recruited from the Don and Volga districts, the Transcaucasus and Central Asia.

The following is a rough estimate of the total force nominally comprised under A :—

	War footing	Peace footing
(a) { Field army*	835,000	507,000
Local troops	310,000	138,000
(b) { Ersatz	235,000	
Reserve army	500,000	
(c) Cossacks	143,000	42,000
(d) Asiatic troops†	6,000	6,000
Total	<u>2,029,000</u>	<u>693,000</u>

B. The Militia has no regular organisation, but is divided into two classes, which can be called up successively to supplement the Reserves. The Militia may possibly reach a total of 1,500,000, of whom 250,000 will be trained soldiers.†

Besides this great military scheme, the organic law of 1874 enacted many other important changes, but it is unfortunately very difficult to ascertain how far they had actually been carried out. It was intended to give a fourth battalion to all Regiments, to abolish the fifth or rifle company of the existing battalions, and to assimilate the four companies in all respects. This change is stated to have taken place in the troops of the Guard and in the Caucasus Divisions before 1877.

A decree of the 27th July, 1875, ordered an augmentation of the Cavalry. Fourteen Don Cossack Regiments were attached to Divisions of regular Cavalry, and a Cossack Division of three Regiments was formed, raising the total number of squadrons from 224 to 344.

* A table showing the strength (on paper) of all arms in 1877 is given in Appendix I. These figures have been taken mainly from Lieut. Greene's work; they are stated to be derived from that of Col. Martianof, of the Russian General Staff. They have all been compared, as far as possible, with those quoted by other authorities.

† Native troops recruited in the Transcaucasus, and elsewhere, for local service only.

Artillery.

Up to 1874 the Artillery was organised in Brigades of four batteries, 1 9-pounder, 2 4-pounder, and 1 mitrailleuse. The latter was then exchanged for a 4-pounder battery, and 2 more 9-pounder batteries were added to the Brigade. The Field Artillery would then number 144 9-pounder and 144 4-pounder batteries, each having 8 guns: a 9-pounder battery to have 287, and a 4-pounder battery 235 men. The Horse Artillery batteries were to be raised from 6 to 8 guns (4-pounders), and their number was to be augmented from 18 to 26. Each Cavalry Division having two H. A. batteries, the regular batteries were insufficient, and the required number was made up by 8 Don Cossack batteries: a H. A. battery to have 225 men. Many of these changes can only have been in progress; the H. A. batteries, for example, seem to have had only 6 guns.

Infantry
Division.

It may be taken that a Division of Infantry of the Guard consists of 2 Brigades of 2 Regiments of 4 battalions of 4 companies. Attached is one Brigade of Field Artillery, 3 9-pounder and 3 4-pounder batteries, each of 8 guns. A 4-battalion Regiment numbers, on paper, 80 officers and 4,057 men, combatants.

A Grenadier or a Line Division consists of 2 Brigades of 2 Regiments of 3 battalions of 5 companies, together with a Brigade of Field Artillery, a Field Artillery Park, and a Field Hospital. A 3-battalion Regiment numbers 76 officers and 3,081 men, combatants.

In the Line Divisions the numbers of Regiments go up by series of four, so that the number of the Division determines that of the Regiments composing it, and *vice versa*. Thus the 1st Division has Regiments 1, 2, 3, 4; the 10th Division, Regiments 37, 38, 39, 40. Artillery Brigades bear the same numbers as the Infantry Divisions to which they are attached.

On a war footing the combatant strength of a Line Division should be about 12,000 men and 48 guns.*

The 8 independent Rifle Brigades have a special organisation. These Brigades have 4 battalions, numbered in consecutive series of four. Each battalion numbers about 820 bayonets.

Cavalry
Division.

A Cavalry Division consists of 2 Brigades of 2 Regiments; of the 4 Regiments 3 are usually regular (1 Dragoons, 1 Lancers, 1 Hussars), and have 4 squadrons, and there is 1 Cossack Regiment of 6 sotnias. A 4-squadron Regiment should number 33 officers, 728 men, 593 horses. Attached are either 2 H. A. batteries, or 1 H. A. and 1 Cossack battery.

On a war footing the combatant strength of a Cavalry Division should be about 2,500 men and 12 guns.

* Tables detailing the *personnel* of a Cavalry and an Infantry Regiment are given in Appendix II.

Previous to the war the Russian Army was not organised in higher units than the Division. At the mobilisation, however, Army Corps were formed which conformed roughly to territorial boundaries. The Army Corps were usually made up of 2 Infantry Divisions and 1 Cavalry Division.

The change from the Krenka to the Berdan rifle was not complete in 1877. It is stated that the Guards, Grenadiers, and Line Regiments in western districts had the Berdan. The Krenka is a large bore of rather less power than the Snider. General Baker states that it is miserably ineffective at 800 yards. It has a breech action very similar to the Snider, is sighted up to 600 yards, and labours under the great disadvantage of an inefficient extractor. The Berdan is an excellent small bore sighted up to 1,500 paces. Officers and colour-sergeants all carry a revolver attached to a line passing round the neck. Each Infantry soldier carries 60 rounds of ammunition, and each company has a 3-horse small-arms ammunition waggon. Small-arms.

Dragoons and the 2nd rank of Hussar and Lancer Regiments carry the Berdan carbine and a sword: the 1st rank of the two latter carry the sword, or lance, and a revolver.

The whole of the Field Artillery was armed with bronze breech-loaders of two calibres, the 4-pounder of 3·42", and the 9-pounder of 4·2": the respective weights of the common shell are 12 and 24 lbs., and of shrapnel 15 and 29 lbs.* The former are used with percussion, the latter with metal time fuses very similar to the old E pattern fuse. A nearly equal number of common shell and shrapnel are carried with the battery, together with a small number of case. The mountain gun is a light 3-pounder of 2 cwt. In 1877 a change to steel was decided upon, and 1,500 field guns were ordered from Krupp, while in the autumn of 1878 the Russian factories at Oboukoff began to manufacture steel guns. The war was fought, however, solely with the bronze field guns. Field Artillery.

The siege Artillery is divided into 3 parks (one in the Caucasus), the establishment of each consisting of:— Siege Artillery.

60 heavy 6" guns, steel	}	B.L.R.
140 light 6" " bronze		
80 " 4" " "		
40 " 8" howitzer, steel		
40 " 6" " "		
40 6" mortars		M.L.S.B.

Total . . . 400

* The light H.A. 4-pounder has the same calibre and ammunition, but is 16" shorter, and 180 lbs. lighter than the 4-pounder field gun.

The 6" guns have a common shell of 71 lbs. and a shrapnel of 89 lbs., the 8" howitzer a shell of 200 lbs. and a shrapnel of 230 lbs. The *personnel* of a park has a total of 8,454.

The two European Parks are divided into 12 sections. The 1st and 2nd section, forming the 'Park of Investment,' consist of 4" guns only; sections 3 to 10 form the 'Park of Attack'; sections 11 and 12 are Reserves.

THE TURKISH ARMY.

Turkish
Army.

The Turkish Army was remodelled in 1871, nominally on the German system, the empire being divided into 7 districts, each furnishing an Army Corps. The head-quarters of 3 Army Corps were in Europe. From the commencement of the war, however, the Army Corps distinction was lost, and the armies in the field were made up haphazard, and reinforced as the exigencies of the moment required and the supply of raw material permitted. Moreover, special commands had been formed before the war to check threatened disaffection in various localities, and special regiments were raised and sent to the front from time to time, so that it becomes quite impossible to estimate the Turkish strength with any certainty.

Annual
contingent.

The annual contingent to be drawn by lot was fixed at 37,000, but is stated never to have exceeded 25,000. Men liable for service were drawn every year from the age of 20 to 26. Those who escape the lot on each occasion pass into the Reserve at once. Conscripts are supposed to pass 4 years as Nizams with the colours in the Infantry, and 5 years in the Cavalry and Artillery. The service in the 1st Reserve is 2 years in the Infantry and 1 year in the Cavalry and Artillery. From the 1st Reserve the men pass into the 2nd Reserve as Redifs for 6 years, and finally for 8 years they belong to the Moustahfiz or Territorial Militia.

Estimate of
Strength.

Roughly speaking, the strength of the Field Army may be taken as follows:—

Infantry	. .	188 battalions =	150,400
Cavalry	. .	186 squadrons =	27,900
Artillery	. .	69 battalions =	7,590 and 414 guns.

The above does not include about 20,000 garrison Artillery and a Reserve Field Artillery Regiment of 6 batteries. Other estimates give a rather lower strength of Infantry and Cavalry and a higher strength of Artillery.

An Army Corps is supposed to contain:—

- 6 Line Regiments.
- 6 Rifle battalions.
- 4 Cavalry Regiments.
- 1 Artillery Regiment.

The latter consists of 6 Field, 3 Horse, 1 Mountain, and 1 Mitrailleuse battery.

The force of Redifs is variously given as 240 and 336 battalions. The Moustahfiz had been estimated at 250,000 men, but they cannot be said to have had anything approaching to a real organisation. In addition to the above, there was a force of some 20,000 Circassian Irregular Cavalry of very small military value, and the numerous hordes of Bashi-Bazouks, mere marauding camp followers, can be left out of account as absolutely worthless.

The great majority of the Turkish Nizams carried the Peabody-Martini, an excellent rifle. Most of the Redifs and battalions brought together after the declaration of war were armed with the Snider. Each Infantry soldier carries 100 rounds; every battalion has 30 pack horses, each carrying two boxes containing together 2,000 rounds. This gives a battalion reserve of ammunition of about 100 rounds per man. Another 100 rounds per man are carried as an army reserve. General Baker speaks highly of the pack-horse system, and it is certain that the Turks rarely ran short of ammunition, though it was always unsparingly expended.

Small-arms.

Dragoons carried the 16-shooter Winchester magazine carbine—a weapon inferior to the Berdan carbine of the Russian Cavalry—and Lefauchaux revolvers. The two wing squadrons of Lancer Regiments were armed with 12-shooter Winchesters and revolvers, the four other squadrons carried the lance.

The Field Artillery was armed throughout with 3·14" and 3·54" (4-pounder and 6-pounder) steel guns of Krupp's make, weapons in all respects superior to the bronze field guns of Russia.

Field Artillery.

At the outset of the war Servia was neutral and inviolable. In the Black Sea Russia was practically powerless. The frontier of possible invasion reduced itself therefore to the line of the Danube, from Viddin down to Braila. Of some fourteen fortresses on the Turkish bank, between Viddin and Matchin, the three most considerable—Viddin, Rustchuk, and Silistria—are insufficiently provided with casemate cover. All have too much exposed brickwork, and their more recent detached works lie too near the *enceinte*. Rustchuk was stated to be armed in February 1877 by smooth bores only, but a considerable number of Krupp guns were subsequently brought from Varna and mounted there. Other fortresses, such as Lom Palanka and Tultscha, are quite inconsiderable, but possess natural advantages of site. Something had been done by the Turks to strengthen their frontier, and at Viddin, Turtukai, Rustchuk, Silistria, and Nicopolis, at least, it is certain that attempts had been made to remedy defects.

Turkish frontier.

Russian
mobilisation.

The first Russian mobilisation began under an Imperial order of November 13th, 1876, and six Army Corps numbered VII.—XII. were formed of the Divisions in the Odessa, Kharkoff, and Kieff military districts. The Reserves were called up in 52 military governments, and responded with great alacrity. The greater number had reached their respective depôts by the 5th, all by the 17th day from the issue of the order. The weather in the autumn of 1876 was very bad, and the snow greatly impeded communications; great distances had to be covered by many of the men, and the time above named is, all things considered, surprisingly short. Four of the new Army Corps, Nos. VII., VIII., XI., and XII., were concentrated as rapidly as possible in Bessarabia, while Nos. IX. and X. were destined for the defence of the Odessa coast and the Crimea. The concentration in Bessarabia was not effected before the end of December, but the difficulties due to climate and the deficiency of railway communication seem to account for the delay.

Under an order of March 11th, 1877, eight new Army Corps, numbered I.—VI., XIII., and XIV. were formed. Of these Corps, Nos. IV., XIII., and XIV. were immediately mobilised to form part of the Field Army, which, therefore, originally consisted of nine Corps, viz. IV., and VII.—XIV.* Nos. IV., XIII., and XIV. originally formed a 2nd Line, or Reserve Army, but by an order of May 8th, 1877, these three Corps also were brought to the Danube. The Xth Corps never crossed the Turkish frontier, nor the VIIth, with the exception of a part of a Cavalry Division employed to reinforce Zimmerman, and one Infantry regiment advanced to Sulina in October. To the above must be added the 3rd and 4th Rifle Brigades, a combined Cossack Division, and 9 unattached Don Cossack Regiments. In addition, there were an Artillery Park, and the following technical troops—viz. 3 Sapper battalions, 4 Pontoon battalions, 2 Field Telegraph Parks, 1 Field Engineer Park, 1 Siege Engineer Park, 1 Railway battalion. The technical troops numbered about 7,000.

Bulgarian
Legion.

In May the Bulgarian Legion was formed at Plojesti, and soon amounted to 6 battalions and 6 sotnias. Uniforms, French chassepôts bought in Germany, and ammunition, were supplied by the Moscow Slav Committee. The commandant and all the officers were Russian.

Roumania.

The Roumanian standing Army was organised in 4 Divisions, its strength being about—

32,000 Infantry
5,000 Cavalry
84 Guns.

* A detail of these corps is given in Appendix III.

The mobilisation began early in April 1877, but the precise politico-military position of Roumania was for some time undefined. This was possibly the reason that the Turks attempted no real operations on the northern bank of the Danube, though the mere destruction of the railway between Bucharest and Giurgevo would have added greatly to the Russian difficulties. But useless raids by the Turks on defenceless Roumanian villages soon set the question at rest, and the bombardment of Viddi from Kalafat was begun by the Roumanians on May 8th.

COMMENCEMENT OF OPERATIONS.

The Russians early decided to cross the Danube at two points. The most direct line from their base at Kischeneff to Schumla passes through Galatz, Tultscha, Oglu-Bazardchik—the line followed in 1828; but, on the other hand, the Roumanian railways afforded a route shorter in time to the Balkan Passes. It was, nevertheless, a military necessity to cross the Lower Danube as early as possible, in order to secure the left flank of the main line of communications, though this occupation absorbed troops whose presence further West was afterwards sorely needed.

A flying detachment under Lieut.-Gen. Skobeleff seized the bridge over the Sereth at Barboschi on the evening of April 24th. The Cossack Cavalry starting at 3 A.M. reached the bridge at about 9 P.M., after a ride of nearly 65 miles. The Infantry belonging to the detachment covered about 40 miles in the 24 hours. The bridge is of iron, 917½ ft. long in 11 spans, the two centre of which are 153½ ft. each. The breadth of the Sereth at the time was about 525 ft. The extreme importance of the operation is therefore very apparent.

Barboschi
Bridge.

The XIth Corps occupied Galatz and Braila on April 27th. From Braila down to Kilia the left bank was soon in the hands of the Russians. Pivoted on the XIth Corps the mass of the Russian Army swung round on to the Upper Danube, advancing into Roumania in 4 columns.* About the middle of June the XIVth Corps reached Galatz, and, thus relieved, the XIth Corps, the greater portion of which had already moved westward, was concentrated near Oltenitza. A portion of the XIVth Corps, under General Zimmerman, crossed the river in boats near Galatz, in the early morning of June 22nd, the rest over a bridge thrown across near Braila. Matchin, Isaktscha (13 miles below Matchin), Tultscha (9 miles below Isaktscha), and Hirsova (40 miles above Matchin) were successively occupied, and the Turks evacuated the whole Dobrudscha (previously garrisoned by some

Russian
advance.

* See Appendix IV. for detail and line of march of these columns.

15,000 troops) up to the Tchernavoda-Kustendje line. Zimmerman's command, subsequently reinforced by a portion of the VIIth Corps, formed for the future the extreme left wing of the Russian Army, but effected nothing beyond the covering of the exposed flank.

Up to June 6th some 220,000 Russians had passed into Roumania, the greater part of the Infantry marching by road at an average daily rate of about 9 miles.

Russian
position at
beginning of
June 1877.

About the beginning of June the Russian position was nearly as follows:—

The 8th Cavalry Division between the mouths of the Aluta and Vede. From the Vede to Lake Gretschiolov the 4th Rifle Brigade and the Caucasian Cossack Division. Thence to the mouth of the Ardschi the 31st Don Cossacks in advance of the 32nd Infantry Division (No. XI. Corps) echeloned from Budesti to Fratesti. From the Ardschi to Hirsova the 11th Cavalry Division. Eastward to Kilia the 11th Infantry Division (No. XI. Corps).

Further in rear the 31st Infantry Division (No. IX. Corps) near Slatina. A Cossack Brigade at Alexandria, and the 12th Cavalry Division at Kopatscheni, south of Bucharest. The XIIth Corps and a Cossack Regiment echeloned on the Bucharest-Alexandria road. The VIIIth Corps and the 23rd Don Cossacks between Bucharest and Alexandria. The 5th Infantry Division (No. IX. Corps) at Bucharest. The IVth Corps moving by rail to Bucharest from the Russian frontier, under orders to place itself at the disposal of the Commander-in-Chief.

By the end of June, the XIIIth Corps also reached Alexandria. Meanwhile with the Russian advance the Roumanian troops moved westward, and were concentrated in Little Wallachia. Later, a tendency to concentrate between the Vede and Aluta, near Simnitza and Turnu-Magurelli, became apparent, and also an accumulation of bridging *matériel* near the mouth of the latter river. A certain number of heavy guns had by this time been mounted along the river bank at various places, notably at Giurgevo, and intermittent Artillery fire on both sides had occurred.

Turkish
dispositions.

It is extremely difficult to arrive at an accurate estimate of the strength and disposition of the Turkish force in Bulgaria. The disturbed state of the empire, the absence—except on paper—of any real Division, or Brigade organisation, the troops drawn from Asia Minor, the Egyptian contingent, the new Regiments raised in Constantinople, and the Moustahfiz, an unknown factor in numbers and military value, combine to complicate the problem. Considerable movements, veiled

with more or less secrecy, had taken place between April 24th and June 27th, notably a transfer about June 20th of a considerable force from Viddin to the lower Danube, and earlier, about April 25th, from Sofia to Schumla. It is probable that Abdul Kerim contemplated his main offensive from the Quadrilateral. By June 27th the Turkish disposition was, roughly speaking, as follows :—

1. The Quadrilateral :—

Rustchuk . . .	33,000 . .	Esref Pasha.
Schumla . . .	25,000 . .	Achmed Pasha.
Silistria . . .	22,000 . .	Salami Pasha.
Varna . . .	16,000 . .	Raschid Pasha.

Total . .	<u>96,000</u>	
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The above formed the 'Army of the East,' under Abdul Kerim, Commander-in-Chief, and was subsequently reinforced by the Egyptian contingent and by levies from Constantinople.

2. The Dobrudscha, 15,000, Ali Pasha.

3. Rahova, Nicopolis, Sistova, 12,000.

4. At and near Viddin, 35,000, the 'Army of the West,' Osman Pasha.

The total strength in Bulgaria would therefore be about 158,000 men, including 6,500 regular Cavalry, 300 field guns, and the Circassian irregulars.*

5. At Sofia an Army of Reserve of 20,000, a portion of which subsequently moved on Plevna, the rest forming the nucleus of a force brought together for the defence of the Western Balkans.

6. On the line, Philippopolis-Adrianople and in the Balkan Passes, about 15,000 men under Raouf Pasha.

7. Suleiman Pasha's army of 35,000, consisting mainly of troops who had been engaged in the unsuccessful attempt to finally crush Montenegro, and who were afterwards brought by the Maritza valley to Adrianople.

8. The garrison of Constantinople, at least 35,000, including troops drawn from Asia Minor and newly raised levies. Of this force a portion was ultimately employed to reinforce Suleiman.

In the above estimate the Moustahfiz and Bashi-Bazonks are not included.

June 7th was the day originally fixed for the crossing, but the Danube was still nearly 15 feet above its proper summer level. Fine

* Other estimates give a rather lower general total; the discrepancies occur chiefly in the strength of the Army of the East.

weather then set in, but a severe storm occurred on the 17th, damaging the railway near Galatz.

The Simnitza-Sistova crossing had been from the first decided upon. Sistova is about 25 miles from Nicopolis, 40 miles from Rustchuk, and about 50 miles, as the crow flies, from Schipka. From Sistova a good road—some miles in the Balkans excepted—leads to Adrianople. The low-lying ground on the Roumanian bank was so much under water, however, that a crossing further West, near Turnu, was contemplated, the river here running in a single channel.

Besides the boats of the 4 pontoon battalions attached to the army, wooden pontoons had been constructed at Galatz and Slatina, and a large quantity of bridge *matériel* of all kinds had been stored at the latter place. Pontoons built at Galatz had to be sent by rail to Banjas, the station before Giurgevo, and thence carried overland to Beja, on the Vede. The very moderate carrying power of the Roumanian railways delayed the transport, and made it necessary for the troops to halt near the Vede, in the neighbourhood of Russvede and Alexandria, and wait for their bridge. From the 20th to the 24th June the Grand Duke personally reconnoitred the Danube from the Aluta to Simnitza. It was clear that an attempt to cross near Nicopolis would be attended with extreme danger, but the river had by this time so far fallen that the original plan seemed practicable.

The approach of the Russian Army to the river bank was very successfully concealed. Lieut.-Gen. Radetsky, whose command—the VIIIth Corps—was to cross first, alone knew the great secret. The general disposition still pointed to a crossing near Turnu, but the XIth Corps was massed with some ostentation between Oltenitza and Giurgevo. The 9th Infantry Division and the XIIIth Corps were ordered to Piatra, the XIIth Corps to Vojevoda and Kroshkar, the IXth Corps to Siaka. Only the 14th Infantry Division (VIIIth Corps) the 4th Rifle Brigade, 2 companies of Pioneers, 2 batteries of mountain guns, and the 4 Pontoon battalions were directed on Simnitza. Bombardments of Rustchuk, Nicopolis, and other places were ordered. The Emperor himself was present at the bombardment of Nicopolis on the 26th; his presence and the known fact of the bridge preparations in the Aluta doubtless served as a blind.

Turkish
preparations.

The Turks had for some time kept careful watch along the southern bank; by May 27th their pickets were reported to be closed in to within 3 miles of each other. Of an intention to cross near Nicopolis they seem to have been aware, and at Giurgevo and Oltenitza the Russians were expected. To protect the river at these points troops were moved up and intrenched. At the end of May a special

command, consisting of 6 battalions and a field battery, had been formed under Hamdi-Achmet Pasha to guard the river from Nicopolis to Rustchuk. At the beginning of June this detachment left Rustchuk for Nicopolis, returning to Sistova on the 20th, where 1 battalion was left, the rest being encamped near Vardin, a village $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles East of Sistova. On the day of crossing there were two battalions in the town itself, and 5 battalions near Vardin. Generally speaking, the Roumanian is commanded by the Bulgarian bank, and the former is more or less swampy. The high road, Rustchuk-Viddin, runs for some distance on a plateau commanding the river, and offers exceptional facilities for guarding it.

Simnitza lies about half a mile from the river at ordinary water level, and some 30 feet above it. Between the town and the river lies a track of meadow, sand, and mud, intersected by numerous water-courses and broken up by mounds and pools; in flood-time it is all under water. The raised road and bridge leading from Simnitza to the landing place had been partially washed away, and these flats formed practically an island cut off by a narrow arm of the river, and destitute of cover except for a wood of willows and alders at its eastern end. Simnitza.

Below Sistova the Turkish bank is very steep, but about two miles down stream the valley of the Dekir-Dera brook debouches, and the steep banks retire from the river, enclosing a small level plateau in which is a bridge carrying the Viddin-Rustchuk *chaussée* over the brook. This was the point selected for the Russian landing. The Turks had to a limited extent recognised its weakness. There was a blockhouse on the right of the creek, guarded by a company of Moustahfiz. Further up the valley and also on the right bank stood a small camp, and on a knoll above there were three or four guns in battery which commanded the river completely. Between the creek and Sistova several guns were disposed among the trees. Sistova.

On the evening of June 26th, the troops under orders to cross first, to the number of about 15,000, assembled on the meadows below Simnitza. The arm of the Danube was bridged to gain access to the flats. The pontoon trains drove down to the water and launched their boats. Five 9-pounder batteries took up a position along the edge of the flats: the extreme range to the Turkish positions was about 3,800 yards. Four battalions of Pontooners were employed, and the technical direction of the crossing devolved on Major-Gen. Richter, commanding the 3rd Sapper Brigade, the military command on Major-Gen. Dragomiroff, commanding the 14th Infantry Division. Dragomiroff has a considerable reputation as a military writer in Russia, and the Danube crossing.

following extracts from his general orders are worthy of note: their observance doubtless contributed greatly to the success of the operation:*

'The watches of all officers commanding minor detachments to be set to those of their commander.

'In case of alarm all confusion to be avoided.

'In action, skirmishers to bear in mind that they will be *supported* but never *relieved*; each man engaged within the line of fire to remain there till the end; cartridges to be economised carefully, 30 per man should suffice. No man is to leave the ranks to carry off the wounded, but the cartridges of dead and wounded men are to be at once removed.

'Mounted officers are recommended to dismount under fire. Surgeons to see that slightly wounded men return into action at once.

'Before any movement make known clearly the nature of the work to be done and the object aimed at; the lowest soldier should know where and why he marches, in order that if officers fall the troops may always know the mission they have to fulfil.

'In action, no bugle-sounds, no retiring, always advance. There are neither flanks nor rear, always face the enemy. Aim well and attack vigorously with the bayonet in order to carry positions.

'During the action open the ranks and keep the firing well in hand; change place frequently, and do not lie down except under orders from the commander. Remember that in action there is nothing to be thought of till the end pursued is attained. Fight on till there are no more troops in your front.'

It was intended to cross in six detachments, each consisting of 12 companies of Infantry, 60 Cossacks, and 8 mountain or 6 field guns.†

The pontoons were partly used single for Infantry, and partly formed by pairs into rafts for Cavalry and guns.

The Russian pontoons are of the old Austrian Birago patterns of 1842. The Pontooners are organised in Sapper Brigades, but in war they are detached from their Brigades and attached to the army of operations as required. They then form battalions corresponding to the pontoon parks. The pontoons are iron boats of two types, 'end' and 'centre,' which can be used singly, or combined, according to the load. Each battalion has 26 boats, or about 230 yards of bridge, the 4 battalions providing, therefore, over 900 yards. Each battalion train consists of 40 6-horse waggons with end and 12 with centre pontoons, 6 two-wheeled carts and 3 carts of other kinds. A pontoon made up of two parts carries 40 men in heavy marching order, or 60 without packs, drawing from $11\frac{1}{2}$ to $15\frac{1}{2}$ inches. A raft made up of two pontoons side by side is put together in 15 minutes. With the same draught it will take a gun and limber, or an ammunition wagon, including, in either case, the detachment and 6 horses.

* The directions not to lie down and to get to the bayonet indicate, it is true, that belief in bygone tactics which was afterwards to cost the Russians dear, but the orders are none the less remarkable for their clearness and foresight.

† This arrangement was afterwards altered: the Artillery, which proved useless till the heights had been carried, was held back.

The night of the 26th was dark and stormy and the tracks difficult to find; delay inevitably occurred. After midnight the first embarkation took place, including 11 companies of the 53rd (Volhynian) Regiment, 1 company of Rifles, a mountain battery, and a half sotnia of the 23rd Don Cossacks under Major-Gen. Jolschine, one of the brigadiers of the 14th Division. At 2 A.M. they pushed off.* The landing place was missed by several of the boats, and the first detachment disembarked in three groups nearly $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles apart. The time of crossing was from three-quarters to one hour, the distance to be traversed about $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles. The Turkish pickets discovered the operation and fired before a landing could be effected.

The alarm being given, troops hurried up from Sistova and Vardin, and the later detachments were met by a brisk Infantry and Artillery fire, under which 5 pontoons sank. Dragomiroff and Major-Gen. Skobeleff arrived at about 5 A.M. The early stages of the operation consisted of a struggle for existence by the scattered improvised groups, commanded often by unfamiliar officers and without hope of immediate succour. The men lay down to get under cover, advancing slowly on either side of the Dekir-Dera as soon as they became more numerous. The Turkish guns were bravely served, and were not silenced by the overwhelming weight of metal on the Roumanian shore for some hours. Soon after 5 P.M. Dragomiroff ordered part of the 1st Brigade to climb the heights East of the brook, and forming up the remainder as they arrived pushed them forward in successive detachments. By 8 A.M. the 1st Brigade had secured some small heights in its front, and the aspect of affairs became rapidly more assured. At about 10.30 A.M. a Russian steamer and two barges arrived and rendered valuable service: in two tours they could bring across an Infantry Regiment. Between 11 A.M. and noon the 2nd Brigade and the 4th Rifle Brigade arrived. A definite disposition was now possible, and the principal movement of the day was ordered. This consisted of a general advance, the 1st Brigade and a portion of the 2nd on the heights East of the brook, the rest of the 2nd Brigade with the Rifles on its flanks West of the brook, to secure the heights behind Sistova. Up to 2 P.M. the resistance of the Turks was stubborn, and the advance, difficult by reason of the steep slopes, was slow. About this time, however, their guns had been silenced, and they were soon in full retreat in the directions of Rustchuk and Tirnova, pursued by Cossacks and Infantry. At 5 P.M. Sistova was found to be abandoned. By 9 P.M. the VIIIth Corps and the 4th Rifle brigade, in all about 25,000 men, were on the Turkish bank. The 35th Division, No. XIII. Corps, was ferried over in pontoons on the morning of the 28th.

* The time of starting is variously stated as 1, 2, and 2.30 A.M.

The main passage of the Danube was an accomplished fact; and, considering that in previous campaigns the crossing had cost the Russians over 12,000 men, their present loss (822 killed and wounded) seems small enough. The admitted Turkish loss was 640. It is probable that the Russians were in possession of accurate information as to the Turkish strength in and near Sistova; otherwise this fragmentary crossing in boats of a rapid river, $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles wide, would seem to have been a bold venture. But there was no available force to crush the isolated Russians, and the crossing went on without hindrance, disturbed only by the appearance on the 28th of a monitor steaming up from Rustchuk. The monitor quietly withdrew without attempting anything. On the same day the construction of the bridge was begun, and proved no easy matter. The boats and *matériel* stored at Slatina had to be floated down under the guns of Nicopolis. On the night of the 26th, a flotilla of 100 boats passed safely down to Flamunda, reaching Simnitzer the following night. On the night of the 27th, 50 boats and 34 rafts attempted the passage. Some of the boats were struck by the fire from Nicopolis, and one of the civilian pilots was wounded and lost his presence of mind. Several boats drove on shore and were abandoned, the rest reached Simnitzer safely. On the night of the 28th, 30 boats made the passage without hindrance. The depth of water and the strong current made the anchorages difficult, and the weather was stormy, particularly on the 30th. The bridge, completed on July 2nd, was one of the longest on record, requiring over 500 boats. The roadway, about 7 feet wide, was formed of 2-inch planks, resting on baulks carried by trestles standing in the boats. Two islands lay in its course, across which roads had to be made on fascines over soft mud.

Danube
bridge.

Order of
crossing.

The general order of crossing was as follows:—

July 3rd.	Gourko's mixed advance guard.
„ 3rd and 4th,	No. XIII. Corps, less 35th Division.
„ 5th to 8th	„ XII. „
„ 8th „ 10th	„ IX. „
About „ 23rd	„ XI. „
„ 24th „ Aug. 5th	„ IV. „

Taking into consideration the comparatively small amount of railway communication, the deficiency of rolling stock, the break of gauge and the exceptional floods; remembering that not more than five trains per day could be run at this period, and that they were crowded with boats, pontoons, steam launches, torpedoes, siege guns, shells, and all the heavy stores required by a modern army; bearing in mind that a vast amount of mining work, and the construction of

many shore batteries were essential as a protection against the Danube flotilla ; that the distance from Kischeneff to Sistova is about 370 miles and the intervening country is not Russian ; the two months' interval between the declaration of war and the Simnitsa crossing will not be deemed excessive. The reported inefficiency and disorganisation of the Russian Army had hardly been verified. Nor was the impatience at the delay evinced by amateur critics entirely justified.

CHAPTER II.

RUSSIAN ADVANCE—CAPTURE OF NICOPOLIS—FIRST BATTLE OF PLEVNA.

Topo-
graphical
conditions.

THE terrace of Danubian Bulgaria rises abruptly to a height of from 150 to 325 feet above the Danube. The geological formation is mainly chalk, covered by beds of grey lias and clay of very varying depth. The surface of the ground undulates considerably, its general character becoming more accentuated as the Balkans are approached. In consequence of the porous substratum, the land of Northern Bulgaria absorbs water rapidly and suffers in summer from a dearth of springs.

The
Balkans.

The great Balkan range is formed of chalk and limestone broken by intrusive masses of volcanic rock. Roughly speaking, there is a central range and two parallel ranges of lower hills. The mountains forming the eastern portion of the range rise to the heights of from 3,000 to 5,000 feet. The western portion is generally higher, culminating North-West of Sofia at about 9,000 feet. The general slope is much steeper on the southern than on the northern side, but on the latter side the spurs are very numerous and their flanks often very precipitous. The chain is much wooded with beeches, oaks, and firs.

Dwellings.

The dwellings of the country are mostly constructed of rough wooden framing, the panels stuffed with straw and daubed on both sides with lime. Only churches, mosques, and public buildings in the towns and larger villages are solidly built.

Roads.

The few good roads of Danubian Bulgaria are due to Midhat Pasha, at one time Governor of the Danubian villáyet, who even contemplated a railway from the mouth of the Osma through Tultschka, Kojalovza, and Grivitza to Plevna. The project was, however, abandoned after his removal, and very few traces of the works remain. The country roads are mere tracks, tolerably firm in dry weather but almost impassable after rain. The bridges spanning the streams are narrow and weak, their approaches often excessively steep.

Country
transport.

The available transport of the country consists of bullock and ox carts of very rough construction. The Bulgarian builds his cart almost without iron, and the wheels are thick blocks, seldom circular, and without tires. Such a cart has a capacity of from 1 to $1\frac{1}{2}$ cubic yards, and under very favourable conditions it can be made to cover from $7\frac{1}{2}$ to $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles per day.

Von Moltke describes six main routes for an army advancing from the Danube to Adrianople; of these only the three following come within the sphere of operations under consideration :—

1. Rahova, or Nicopolis to Lovtcha, across the Balkans to Philipopolis and Hermanli. Routes to Adrianople.

2. Sistova, or Rustchuk to Biela, Tirnova, Gabrova, Schipka, Kazanlik, Eski-Sagra, Hermanli.

3. Rustchuk to Osman-Bazaar and Kazan, over the Balkans to Karnabad and Jamboli. From Jamboli there is a railway to Hermanli.

There is further the far more circuitous route, Plevna—Orchanie—Sofia, taken by Gourko's force after the fall of Plevna.

In crossing the Danube at Sistova the Russians intended from the first to take the Schipka route. This has the advantage of the shortest line from the Danube to the Balkans, and offers by far the best point at which to cross the latter, for the Schipka is not a 'pass' in the proper sense of the word. But, on the other hand, this route is barred by the eminently defensible position of Tirnova, and the Schipka position was known to be fortified and garrisoned. Russian plan of operations.

By July 5th 3 complete Army Corps, an independent Cavalry Division, the 4th Rifle Brigade, some unattached Cossack Regiments, and part of the Bulgarian Legion had crossed the Danube. By the end of July the XIth, XIIth, and part of the IVth Corps followed.* Of the precise dispositions of the Turks no exact information was possible to the Russians. At a low estimate, however, they must have expected to face some 40,000 troops on their right flank, 60,000 on the left, and from 20,000 to 30,000 in their immediate front, guarding the Balkan passes, or behind the Balkan range, together with a further force at Adrianople and Constantinople. If, therefore, a rapid advance on Adrianople was in contemplation, about two or three Army Corps were required to protect the right and left flanks respectively. For such a movement the Russian force was at this time clearly insufficient.

Having crossed the Danube the Russians had to broaden their river base, to take Nicopolis, only about 25 miles from Sistova, to besiege or mask Rustchuk, and above and before all, to press radial reconnaissances as rapidly as possible in all directions, so as to gain full possession of a 'strategical bridgehead' within the lines of which

* Von Trotha estimates an Infantry Division at 10,000, a Cavalry Division at 2,500; allowing for the whole seven Corps at first employed, 150,000 Infantry, 25,000 Cavalry, 20,000 special troops, 800 field guns, together with a siege train of 250 heavy and medium guns. These figures are probably fairly correct, and they agree sufficiently with the estimate of the total force stated on page 10 to have passed into Roumania by June 6th.

they would have a free scope of operation. The outline of such a bridgehead is suggested by the geographical conditions of the country. Starting from the mouth of the Jantra 11 miles below Sistova, it would follow this river and the Ruschiza to Selvi, crossing the watershed to Lovtcha on the Osma; thence, the line of the Vid to its mouth, 6 miles above Nicopolis, or the more distant line of the Isker. The district thus enclosed forms roughly the segment of a circle, with a chord—the Danube—of about 45 miles, a versed sine—the line as the crow flies to the Schipka—of 42 miles, and a circumference of about 125 miles.

The first few days were occupied in forming provision depôts, but nothing seems to have been done in the way of fortifying Sistova.*

Roughly speaking, the first Russian dispositions were as follows:—

Preliminary disposition.

Several detached Cossack Regiments to be employed on reconnaissance duty. The IXth Corps under Krudener to operate against Nicopolis, and subsequently to secure the line Nicopolis—Plevna—Lovtcha. The XIIth and XIIIth Corps, under the Czarevitch, and subsequently the XIth Corps, to obtain possession of the important line of the Jantra from Biela to the Danube, to besiege or mask Rustchuk, and to hold the line of the Lom against the Turkish Army of the Quadrilateral. The centre column, under the Grand Duke Nicholas, Commander-in-Chief, consisting of the VIIIth and subsequently the IVth Corps, to push forward to Tirnova and the Balkans. Finally, a strong advanced guard under Gourko to reconnoitre the Balkan passes, to turn, if possible, the Schipka position, to reconnoitre the Tundscha valley, and subsequently to be reinforced by the main centre column.

It was probably expected that the Turks would hold the Jantra line, and the Russians seem to have expected the greatest resistance from the East. Of the existence of the army of Viddin they were aware, but they doubtless believed that it was altogether out of the sphere of operations, and that the Turks would follow their traditional policy and cling to the fortress, or it may possibly have been thought that this force was sufficiently contained by the Roumanians at Kalafat across the Danube.

Turkish movements.

On the Turkish side, directly the Sistova crossing was known, 13 battalions from Rustchuk were despatched in the direction of Biela, and Osman Pasha at Viddin acting, it is stated, under orders from

* Colonel Ott, visiting the place in March 1878, found no trace of a bridgehead, the absence of which he ascribes to the Russian deficiency of technical troops. It is perhaps also to be ascribed to the fact that the Russians counted on the taking of Nicopolis to give them a ready-made bridgehead.

Abdul Kerim, directed two-thirds of his force on Nicopolis, the rest on Plevna. He further ordered the available troops at Nisch and Sofia on Plevna, and subsequently, being too late to save Nicopolis, he decided to concentrate his whole command there. Shortly afterwards Suleiman's army was summoned in haste from Montenegro, and the greater portion was embarked at Antivari on July 16th, *en route* for the Bay of Dedeagatch and Adrianople.

Biela was occupied on July 5th by the Cavalry of the XIIIth Corps, and on the 6th by Infantry. Tirnova was occupied without any real resistance by Dragoons of Gourko's advanced guard on the 7th, and by Infantry of the VIIIth Corps on the 12th. The possession of Biela and Tirnova gave the Russians the command of two high roads leading West from the region of the Quadrilateral, and placed the important line of the Jantra in their power.

First
Russian
operations.

CROSSING OF THE BALKANS.

Gourko's mixed advanced guard was formed under orders of the Grand Duke, dated June 30th. It consisted of $10\frac{1}{2}$ battalions of Infantry, 31 squadrons, 34 guns, and about 200 mounted Pioneers, in all some 12,000 men. Starting from Simnitza on July 3rd for Tirnova, the Travna pass, nearest to the Shipka position on the East, was reconnoitred and proved to be guarded. The Elena-Tvardica route was considered too far East, and too near Osman-Bazaar; the intermediate pass of Hain-Bogaz was therefore selected. On July 10th General Ranch and the mounted Pioneers worked at the road. Elena was occupied after a slight skirmish on the 12th, and a detachment of Cossacks and Artillery was left there to guard the flank. The 13th was spent in overcoming the great difficulties of the road, and on the 14th the head of the column debouched near Hainkioi,* surprising a camp of 300 Anatolian Nizams, who offered a brief resistance to Gourko's Dragoons.† On the 15th reconnaissances were pushed in the direction of Tvardica and Komaro, Slivno, Jeni-Saghra and Eski-Saghra, and up to Manikoi on the Kazanlik route: Jeni-Saghra is important as the most northerly point of the Adrianople-Jamboli railway.

The
Advanced
Guard.

Pl. IV.

* Hainkioi is nearly equidistant from Slivno, Jeni-Saghra, Eski-Saghra, and Kazanlik.

† The pass is nearly 4,000 feet high, and the route of 38 miles was accomplished by the Cavalry in two and a half, and by the H.A. guns in four days. The success of the operation was due to the energy, rapidity, and secrecy with which it was conducted, and also in no small degree to the services of the mounted Pioneers. The Hain-Bogaz is a veritable mountain pass, and might have been defended for hours, and even days, by a single Turkish company properly posted.

Pl. IV. An attempt to cut the latter failed. On the 16th, leaving some Bulgarians and mountain guns at Hainkioi, the force moved on Uflani in two columns, one on each side of the Tundscha. At Uflani a force of from 4 to 5 battalions of Turks offered considerable resistance. Late that evening the Cavalry reached Maglish, the Infantry bivouacking for the night at Uflani. Gourko was timed to reach Schipka on the 17th, but the resistance at Uflani and the great heat occasioned the loss of a day. On the 17th the force started for Kazanlik in three columns. Kazanlik was occupied by Dragoons at 1 P.M., after some fighting at Karganli, 5 miles East of the town. The Cavalry pushed on at once to Schipka, which the Infantry, who were much exhausted, did not reach till night. On the same day the Schipka position was unsuccessfully and unskillfully attacked from the North by troops of the VIIIth Corps in three columns under Prince Mirski. On the 18th Gourko advanced and some severe fighting took place. On the 19th the position was found to be evacuated, and was occupied by the Russians, who captured 6 Krupp guns of 8 cm. and 3 bronze mountain guns. The Turkish defences consisted of open earth-works, without gorge, and all facing North. They were well placed from a tactical point of view, and solidly built. The wood had been cleared where it obstructed the fire. Troops were set to work at once on these fortifications,* and, in view of possible contingencies, provisions and munitions were stored there.

The above is of course a mere outline of a really brilliant exploit. Within sixteen days of crossing the Danube, Gourko had secured three Balkan passes, covering some 30 miles of the range. He had, moreover, dispersed considerable Turkish forces and struck a panic at Constantinople, with a loss of less than 500 men.

Removal of
Abdul
Kerim.

The popular feeling against Abdul Kerim rose so high that he and the Minister of War, Redif Pasha, were removed. Mehemet Ali, recalled from Montenegro, was appointed to the Army of the East, and became nominally Commander-in-Chief, though henceforth the operations seem to have been controlled entirely from Constantinople. Much has been said of Abdul Kerim and his now historic 'plan,' which General Baker is of opinion consisted in 'drinking coffee and smoking cigarettes at Schumla.' It is but fair, however, to remark that the two strategical inspirations of the Turks—the flank movement of Osman and the prompt recall of Suleiman—must be ascribed to the old Sirdar Ekrem, and that after his removal there are few traces of strategical genius on the Turkish side.

* Beyond reversing the front of the works, however, not much appears to have been done.

OPERATIONS AGAINST NICOPOLIS.

Krudener, with part of the IXth Corps and some special detachments, among which was the Caucasian Cossack Brigade, started on July 12th for Nicopolis, by way of Losovikza, arriving before the town on the 14th, after some slight skirmishes.

Operations
against
Nicopolis.
Pl. I.

Nicopolis (*Pl. I.*) is an old masonry fortress situated on a cliff overhanging the Danube, near the confluence of the Osma, and nearly opposite that of the Aluta. It was much out of repair, and is commanded by the surrounding hills. South and West of the town, and rising some 700 feet above the river, is a plateau, from which deep wooded ravines descend to the Osma on the West and the marshes of the Danube on the East. Batteries had recently been constructed fronting to the Danube, and, about the time of the Sistova crossing, works had been hastily constructed to defend the town from the South side. These consisted of five considerable redoubts, of which two were situated West of the town, on the plateau between the Nicopolis ravine and the Danube, one South, and two East. There were also three batteries, mounting some 10 field guns, with Infantry trenches in front and rifle pits; the Danube batteries mounted a few siege guns. The ground between these works was much covered with vineyards, and was difficult for Artillery; in front it was comparatively open, and the approaches were well commanded. The garrison, including outlying detachments, was probably not much more than 10,000 men, under Ahmed and Hassan Pashas. Krudener decided to operate simultaneously on both sides of the Osma, hoping to drive in and capture the garrison. With this view the following dispositions were made:—

Left Attack.—Lieut.-General Schilder-Schuldner:—

Dispositions
for attack.

1st Brigade 5th Division (17th Archangel and 18th Vologda Regiment), 9th Lancers, the greater part of the Caucasian Cossack Brigade, 3 4-pounder batteries, 4 mountain guns. Rendezvous: Debo, on the Osma. To operate between the Vid and the Osma, turn the right flank of the Turkish position, drive back the Turks into the town, and to seize the bridges over the latter river.

To support Schilder-Schuldner and to maintain contact with the right attack, the 123rd (Kozloff) Regiment and two sotnias 32nd Don Cossacks were posted at the point where the Slatina valley debouches into the Osma.

Right Attack.—Lieut.-General Krudener :—*

Right Wing : 3 sotnias 9th Don Cossacks on the Nicopolis-Bielani road.

Centre : The 121st (Penza) Regiment to occupy some woods and water mills near Ermenli ; a line of 5 9-pounder batteries to take post during the night between Ermenli and Voubla.

Left Wing : The 20th (Galitz) Regiment near Voubla.

Reserve : The 122nd (Tamboff) Regiment, 2 batteries, 2 sotnias of Cossacks, 1 Don Cossack battery in rear of the Centre.

In all a force of about 15,000 men.

Attack on
Nicopolis.

A general bombardment by the Russian and Roumanian batteries at Islacs and Flamunda was ordered for the 14th and 15th, the attack to take place at daybreak on the 15th. At about 4 A.M. on the 15th the centre battery opened fire, and the turning movement under Schilder-Schuldner began. The 18th Regiment (2 battalions in first and 1 in second line), with 2 batteries, advanced along the left bank of the Osma. The 17th Regiment, with one battery and a half-sotnia of Caucasian Cossacks, was directed on Gradeschti. The rest of the Caucasian Brigade was charged with the duty of guarding the rear against possible Turkish reinforcements from the directions of Rahova or Plevna. The Nicopolis garrison was in fact expecting relief from the West.

Left
Attack.

The 18th Regiment became engaged shortly before 7 A.M., the guns coming into action about the same time. The Turkish shell fire from batteries posted on the right bank of the Osma, S.W. of Nicopolis, began to cause much loss, and the Regiment was rapidly pushed on to the attack. The ground presented a series of deep ravines, the crests of which afforded a succession of excellent positions to the enemy, who, driven from each in turn with the bayonet, finally retreated over the Dschurmuselo bridge to the right bank. In this operation 2 guns of the Cossack battery, drawn from the reserve, having been with great difficulty placed in position on the height above the Slatina valley, rendered much assistance. Simultaneously with the retreat of the Turks the 123rd Regiment was pushed rapidly forward and took possession of the Missilyeu bridge. Here the 3rd battalion crossed the river to lend a hand to the 18th Regiment, recrossing and rejoining the Regiment by the Dschurmuselo bridge after the retreat of the Turks. The

* Several writers assign the command of the Right Attack to Lieut.-General Veliaminoff, commanding 31st Infantry Division, but this attack appears to have been personally directed by Krudener.

1st and 2nd battalions, 18th Regiment, crossed to the right bank at the same time. The 5 battalions slowly continued the advance on the right bank, meeting with a stubborn resistance, and finally arrived in front of a large redoubt (*No. 2, Pl. I.*) barring the Rahova road into the town; the troops were much exhausted, and further advance was impossible.

On the extreme left the 17th Regiment occupied Gradeschti after some fighting. The 9th Lancers was ordered to Samli to reconnoitre the Rahova road, and pushed on to the right bank of the Vid near its confluence with the Danube, finding only weak Turkish outposts. Later, this Regiment returned along the Rahova road, bivouacking for the night near the Osma and throwing out posts to the West. Meanwhile the 17th Regiment, changing front to the right, was directed on the Osma, effecting a junction with the 1st battalion 18th Regiment near the Dschurmuselo bridge.

At about 2 P.M., the success of the left attack being now assured, Krudener ordered the centre battery to be advanced nearer to the town, and the 20th Regiment was directed against the Turkish position at Voubla. After a short struggle and with considerable loss, the 2nd battalion, 20th Regiment, captured the battery *C.* and some lateral trenches, the Turks leaving one gun behind; the 1st battalion operating more to the right attacked the large southern redoubt (*No. 3*). The attack failed completely; the men of the leading company reached the ditch but were soon driven out. The 3rd battalion, 122nd Regiment, was ordered up from the Reserves, and shortly afterwards the 1st and 2nd battalions, 122nd. Successive attacks failed, but a portion of the men established themselves in the ditch and could not be dislodged. The 2nd and 3rd battalions, 20th Regiment, were now brought in from the left, and finally the 1st battalion, 121st. A general assault took place, and some men of the 20th Regiment passing round to the North succeeded in entering the gorge of the work. A desperate struggle took place in the interior, but the redoubt fell, and the Turks abandoning the whole position retreated towards the town. The 121st Regiment became engaged about 4 P.M. with the Turks near Ermenli, one battalion being shortly after detached for the assault on the redoubt. After the fall of the latter, which was the key of the position, resistance ceased. On the extreme right 3 sotnias of the 9th and 1 of the 34th Don Cossacks explored the country between Ermenli and the Danube; small Turkish detachments occupying the gardens near Ermenli were easily dislodged by 2 dismounted sotnias. Meanwhile the two battalions 18th Regiment and the 123rd Regiment were still in front of redoubt *No. 2*. At about 7 P.M. they were aware of a strong

Right
Attack.

sortie against their left flank. A 4-pounder battery, 2 Don Cossack batteries, and 3 sotnias, 9th Don Cossacks, were hurried up from the Reserve. The Turks were driven in and pursued close up to the redoubt. Darkness put an end to the fighting.

Night found the Russians ranged in a semi-circle round Nicopolis. The Caucasian Brigade had bivouacked on the heights of Samovid, forming a large square as a security against a surprise. At about 11 P.M. the square was attacked by Turkish Infantry, who were twice repulsed, according to the Russian account, but the Brigade fell back on the 17th Regiment. According to the statement of prisoners the enemy's force consisted of 6 companies, who had succeeded in breaking through the line of investment and were making for Plevna. During the night the guns of the centre battery were moved up to the heights commanding the town. Soon after 4 A.M. they opened fire, but the white flag was at once hoisted and the garrison surrendered at discretion. Ahmed and Hassan Pashas and about 7,000 men, of whom 300 were wounded, became prisoners, while 113 guns of various kinds, 2 monitors, and a large quantity of miscellaneous stores fell into the hands of the Russians. Their total loss was 1,278 killed and wounded, the heaviest share of which fell to the 20th, 122nd, and 123rd Regiments.

The capture of Nicopolis was of considerable importance to the Russians; it ensured them a strong base on the Danube, enabled them to build a better bridge, and afforded them at the same time a bridgehead and a fortified etappen station.

The attack has been described in some detail because its conduct serves to illustrate many of the faults destined afterwards to cost the Russians dear. There is little or no tactical genius to be discovered in the operation. A girdle of troops was thrown round the position and the individual detachments closed in upon it as best they might. There seems to have been plenty of bravery and dash, together with an impatience (worthy of a bygone age) to make use of the bayonet, and an evident ignorance or mistrust of the offensive power of the modern rifle. The force employed was barely sufficient, nearly all the Reserves having been called up. The resistance of the southern redoubt is remarkable. No less than 6 battalions seem to have been hurled against it, and the greater part of the whole loss of the 20th and 122nd Regiments (17 officers, 723 men) must be attributed to the fire from this one work. Its ultimate capture by the gorge perhaps points to some defect in the design, failing which the resistance might have been still more protracted. Again, the long bombardment by the 40 9-pounders seems to have produced little or no effect; and, finally, there is no reason to suppose that anything like a systematic preliminary reconnoissance of

the position was carried out. The attack, notwithstanding, succeeded, and the success of July 15th doubtless encouraged the tactical slackness of which the Plevna battles are such disastrous examples. When, three days later, the Schipka position fell, the Russian over-confidence reached its zenith; a speedy termination of the war seemed to be assured. No appearance was ever more deceptive.

Of the IXth Corps, the 19th and 124th Regiments had taken no part in the fighting round Nicopolis. The former with 2 sotnias of Cossacks had been ordered towards Bulgareni and Poradim, to hold the line Plevna-Biela and observe that of Plevna-Nicopolis; the latter was held back at Sistova to guard the bridge.

The precise date at which Osman Pasha's army left Viddin cannot be assigned. Krudener was informed by prisoners taken before the assault on Nicopolis that the garrison expected to be relieved from the West, and it is probable that the advanced guard of the Viddin force was not much over a day's march from Nicopolis on the 15th. Hearing of the fall of the place, Osman moved straight on Plevna, concentrating there all the available scattered detachments of the district, together with the escaped troops of the Nicopolis garrison. On the 17th, the Cossack outposts pushed to the South reported a force of Circassians and Infantry (estimated at 1,500) at Selvi, who retired on Lovtcha. On the evening of the same day Cossack patrols on the Vid reported that large forces from the West were moving on Plevna. The Russian Head-Quarter Staff seems to have attached little importance to the news, and the fact that the possible advent of large forces on their right flank was not taken into account, reflects small credit on the Intelligence Department. Plevna is about 124 miles from Viddin, and the force reported from the Vid was probably the advanced guard of the Viddin Army. The enemy discovered at Selvi was possibly a force marching on Plevna from Sofia, or a strong reconnaissance of troops already at Plevna. Krudener had no spare Cavalry. Two of the Regiments of the IXth Corps (9th Hussars and 9th Dragoons) were with Gourko, and had been replaced by 6 sotnias of Caucasian Cossacks, a weaker and an inferior force. With the exception of a few sotnias covering the rear, the whole of Krudener's Cavalry was engaged on July 15th. The all-important duty of guarding the right flank of the Russian main advance ought therefore to have been looked to by the Head-Quarter Staff. Gourko's detachment had absorbed a large portion of the great Cavalry force nominally available, and the Czarevitch's army required a full complement. The Cossack Regiments remaining at the disposal of the Commander-in-Chief either received inadequate instructions or were unskilfully handled. Excellent Light Cavalry

material though the Cossacks afford, it is little likely that either officers or men rise to the high standard of modern requirements. In any case, considering the important position of Plevna as a junction of roads, that a considerable Turkish force was known to exist in the West, and that Plevna is little more than 35 miles from Sistova, it is a significant fact that it was not touched by Cavalry outposts till three weeks after the crossing of the Danube.

On July 18th the Commander-in-Chief telegraphed to Krudener, 'Occupy Plevna as promptly as possible.' The Head-quarters of the Army had moved to Biela on July 8th, and to Tirnova on the 17th.

PLEVNA.

Plevna.

Pl. II. & III.

Topo-
graphical
conditions.

Plevna lies on the Rustchuk-Sofia high road, in the centre of a great agricultural district. Before the war it contained about 17,000 inhabitants, 3,100 houses, 8 mosques, and 2 Christian churches. The town is placed in the valley of the Tutschenitza, a small affluent of the Vid, about three miles from the meeting of the two, and just South of the confluence of the former with the Grivitza. Rolling hills stand all round the angle formed by this confluence, culminating on the North near the villages of Opanetz, Bukova, and Grivitza. On the East the town is shut in by a series of natural mamelons. On the South, and following the right bank of the Vid, Plevna is defended by a huge natural rampart. The streams are small but they cut deep erosion valleys into the chalk, forming very considerable obstacles to the movement of troops. The surrounding hills and the steep valley slopes constitute the main tactical features of the position. The Grivitza and Tutschenitza* ravines, radiating on Plevna, divide the country East of the Vid into three sections. On the North of the united Tutschenitza and Grivitza the hills fall steeply to the South, and are divided by the Bukova valley. Between the Grivitza and Tutschenitza the position is further divided by the 'South Grivitza valley' running South from the Grivitza village, the 'middle valley'† running South-East from Plevna, and the Radichevo valley running East from the Tutschenitza. The succession of knolls on the left bank of the Tutschenitza were termed the 'Green Hills' by the Russians. South-West of the town another stream—the Tschernjalka—runs into the Vid. The hills on the

* The depth of the important Tutschenitza ravine is stated to vary from 160 to 325 feet.

† The middle valley contains the road Plevna-Pelischat, and the latter crosses the road Grivitza-Tutschenitza-Bogot on the plateau termed the 'Reserve Hill.' The reserves in the great battle were formed up here.

right bank of the Grivitza rise to about 950 feet, those on the left bank near Plevna to 700 feet, and the Green Hills to 980 feet above the sea level.

The Vid, formed by the union, about 3 miles below Teteven, of the 'White' and 'Black' Vids, rises in the Chodscha Balkans and runs for some miles in a narrow and deep channel. The defile of Sadovetz is only about 18 miles above Plevna, but at Plevna itself the valley broadens, the right bank, however, remaining steep while the left takes a gradual slope. Generally speaking the right everywhere commands the left bank. The bottom is hard, and the ordinary breadth at Plevna is about 60 yards, but over 300 yards in flood. After continued dry weather it may be forded almost anywhere in the neighbourhood of Plevna; the water rises very rapidly, however, after rain. A good bridge, 110 yards long, with a wooden superstructure on 9 stone piers, carries the Sofia-Rustchuk high road over the Vid. Near Plevna there is no other permanent bridge.* Following the line of the stream, there are deep fords at Teteven and Torotz, ordinary fords at Aglen, Tchirekove, and West of Gorny-Dubnik, and also at Opanetz, Rybina (where the Roumanians constructed a bridgehead in October), and Giulenci, 5 miles from the Danube. The Vid offers a fair line of defence against western Bulgaria, but one inferior to that of the Isker further West and of the Jantra on the East.

The Vid.

In July the uncut maize stood high round Plevna, particularly on the gentle slopes of the left Vid bank: in places even a cavalry trooper might be hidden. The 'Green Hills' were covered with vineyards, and in many places the signature of the Russian map shows scrub, wood, or detached trees. The latter were mostly oaks and beeches.†

The fortifications existent at the time of Osman's arrival consisted of a single blockhouse between the Vid and Tutschenitza on the Sofia road, of the type common on the Servian and Albanian frontiers. The Plevna position is, however, eminently defensible if held by a considerable force. The surrounding hills afford admirable sites for defensive works, hiding the interior of the position and allowing reserves to be concentrated out of sight ready to be directed on any threatened point. The deep ravines breaking up the country, and for the most part radiating on Plevna, rendered the lateral communication of the attacking force very difficult, so that the tactical contact, so important to the success of a combined attack on two points, was

Defences of Plevna.

* The other bridges shown on the Russian map (*Pl. II.*) must have been made by the Russians during the period of investment.

† Later, the ground was all cleared by the two armies. Col. Ott, visiting the place after the capitulation, says, 'Not a tree was to be seen for miles round Plevna.'

scarcely possible. The ground was difficult for the movements of Cavalry and guns, and the maize, vineyards, and scrub combined to prevent the rapid movement even of Infantry. And the position was of such an extent that, as will be seen hereafter, a large army was required for its complete investment. Uninvested, and with the roads to Sofia and Viddin open, Osman's Army could receive reinforcements and supplies of all kinds. Before the 1877-78 campaign Plevna had never been heard of, and it finds no place in von Moltke's sketch of the defensive advantages of Bulgaria.

Roads
leading from
Plevna.

Following the reverse of the way of the sun, the following roads radiate from Plevna* :—

1. Plevna—Tchalissovatz—Nicopolis (25 miles), an average road.
2. Plevna—Rahova (37 miles)—Lom Palanka (37 miles)—Viddin (37 miles).
A fair road, good from Rahova to Viddin. Rahova is a small trading town on the Danube to some extent fortified by the Turks as a dépôt between Plevna and Viddin.
3. Plevna—Vratza (62 miles)—Rahova (44 miles). The portion Vratza—Rahova is a mere country road.
4. Plevna—Dolny-Dubnik (9 miles)—Telische (9½ miles)—Lukovitza (9¼ miles)—Jablonitza (12½ miles)—Orchanie (19 miles)—Babakonak Pass (3,500 feet) in the Balkans (12½ miles)—Sofia (31 miles). A good broad road, except in the Balkans, with a line of telegraph.
5. Plevna—Jablonitza (40 miles)—Etropol (20 miles)—Slatiza Pass (4,785 feet, 10 miles)—Slatiza (8 miles). The path is steep, especially in the northern ascent. From Etropol another path leads over the Strigly Pass to Komarzi. Country road only. Section Plevna—Jablonitza same as No. 4.
6. Plevna—Peschterna (24 miles)—Teteven (12½ miles); forking at 9½ miles the westerly route leads over the Rybanitza Pass, the easterly over the Maskow Gate Pass (almost impracticable for vehicles); both lead to Rachmanli. Also a steep horse track from Teteven to Slatiza. From Peschterna there is a route through Turzki-Izvor and Mikré to Lovtcha. Country road only.
7. Plevna—Lovtcha (18½ miles)—Trojan (18½ miles)—Trojan Pass (4,950 feet, 9½ miles)—Kornare (5 miles). The pass is difficult and sometimes dangerous.
8. Plevna—Lovtcha (18½ miles)—Selvi (18½ miles)—Tirnova (25 miles). A good, metalled road. From Selvi a road to Kalifer (31 miles), thence over the Rosalita Pass (6,270 feet, 21 miles from the Schipka).
10. Plevna—Bulgareni (25 miles)—Biela (31 miles)—Rustchuk (25 miles). A good metalled road, with a line of telegraph.

* See Rustchuk, Viddin, and Sofia sheets of the Austrian map issued by the R. E. Institute, and also *P.* VI.

Plevna thus not only threatened the right flank of the Russian main advance to Schipka, and barred any movement towards Sofia, but covered numerous minor Balkan passes.

About midday on the 18th July Krudener sent orders to Schilder-Schuldner to move on Plevna by way of Bresljanitz. The General had not his whole Division, but only its 1st Brigade (17th Archangel and 18th Vologda Regiments), together with 4 batteries of the 5th Artillery Brigade and the 9th Don Cossacks. One battalion of the 19th (Kostroma) with the regimental baggage, the bulk of the Caucasian Cossack Brigade, and 6 H.A. guns were near Bulgareni, 25 miles from Nicopolis and from Plevna. The remaining two battalions of the 19th Regiment, with the 5th battery, 31st Artillery Brigade, had been pushed on to Poradim, about 14 miles from Plevna on the Rustchuk-Biela-Plevna road. All these troops were placed at Schilder-Schuldner's disposal. The total force thus numbered 9 battalions, 18 sotnias, 46 guns—between 8,000 and 9,000 men.

Russian
advance on
Plevna.

Schilder-Schuldner ordered the 19th Regiment to concentrate at Poradim and move on Sgalevitze, arriving there by 2 P.M. on the 19th: the Cossack Brigade to advance toward Tutschenitz. The General, with his Infantry Brigade and 4 batteries, bivouacked on the night of the 18th at Tschiskovitza on the left bank of the Osma, some 22 miles from Plevna. On the afternoon of the 19th this force arrived in front of the town and, finding it occupied by the enemy, a desultory Artillery fire was opened which lasted till dark. The 9th Don Cossacks marched quite apart from the force, and on the night of the 18th bivouacked at Rybina, remaining there apparently till the afternoon of the 19th. Shortly after 3 P.M. guns were heard in the direction of Plevna, and this Regiment, which was engaged in cooking, pushed on to within $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles of the town. On the heights above Bukova a small force of Turkish Infantry was found and, half a sotnia dismounting, a slight musketry engagement ensued lasting till nightfall. The Regiment passed the night in front of Plevna, throwing forward 2 sotnias as outposts. Meanwhile the 19th Regiment with its battery and 2 sotnias of Cossacks reached Sgalivitze at the appointed hour, and the Cavalry was sent forward to reconnoitre. An entrenched camp of the enemy was seen behind the Grivitza village, and a battalion of Turkish Infantry with 2 guns and a small Cavalry detachment moved out against the Cossacks. The latter fell back on their Infantry, and the battery being brought up the Turks slowly withdrew. This contact probably sufficed to show Osman Pasha that he had no large force from the East to deal with.

Disposition
on night of
19th July.

On the night of the 19th the Russian disposition was as follows:—

(1) 9th Cossacks (6 sotnias) on the extreme right nearly due North of Plevna.

(2) 1st Brigade, 5th Division (6 battalions) and 32 guns North-East of Plevna.

(3) More to the South-East near Sgalivitze the 19th Regiment (3 battalions) with 2 sotnias of Caucasian Cossacks and 8 guns.

(4) South-East of Plevna the rest of the Caucasian Brigade (10 sotnias) with 6 guns at Tutschenitza.

This weak force of under 9,000 men, split up into four groups, was thus drawn up in a circular arc of about 16 miles in length, round a strong position whose centre was occupied by an enemy of nearly treble strength.

Turkish
entrench-
ments and
strength.

Osman's Army had lost no time in beginning to entrench itself. By the 19th trenches had been thrown up, firstly, near Bukova; secondly, on the site of the afterwards famous Grivitza redoubt; and thirdly, on the hills South of the high road and commanding the approach. The convent of Nestor, a solidly built structure a little East of Plevna on the Bulgareni road, had been placed in a state of defence, and afterwards served as Osman Pasha's Head-Quarters. South of the town there were at this time no works at all. The total Turkish strength in Plevna was not less than 25,000, and the greater portion of this force had only just arrived.

The advance on Plevna above described was strangely careless. The 9th Cossacks never attempted to cover the Infantry, but performed a leisurely march actually in rear. There was no attempt at cohesion between the two columns. The 19th Regiment and its Cavalry never effected a tactical junction with the main body, even on the day of battle. The Infantry Brigade arrived in front of the town without any Cavalry to obtain information and to keep up communication with the other force. The Artillery attack on the afternoon of the 19th served no useful purpose except to bring up the 9th Cossacks. Although the 2 sotnias attached to the 19th Regiment were pushed forward on the 19th, there was nothing like a general reconnaissance of the position, and the Cossack Brigade seems to have effected nothing. In fine, Schilder-Schuldner had stumbled upon his enemy in a manner which would have been discreditable in peace manœuvres, and his little force, scattered over a wide front, was to be thrown against an unknown position, held by an enemy of unknown strength. The result could hardly be doubtful.

FIRST BATTLE OF PLEVNA.

Orders were issued for a general attack at 5 A.M. on the 20th, which were not received by the 19th Regiment till 2 A.M. At about 4 A.M. the outposts of the 9th Cossacks near Bukova were attacked by a Turkish force. The rest of the Regiment moved up in support, and dismounting held the enemy in check till Schilder-Schuldner despatched 2 companies of Infantry and a battery as a reinforcement. The thickets covering the Turkish skirmishers were shelled, and the latter retired, taking up a strong position in rear. The weak Russian detachment could effect nothing, and these two forces remained fronting each other till about 12 noon, when the Cossacks received orders to cover the retreat of the Infantry Brigade. A Turkish Cavalry force offering to pursue was checked, and the Cossacks reached Bresljanitz at about 6 P.M.

First battle
of Plevna.

Pl. II. & III.

At about 4.45 A.M. 3 batteries, belonging to the main body on the Tschalissov-Plevna road, came into action against 2 Turkish batteries. The Infantry Brigade shortly afterwards deployed on the heights West of the road in the following order:—

On the left of the batteries, one battalion of the 17th Regiment; on the right two battalions, 17th Regiment, and two battalions, 18th; the 5 battalions being formed in two lines of company columns, with their rifle companies extended in front.

In reserve one battalion, 18th Regiment, and one battery. From this small reserve 2 companies and the battery were very soon detached to support the 9th Cossacks engaged on the extreme right.

The position of the attacking force [(a) (a) . . Pl. III.] extended along the northern side of a valley running nearly parallel to the Grivitza. The opposite slopes of this valley were at the time covered with brushwood; behind these and more to the East are the heights on which the 2nd Grivitza redoubt subsequently stood.

At about 5.30 A.M., after a very short and ineffectual Artillery preparation, a general advance was ordered. The 17th Regiment, forming the left wing, met with great resistance and made very little progress. On the right wing the two battalions, 18th Regiment, and the nearest companies of the 17th crossed the valley, drove the enemy back, and pushed on to the outskirts of Plevna. The Turkish retreat was probably a ruse which succeeded in putting the Russians completely off their guard. Straggling along in considerable disorder they fell in with a hot fire from behind the hedges and walls all round them. The gardens and buildings were filled with the enemy, and some desperate fighting took place. The Russian losses increased to a critical extent.

The Brigadier, Major-Gen. Knorring, was wounded ; Col. Rosenbaum, commanding 17th Regiment, was killed, and a large number of officers and men were soon *hors de combat*. Major-Gen. Pokhitonoff, commanding 5th Artillery Brigade, took command, and a hasty retreat ensued. The force was able to maintain itself, however, near the town for nearly 4 hours, waiting doubtless for the result of the attack of the 19th Regiment on the left. Up till 9.30 A.M. Schilder-Schuldner had no news of the 19th Regiment. The latter, after a short Artillery prelude, advanced to the attack ; the 1st and 2nd battalions in two lines of company columns, rifle companies thrown out as skirmishers, the 3rd battalion in reserve ; the right flank covered by two sotnias of Caucasian Cossacks. The objective was the Turkish position on the heights South of Grivitza and East of the Tutschenitza-Grivitza road. Two advanced lines of trenches were carried, the 5th battery 31st Brigade, which was boldly handled, rendering great assistance. From a third line the attack was received by a very hot fire, which struck down nearly all the officers in the fighting line, including Col. Kleinhaus, commanding the Regiment. Sub-Lieut. Schasiloff rallied the men and led them against the last line of trenches. The Turks were driven out and a gun was captured. The reserve battalion was brought up and the advance continued towards the town, the Turks occupying the walls, gardens, and outlying houses. Turkish reserves of Infantry and Artillery were hurried up ; the Russians could make no further progress ; their losses had been heavy ; a counter attack was imminent, and, moreover, ammunition had begun to run short. Soon after 9 A.M. Major Baratscheff ordered the retreat, which was carried out in good order, but following a different direction to the advance ; the knapsacks and regimental baggage were lost.

The Caucasian Cossack Brigade advanced early from Tutschenitza to Radichevo, finding the country very difficult for Cavalry. The light Cossack guns here opened on the right flank of the Turks engaged with the 19th Regiment, but failed to range half the distance. The Brigade, having effected nothing, moved to the right to support the 19th Regiment, and arrived at Grivitza about 10 A.M., just in time to cover the retreat to Sgalivitze and thence to Bulgareni.

By 11.30 A.M. the troops of the main body were greatly exhausted. Their losses, especially in officers, had been very heavy, and there was no available reserve. Moreover, the Turks threatened an advance in force on the left flank which would cut the line of retreat. Schilder-Schuldner ordered the retirement covered by the 9th Cossacks. The Brigade met with the 20th (Galitz) Regiment of the same Division, which had been despatched from Nicopolis in support, but too late to be of

any service. The whole force bivouacked on the evening of the 20th at Bresljanitz. No real pursuit took place, but the Turks reoccupied all their original positions.

The loss of the 17th and 18th Regiments was 51 officers and 1,878 men killed and wounded; of the 19th, 22 officers and 893 men. The total loss is given as 74 officers and 2,845 men, more than one-third of the force engaged. The total loss of the 5th Brigade, 31st Division, on the 15th and 20th was about 2,200 out of a fighting strength probably not exceeding 5,000. Of 30 ammunition waggons belonging to this Brigade 17 fell into the hands of the Turks. The Russian estimate of the Turkish loss—4,000 men—is doubtless excessive.

This attack violates most principles of warfare. The Russian Infantry was thrown in too dense a formation against the front of a strong position. There was no real co-operation between the two attacks; the General was even ignorant of the fate of the 19th Regiment till it was in retreat. There is no sign of tactical skill, nor of a just appreciation of the relative functions of the three arms. The Cavalry attached to the 5th Brigade was never employed in reconnaissance, and the mass of the Caucasian Brigade was only utilised in covering the retreat of the 19th Regiment, and for the rest might as well have been away from the field. The Artillery preparation was inadequate and ineffective, and the Infantry attack was hurried on with an impatience which seems to have characterised the Russians at this period. Schilder-Schuldner in his report says, 'Losing no time with the cannonade I ordered the attack . . . ' and the general impression left on the mind is that he attached far too little importance to the actual *conduct* of the attack, trusting too implicitly to the mere bravery of the Russian soldier. As a crowning blunder, the ammunition train of the left wing had been left behind at Bulgareni, about 19 miles in rear, and both the Infantry and Artillery belonging to this part of the force ran short of cartridges. Had the Turks possessed a sufficient Cavalry force the disaster would have been still more complete; as it is, the proportion of losses to the troops engaged has rarely been exceeded. The attack gives a clear idea of the then Russian tactics. To march on till the enemy is met; to deploy the leading troops, retaining only a small reserve; to form the deployed troops in two lines of company columns, two-thirds in first line and one-third in second line as supports. After a short Artillery preparation, to throw the Infantry forward to the attack, skirmishers in front and the main body following as fast as possible. Of a true appreciation of the real use of Reserves—to act at the decisive moment, to give a numerical superiority at a given point, and to provide troops in hand for unforeseen emergencies, there is no sign in the first battle of Plevna.

CHAPTER III.

GENERAL SITUATION AT THE END OF JULY—SECOND BATTLE OF PLEVNA.

Russian
military
policy.

THE original Russian plan of operations was doubtless to detach a strong force to protect each of the two flanks, to seize or turn the Schipka position, and to advance as rapidly as possible on Adrianople. All the earlier dispositions point to this project, while political and financial considerations alike called for a rapid and decisive campaign. It was probably expected that a great battle would be fought at Biela or Tirnova, and that a crushing defeat would be inflicted on the Turks, the moral effect of which would greatly smooth the way for the subsequent advance. The over-confidence and loss of military judgment, which is the almost inevitable result of easy victories, had, no doubt, led the Russian Staff to under-estimate the difficulties of the task before them. And the recent Turkish campaigns in Servia and Montenegro had by no means tended to raise the general opinion as to the capabilities of the Turkish army and its generals. But it is still difficult to understand how the situation could have been so totally misapprehended.*

Allowing two or three Corps for the protection of the right and left flank respectively of the main advance and to provide strong detachments for the holding of the Balkan passes and the etappen stations on the line of route, a force of not less than eight Corps would seem to be required in order to carry out the original plan. Not till the middle of August were there six Corps in hand, and the two defeats before Plevna had then occurred. It is worthy of note, however, that such a force might apparently have been rendered available in July. The IVth Corps did not begin to reach Bucharest till about July 17th, and the XIth Corps was detained between Giurgevo and Oltenitza till about July 23rd: both these Corps might by proper arrangements have been in Bulgaria by the middle of July at the latest. The Xth and part of the VIIth Corps were watching the coasts of the Black Sea. For this service and to reinforce the XIVth Corps in the Dobrudscha, the Reserve battalions, which had now been for some

* It is probable that a more just estimate of the power of the Turkish resistance was formed in England than elsewhere.

time mobilised,* might probably have been employed. This would give a force of exactly eight Corps (IVth and VIIth-XIIIth) for operations in Bulgaria and the advance on Adrianople.

The Russian strength in Bulgaria, towards the end of July, was under 115,000, and this number includes a portion of the XIth Corps, which did not cross the Danube till the end of the month. To strengthen this force there remained the IVth Corps (22,500) and the 3rd Rifle Brigade (3,000); which had all crossed by the middle of August, and would bring up the total strength (losses excluded) to about 140,500. The next reinforcements consisted of the 2nd and 3rd Infantry Divisions, still in Russia, and not available till about September 1st, while the troops belonging to the later mobilisation (Chap. V.) did not begin to arrive till quite the end of September.

Russian
strength.

By the 26th July Suleiman Pasha's newly arrived army, numbering about 35,000 men, was concentrated between Karabunar and Tirnova. This force, together with that of Raouf (p. 11), gave an army of not less than 50,000 available to resist the Russian advance on Adrianople, and there was, in addition, a very considerable Reserve at Constantinople. Excluding the latter, the total Turkish strength in the field cannot have been less than 230,000 at a moderate estimate.

Even allowing for the inferior quality and discipline of some of the Turkish troops, the disparity is startling. The weaker force was acting on the offensive, and had a long and difficult line of communications to maintain. The stronger force was acting on the defensive; a large portion of it was based on the strong fortresses of the Quadrilateral; the geographical conditions of the country were in its favour, and it possessed a strong defensive line (now partially broken, however) in the Balkans; it had two railways to facilitate communications, and possessed the command of the sea; and, finally, it carried a superior Infantry weapon.

In estimating the strategical value of the Plevna position to the Turks, full weight must be given to the above considerations. The great tactical results achieved by Osman's earthworks tend, perhaps, to the formation of a somewhat exaggerated estimate of their real effect on the course of the campaign. The two things are entirely distinct, and the question whether, Plevna apart, the Russian project of an immediate advance on Adrianople was practicable under the circumstances, is one of some importance.

Strategical
importance
of Plevna

The success of Gourko's first operations appeared to be greatly in

* The Reserves called up at the time of the mobilisation of November 1876 (p. 8), besides being employed to bring up the 12 Infantry Divisions to the war strength, were also partly formed into Reserve battalions, one per Regiment. These 48 battalions were subsequently organised in 3 Divisions (p. 70). A further Reserve force was rendered available on the second mobilisation of March 1877.

favour of the Russian plans. Only scattered detachments of Raouf's force offered any resistance; they were easily dispersed, and the road to Adrianople seemed to be open. And the Turks seem at first to have adopted a passive defensive policy which would be best met by a heavy blow struck in the heart of the country. To carry out the Russian plan, however, it was clearly necessary that the army available for the trans-Balkan movement should possess a numerical superiority sufficient to ensure a decided victory over the Turks in Roumelia; to be followed up without delay by a rapid advance on Adrianople. But Suleiman's arrival rendered an adequate superiority impossible to the Russians, and Suleiman's troops were seasoned soldiers, who proved themselves capable of great things. Supposing that Osman had not moved from Viddin, and allowing only one Army Corps for the protection of the right flank, including the garrisoning of Nicopolis and Plevna, there would remain only two Corps (say 45,000 men) to defeat Suleiman and advance on Adrianople, and even this apparently inadequate force was not available till the middle of August.

The gallant defence of Plevna must not be allowed to detract from the great strategical effect of the rapid transport of Suleiman's Army from Montenegro. As a strategical inspiration, promptly decided upon and rapidly carried into effect, the latter is probably unequalled in the later military history of Turkey.

Under all the circumstances, it is not surprising that a recent writer in the *Neue Militärische Blätter* holds that it does not require the appearance of Osman Pasha at Plevna to account for the failure of the Russian plans and the protracted course of the campaign.

It is never satisfactory to speculate on what might have been, but it must be allowed that such troops as those of Osman, under such a leader, would have acquitted themselves equally well under other circumstances, and that fortified positions defended as tenaciously as that of Plevna and attacked in the Russian fashion would, wherever established, have necessitated great sacrifices for their capture. On the other hand, full value must be attached to the proximity of Plevna to Sistova—a bare three days' march. It was this nearness of the danger to their communications which caused the impatience, of which the second Russian defeat was the direct result. A Plevna less near and less evidently threatening, would probably have been effectively masked, and great losses thereby saved.

On the Turkish side, the retention of Osman Pasha at Viddin, and the consequent splitting up of the forces in Bulgaria into two principal groups, must be assigned to political considerations, it being for some time held necessary to keep a large force in the N.W. corner of Turkey as a menace to Servia. Political considerations enter largely into the

conduct of the campaign on both sides, and, as usual, they hamper and complicate strategy. It is stated that Abdul Kerim was most anxious to move the Viddin force to Schumla, but that he was opposed at Constantinople. After the crossing of the Danube, the co-operation of the two Turkish groups was evidently necessary, and it was open to Osman Pasha either to move to the East and endeavour to occupy Nicopolis, Plevna, or Lovtcha, or to cross the Balkans to Sofia, and moving thence on Kazanlik, to aid in the defence of the Balkans. The former plan possessed the attraction of the prospect of immediate action, but it entailed the disadvantage that, in all probability, the Russians would at once occupy the line of the Vid, in which case Osman would have to offer battle, to retire to some intermediate position between Plevna and Orhanie, or to fall back on the second plan, thereby losing valuable time. In selecting the first plan the culpable remissness of the Russians could hardly have been counted upon.

At the end of July the military situation was briefly as follows:— On the Russian left, the Army of the Czarevitch—the XIIth and XIIIth Corps, just reinforced by the greater part of the XIth Corps—was operating over a very extended front. There was an evident reluctance to commit this force to any decided action. Rustchuk was uninvested and no real movement against Rasgrad was attempted, though the Turkish forces there were at the time little prepared to parry a rapid stroke. This reluctance is distinctly attributable to the Russian plan; the Czarevitch's Army was merely to cover the left flank of the main line of communications; and, had the trans-Balkan advance prospered, it was probably expected that the Turkish Army of the Quadrilateral under pressure from Constantinople would leave the shelter of its fortresses and offer battle in the open.

South of the Balkans Gourko's operations had carried temporary panic to Constantinople. But from July 31st a general retreat to the Balkans set in, due to the arrival of Suleiman's army, and also to the disastrous fighting of the 20th at Plevna, failing which Gourko might have been considerably reinforced. Supposing, however, that Osman had followed the second plan, his force would have joined hands with that of Suleiman by the beginning of August, giving the Turks an army over 90,000 strong to bar the Russian advance. To oppose this force the Russians, if secure on their right flank, might possibly have been able to concentrate 70,000 men (IVth, VIIIth, and part of IXth and XIth Corps), but not before the middle of August.

On the Russian right flank an unexpected danger had shown itself. While the whole attention of the Russian staff had been absorbed by the successful operations of the advanced guard, Osman had established

Situation at
end of July.
Russian left.

Russian
centre.

Russian
right.

his force in a strong position dangerously near to Sistova and the main line of communications. The complete defeat of Schilder-Schuldner's weak detachment on July 20th, while it considerably hampered the Russian plans, must have brought home to the General Staff their unsatisfactory strategical position. As a result, so far, of their dispositions, the Russians, besides being in a great *total* numerical inferiority, were now much scattered, and did not possess a superiority of force at any one point. The time had arrived for prompt and energetic measures or the initiative would inevitably be lost, and a passive defensive policy must be adopted. It was necessary, in fact, to concentrate a considerable force, and to defeat one of the three Turkish armies without delay. The situation was just one in which Napoleon, by a vigorous decision and rapid movements, would have neutralised his enemy's numerical preponderance.

To crush Osman Pasha's army was evidently the most natural course to attempt. Plevna was much more easily accessible than either Rasgrad or Eski-Sagra; it was easier to concentrate a force there than elsewhere, and there was no immediate danger in any other quarter. To attack the Turkish Army of the East involved the possibility of tedious siege operations, while if Osman were defeated it would be easy to reinforce Gourko and subsequently advance against Suleiman. It was thus of vital importance to the Russians to win a great victory at Plevna.

Whether or no the real significance of the coming attack on Plevna was comprehended, it is certain that the task to be accomplished there was altogether under-estimated. The Russian Staff, even after July 20th, could hardly have realised the natural strength of Plevna and the possibilities for defence which it promised. The Army Head-Quarters remained at Tirnova, about 60 miles distant, and no superior officer of the General Staff appears to have visited the Plevna position.

Krudener with the rest of the IXth Corps was at Nicopolis, and receiving orders to move at once on Plevna, he started on July 22nd, concentrating his force subsequently at Bresljanitz. One Division of the IVth Corps, which had just crossed the Danube, was hurried up, and Lieut.-General Prince Schackoffskoi (commanding XIth Corps), with one Infantry and one Cavalry Brigade, reached Karagatch (15 miles East of Plevna) on the 27th.

Dispositions
for second
attack on
Plevna.

The following is a detail of the force thus brought together :—

Detail of
Russian
force.

31st Infantry Division :—		
1st Brigade	{ 121st Penza Regiment. 122nd Tamboff " 123rd Kosloff " 5 batteries.	IXth Corps.
5th Infantry Division :—		
1st Brigade	{ 17th Archangel Regiment. 18th Vologda " 20th Galitz " 5 batteries.	
9th Cavalry Division :—		
1st Brigade	{ 9th Kazan Dragoons. 9th Don Cossacks. 1 H.A. Battery.	IVth Corps.
30th Infantry Division :—		
1st Brigade	{ 117th Jaroslaff Regiment. 118th Shuja " 119th Kolomna " 120th Serpuchoff " 6 batteries.	
32nd Infantry Division :—		
1st Brigade	{ 125th Kursk Regiment. 126th Rylsk " 3 batteries.	XIth Corps.
11th Cavalry Division :—		
1st Brigade	{ 11th Riga Dragoons. 11th Tchujageff Lancers. 1 H.A. Battery.	
Caucasian Cossack Brigade :—		
	{ 1 H.A. Battery. 1 Mountain Battery.	Unattached.

Total :—36 Battalions.

30 Squadrons.

176 { 80 9-pr. guns
72 4-pr. "
18 H.A. 4-pr. guns.
6 Mountain "

In all, probably little over 30,000 men, since the losses at Nicopolis and Plevna had not yet been made good.

The 19th Regiment (5th Division) was at Nicopolis refitting, after the loss of its baggage on the 20th. The 124th Regiment (31st Division) was guarding the Sistova Bridge, and might have been rendered available. This Regiment actually reached Trestenik on the evening of July 30th, and was employed in covering the retreat.

The force above detailed was unquestionably too small to render

victory certain. By a delay of a few days it might have been strengthened at least by another Brigade each of the IVth and of the XIth Corps, even if it were deemed impossible to detach temporarily a portion of the Czarevitch's command. Circumstances may often render it imperative to fight a battle at once, even with a numerical inferiority; but considering the great importance of a victory, and that there was no immediate danger either on the left flank or in the centre, no effort should have been spared to place the result of the coming operation beyond a doubt.

Roumanian
co-operation.

Up to this time the Russians, acting probably from political considerations as well as from a natural military pride, had refused the co-operation in 1st line of the Roumanian Army. The rest of the IXth Corps having been withdrawn from Nicopolis to cover Schilder-Schuldner's shattered Brigade, the Roumanians were now requested to garrison the town. A portion of the 4th Roumanian Division, under General Manu, crossed the Danube in the early morning of July 28th, in a steamer and some barges.

Turkish
occupation
of Lovtcha.

Meanwhile, Osman Pasha having received reinforcements, determined to occupy Lovtcha as a protection to the right flank of his position at Plevna. Lovtcha, 22 miles from Plevna, 22 miles from Selvi, and 19 miles from Trojan, had been held since about June 20th by a weak detachment of the VIIIth Corps, under Major-General Soubatoff. On July 27th a large Turkish force appeared before the place, and the Russian force, completely isolated since July 20th, withdrew towards Selvi. Lovtcha was at once occupied by the Turks and entrenched.

Defences of
Plevna.

Pl. II.
and *III.*

On July 20th the Turkish defences of Plevna consisted only of Infantry trenches and slight epaulments for the Artillery. Since that day, however, a considerable amount of work had been done. The trench defences had been supplemented by several works of strong profile, disposed for the most part for the protection of the town from the East side. Roughly speaking, the Turkish position was a semi-circle of $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles circumference East of Plevna. By the 30th the Grivitza redoubt (No. 1, Abdul Kerim Tabia) was completed, and formed the chief defence of the position: it was strengthened in front and flank by many Infantry trenches, and commanded the Bulgareni-Plevna high road. Due East of the town, on the heights above Plevna, there were four works* more or less complete—viz. No. 1 (Hafiz Tabia), No. 8, No. 7, No. 3 (*Pl. II.* and *Pl. III.*). These works

* These four works are spoken of as 'redoubts' by many writers. It appears, however, that they were rather works of lunette form, with strong profiles, strengthened in front and flank by many Infantry trenches, but probably open, or very slightly closed at the gorge. Subsequently, no doubt, they were nearly all converted into closed works, as shown on the Russian plan. (*Pl. II.*; compare also *Pl. III.*)

were also strengthened by many trenches in front and flank, and commanded the isolated hill on which redoubt No. 10 subsequently stood and the Pelischat-Plevna road.* After the defeat of the 20th it appears that the touch between the Russians and Osman's force was almost lost; at all events, it is certain that no attempt was made by the former to hinder the Plevna trench work.

Since the fighting of July 20th Osman Pasha had been considerably reinforced. Turkish accounts state that his total force was between 60,000 and 70,000 men. This number, however, includes the Lovtcha detachment and probably non-combatants. The Turkish combatant strength in Plevna on the 30th may be taken at about 40,000, with at least 60 guns.

Turkish
strength
Plevna.

Krudener personally reconnoitred his front; recognising the strength of the Turkish position, and learning that Osman Pasha was receiving reinforcements every day, he hesitated to attack, and telegraphed to Tirnova representing his views. On the 28th he received a peremptory order to attack at once. The general assault was ordered for the 30th, and the 29th was spent in reconnaissance, both by Krudener and Schackoffskoi. Skobelev also executed a reconnaissance on Lovtcha, which he found strongly occupied; he was, moreover, much impressed with the Turkish strength in Plevna. Later in the day a council of war was held at Schackoffskoi's Head-Quarters, near Poradim, at which the Divisional and Brigade Commanders were present.

The general disposition of the Russian troops on the 29th was as follows:—

Russian
dispositions.

1. 9th Lancers and 9th Don Cossacks, with 1 H.A. battery at Bresljanitzza.
2. 31st Infantry Division (less 124th Regiment), with 5 batteries at Kojolovtza.
3. 5th Infantry Division (less 19th Regiment), with 5 batteries at Trestenik.
4. 2nd Brigade, 30th Division, with 3 batteries at Karagatch.
5. 1st Brigade, 30th Division, 1st Brigade, 32nd Division, 1st Brigade, 11th Cavalry Division, with 6 field batteries and 1 H.A. battery at Poradim.
6. Caucasian Cossack Brigade with 2 H.A. batteries at Bogot.

* The exact chronology of the Plevna works cannot be assigned. The works above detailed alone played a part in the second battle. Other works existed at the time on the ridge North of the town between Bukova and Grivitza, and it is stated that further works had been executed West of the town, near the Vid bridge, and also near Opanetz. Due South of the town, on the Green Hills, it is certain that no trench work had been carried out by the 30th. Some writers state that the second Grivitza redoubt was then existent, but this is very doubtful; the work may, however, have been begun.

The line from Bresljanitzza to Poradim is about 15 miles long, roughly the arc of a circle 10 miles distant from Plevna. From Poradim to the extreme left flank at Bogot is about 11 miles, while Bogot is only about 13 miles from Lovtcha.

General idea
of the
attack.

The 'general idea' of the assault was a main attack by Krudener on the Turkish Grivitza position, maintaining Cavalry contact with the left attack by Schackoffskoi directed from Radichevo; the flanks to be covered by Cavalry under orders to cross the Vid and cut the Turkish line of retreat. A main Reserve to be held at the disposal of Krudener.

The latter was, as senior General, nominally Commander-in-Chief of the forces before Plevna, but his position as such was not clearly defined. Schackoffskoi was also a Corps Commander, and, moreover, arrived with special instructions from the Commander-in-Chief. On the day of the battle he appears to have acted independently, with the subsequent result of bitter mutual recrimination between himself and Krudener. As in the case of the assault on Nicopolis, Lieut.-General Veliaminoff is usually credited with the command of the right attack, but the latter seems to have taken place under the personal direction of Krudener. In the Russian Army, Krudener had the reputation of being slow; Schackoffskoi, on the other hand, was held to be somewhat rash and impetuous.

Orders for
the general
attack.

The following orders were issued for the attack on July 30th:—

1. *Cavalry of Right Flank*.—9th Lancers, 9th Don Cossacks, 1 H.A. battery (10 squadrons, 6 guns), under Major-General Loshkareff, to move at 6 A.M., to observe the North front of the Turkish position, and send out patrols as far as the Vid. In case of a Turkish defeat to cross the latter, and fall on the enemy on the Sofia road.
2. *Right Attack*.—31st Infantry Division, 5 batteries (9 battalions, 40 guns), under Lieut.-General Veliaminoff, to leave Kojolovtza at 5 A.M., and attack the main Grivitza position North of the Bulgareni-Plevna road. The 5th Infantry Division, with 5 batteries (9 battalions, 40 guns), under Lieut.-General Schilder-Schuldner to follow in reserve.
3. *Left Attack*.—1st Brigade, 30th Division, 1st Brigade, 32nd Division, 6 field batteries and 1 H.A. battery (12 battalions, 54 guns), under Lieut.-General Prince Schackoffskoi, to leave Poradim at 5 A.M. and attack the entrenchments due East of the Town.
4. *Cavalry of Left Flank*.—Caucasian Cossack Brigade, 1 Don Cossack battery, and 1 mountain battery (10 sotnias, 12 guns),

under Major-General Skobeleff, to leave Bogot at 5 A.M., to take up a position near Krischin on the Plevna-Lovtcha road, to cover the left flank and guard against any movement either from Plevna or Lovtcha. This force to be strengthened by the 3rd battalion 125th Regiment and 4 guns of the 32nd Artillery Brigade detached from Schackoffskoi's command.

5. *General Reserve*.—2nd Brigade, 30th Infantry Division, 2 squadrons, 11th Dragoons, and 2 squadrons, 11th Lancers, 3 field batteries and 1 H.A. battery (6 battalions, 4 squadrons, 30 guns) to remain under arms at Karagatch at the disposal of Krudener.
6. *Cavalry to maintain Contact*.—2 squadrons, 11th Dragoons, and 2 squadrons, 11th Lancers, to maintain contact between Right and Left Attacks.

Krudener's Head-Quarters were to be on the heights East of Grivitza.

The fault of the first battle was repeated; an inadequate force, split up into two groups so far apart as to render complete co-operation impossible, was to attack a strongly posted and numerically superior enemy. And, moreover, the positions selected as objectives were the strongest which Plevna then offered. The sole counterbalancing advantages on the Russian side were—1st, the superior discipline and manœuvring power of their troops, partly nullified by the fact that the Turks for the defence of their earthworks were not called upon to develop any manœuvring power; and, 2nd, the great preponderance in Artillery, which proved, however, of little or no avail.

SECOND BATTLE OF PLEVNA.

The night of the 29th was very wet, and the morning of the battle damp and foggy.

The troops of the Right Attack got into movement a little before 7 A.M., and marched towards Grivitza, forming in order of attack on the heights North of the high road before 8 A.M. On the right flank stood the 121st Regiment, on the left flank the 122nd, the 3 batteries being posted between. In rear, as 2nd line, the 123rd Regiment with two batteries under Major-General Bjelokopytoff. The Reserves of the right attack, 17th, 18th, and 20th Regiments (5th Infantry Division), with five batteries under Schilder-Schuldner, arrived on the ground later and took up a position in rear at about 10 A.M. The fog and the undulations of the ground hid the Turkish position to a great extent. In front of, and parallel to the right flank, was a broad ravine, much covered with brushwood; the opposite slopes

Advance of
right wing.

Pl. II. & III.

the parapet of the redoubt, where he was cut down and nearly all the men perished. Crushed by the fire the Regiment fell back into the ravine, having in a very short space of time lost 29 officers and 1,006 men killed and wounded. The two battalions, 123rd Regiment, now moved to the attack. Colonel Stefanoff commanding, led them up to the ditch, where he fell; some few of the men reached the parapet, others maintained themselves for a short time in the ditch, but the attack failed completely. About the same time Schilder-Schuldner brought up the 17th and 18th Regiments (the Reserves of this column) on the right of the 123rd Regiment; they carried some trenches on the right of the redoubt, but failed altogether to take the latter.

The left column advanced across the ravines North of the Grivitza village, the 20th Regiment following in reserve on the left rear. The attacking force reached a slight knoll* about four hundred yards South-East of the redoubt, but the intermediate ground was devoid of cover, and the men could make no head against the shower of bullets coming from the redoubt and the trenches on the slopes South of it. The 20th Regiment was subsequently brought up, but nothing was effected. The left column seems never to have been able to get near the redoubt.

By 6 P.M., the Infantry attack having lasted over three hours, the 121st Regiment had been withdrawn altogether from the fighting line, while the 17th, 18th, and two battalions, 123rd, were maintaining themselves in no sort of formation North and East of the redoubt, between it and the ravine. To check the retreat, which was impending on the right flank, Krudener now ordered up 1 battalion, 120th, 1 squadron, 11th Dragoons, and 2 H.A. guns from the General Reserve. The 119th Regiment had been detached at about 4 P.M. to reinforce Schackoffskoi, but soon became engaged with a Turkish force, which was moving up between Grivitza and Radichevo, threatening Schackoffskoi's right flank. The Turkish advance was held in check by this Regiment, supported by the fire of some of the advanced troops of Schackoffskoi's right, but the intended reinforcement never reached its destination, and was able to afford no other aid. The General Reserve was now therefore reduced to 2 battalions, 120th Regiment, 2 squadrons, and 2 H.A. guns. From this force 2 companies, and shortly afterwards 3 more companies, were ordered into the fighting line.

About sunset two desperate general assaults took place, in the second of which a Brigadier of the 30th Division was wounded within 100 paces of the redoubt. It was now getting dark, success was past hope,

* The site of a lunette subsequently constructed by the Russians. See Pl. II.

and Krudener ordered a retreat, covered by the sole remaining battalion 120th Regiment, the 20th Regiment (which had suffered but little), and 2 squadrons. The 124th Regiment from Sistova arrived in time to share this duty. The retreat thus ordered could not be completely carried out; after their great losses the troops were partially out of hand, and the general confusion had increased as darkness fell. Round the redoubt a wild irregular fight took place through the night, and many of the survivors did not reach Trestenik and Poradim till 11 a.m. on the following morning. Here a defensive position was taken up, and preparations for making a stand were immediately carried out.

Meanwhile on the left, at about 2.30 p.m., Schackoffskoi, acting independently, gave orders for the Infantry attack. The 126th Regiment on the right, and 2 battalions, 125th, on the left, crossed over the Radichevo ridge, passing between the guns, and descended into the brushwood at the bottom of the slope. On emerging they were received by a heavy fire from works Nos. 1 and 8, and numerous trenches on their front and flanks. The 126th Regiment carried the intervening trenches, and finally the work No. 1. The Turks, however, removed 10 guns, leaving 2 behind. The two battalions, 125th Regiment, had a harder task. The ground in front of work No. 8 was more open, and the fire from the trenches, of which there were in some places three lines, was excessively severe, while strong Turkish forces showed themselves on both flanks of the work. The first assault failed, and the situation was critical. Just in time Schackoffskoi ordered up the 1st battalion, 118th, under Colonel Baron Kaulbars (commanding the Regiment), and a battery was placed in position on the ground subsequently occupied by redoubt No. 10, which gave great assistance. The 126th Regiment, from work No. 1, was able to render aid in clearing out some of the flanking trenches, and work No. 8 was at length carried, the Turks withdrawing all their guns.

Infantry
attack of
left wing.

About 5 p.m. Schackoffskoi received information from Krudener that the 119th Regiment had been sent to reinforce him. The first Turkish position (works 1 and 8) had been carried, but the losses had been very heavy and the troops were greatly fatigued. Krudener meanwhile had effected nothing, while his force, 2 miles distant, in a direct line, was now practically separated from that of Schackoffskoi by about 5 miles, since the Turks had occupied the intervening ground. Mutual support between the two attacks was out of the question, and Osman Pasha, probably feeling secure on his left flank, could reinforce his right. Relying on the immediate arrival of the 119th Regiment, Schackoffskoi determined on a fresh effort. The two remaining battalions of the 118th Regiment were ordered up to reinforce the right

flank, and 2 batteries were brought into position to the right of work No. 1 to support the advance. There remained in reserve only the 117th Regiment. From the latter one battalion was soon detached to strengthen the left flank. Just about this time Skobelev was making his last effort against Plevna on the West side of the Tutschenitza ravine. His movement doubtless rendered great assistance to Schackoffskoi's force. The attack at first appeared successful; the Turks slowly fell back on Plevna. On the right the Russians succeeded in occupying a mill on the outskirts of Plevna, while on the left also, the advance was carried out for some distance in spite of the fire from work No. 7. But the Turks were steadily developing strength; their second position, close in front of Plevna (works 7 and 3) was never carried, and a counter attack, supported by bodies of Cavalry on the flanks, was imminent. Another battalion, 117th Regiment, was forwarded to reinforce the left wing, which was hard pressed, and the Turkish attack was temporarily checked. It was the turning point of the fighting, and had a strong reserve of fresh troops been immediately available, it is probable that Plevna would have been taken. But, for the reasons stated, the 119th Regiment never arrived, there was only a single fresh battalion in hand, and darkness was approaching. Schackoffskoi gave orders for the now inevitable retreat to be covered by the last remaining battalion, 117th Regiment. The force remained during the night near Radichevo, reaching Poradim next morning unpursued.*

Skobelev's
operations.

Skobelev's force, covered by the fog, moved from Bogot to Krichin without resistance. Here the main body was halted, with orders to watch the Lovtcha road, and the General himself, with 2 sotnias and 4 Don Cossack guns, starting at about 7 P.M., succeeded in reaching the heights about half a mile South-West of Plevna without being observed. As the fog lifted, a Turkish force, estimated at 20,000, was seen massed in the valley between the Grivitza heights and the town, while a body of Cavalry could be made out in the direction of the Vid between Plevna and the bridge. At about 8.30, hearing the Artillery fire of Krudener's attack, Skobelev opened fire on the town. The Turks soon replied, at first with 6 guns, but afterwards with a much greater number, while a considerable Infantry force advanced to the

* Among the numerous startling discrepancies and inconsistencies which are to be found in the various accounts of the second battle of Plevna, none is more striking than that which relates to the conduct of Schackoffskoi's retreat. Some writers assert that the latter was effected with 'the greatest order'; from other accounts the exact reverse is to be inferred. It is very unlikely, however, that great order did prevail after the severe losses and fatigue the troops had sustained. Moreover, a large number of the wounded seem to have been left to their fate, while it is certain that the captured Turkish guns could not be removed.

attack, throwing out skirmishers in front and covered by small bodies of Cavalry on the flanks. Before this force Skobelev slowly retired on his main body at Krischin, where the 3rd Battalion, 125th Regiment, and 4 guns, detached by Schackoffskoi, had already arrived. Here he issued the following orders:—

1. Col. Tutolmin, with 3 sotnias and 12 guns, to remain at Krischin, fronting towards Lovtcha, and pushing out Cossack videttes radially.
2. One sotnia to be detached to reconnoitre as far as the Vid, 20 volunteers under an officer to search for a ford in case it should prove subsequently desirable to cross the river.
3. One sotnia to be detached to the right to maintain contact with Schackoffskoi's force on the opposite side of the deep Tutschenitza ravine.

Skobelev had perceived from his reconnaissance that if the Turks succeeded in occupying a position on the Green Hills nearly due East of Krischin, they could enfilade Schackoffskoi's line and take it in reverse as it advanced. Having made the above dispositions therefore, he left Krischin with the 3rd Battalion, 125th Regiment, 5 sotnias and 4 field guns, in order to drive back the Turks and occupy this point. At first only two companies were thrown forward to the position with the 4 guns, 2 sotnias being employed to cover the exposed left flank. Towards 5 P.M., hearing of the intended advance of Schackoffskoi's left, and feeling now safe from any movement from Lovtcha, Skobelev threw forward the rest of his Infantry to the support of the advanced detachment which was hard pressed. The Turks were driven back by a bayonet charge to the outskirts of Plevna. Here the heavy fire rendered a further advance impossible, and the force retired again to the original position. Till dark repeated Turkish attacks were repulsed, but Schackoffskoi's force had now definitely retreated, and Skobelev withdrew his little detachment, covering his retreat by 3 sotnias. He had fought almost continuously for 12 hours, during which he had occupied a considerable Turkish force, and rendered great assistance to Schackoffskoi's attack. He succeeded, moreover, in effecting a perfectly orderly retreat and carrying off all the wounded. At 10 P.M. orders were received to fall back on Bogot and Pelischat.

The Russian total loss is given as 169 officers and 7,136 men, about one-fourth of the whole force. The casualties of the 121st Regiment in Krudener's force and the 125th and 126th Regiments in that of Schackoffskoi were exceptionally heavy. The latter Regiment lost 725 killed and 1,200 wounded, about 75 per cent. of its total strength. The Turkish loss cannot be stated with any hope of accuracy.

Russian
losses

There was no Turkish pursuit, and the Russians took up a defensive position between Trestenik and Poradim. The Grand Duke is stated to have inspected the force on August 2nd, and to have found the men in good spirits in spite of their heavy losses, and although the greater number were raw troops who had never been under fire before.

Panic at
Sistova.

Exaggerated reports were, however, carried to Sistova, where a panic occurred involving a rush to the bridge. General Richter, of the Engineers, in command there, barred the latter by force of arms, and by energetic measures succeeded in restoring order.

General
remarks.

The main cause of this disastrous defeat was a total want, on the part of the Russian General Staff, of appreciation of the natural and artificial strength of the Plevna position, together with an entire failure to realise the tactical value of earthworks defended by breech-loaders.

In reviewing the attack the following points are specially worthy of note :—

A strong position was attacked by a numerically inferior force, and the operation was ordered from Head-Quarters at a distance in spite of the representations of the General Officer on the spot.

The general plan of attack was extremely faulty, the two columns operating so far apart that mutual support and even combined action was impossible.

Although it is stated that the position was reconnoitred both by Krudener and Schackoffskoi, it is clear that the ground to be fought over was very little known, otherwise the fog might probably have been utilised to establish batteries and strong bodies of skirmishers in sheltered positions near to the enemy's lines.

The Artillery preparation was long, but evidently ineffectual. The Turkish earthworks were doubtless somewhat damaged, but the Infantry was completely unshaken.

There was very little preparation by Infantry fire, but in Krudener's attack, and to a less extent in that of Schackoffskoi, the Infantry were thrown straight at the earthworks over a narrow front flanked by the fire from the Turkish trenches. The formation, a skirmishing line followed at a short distance by the main body, in two lines of company columns, is totally unfitted for modern warfare, and helps to explain the great losses. According to all accounts, order was soon lost, the leading troops of the main body becoming rapidly involved in the fighting line, which then degenerated into a loose, irregular crowd, too dense in some places and with gaps in others.

In Krudener's attack, the Regiments were sent up one after the

other to the final assault on the redoubt. This really amounted to making several distinct successive assaults which the Turks were able successively to defeat. Of this attack von Trotha remarks: 'The whole of the troops of the 1st Line (9 battalions) were formed in two columns, operating from the North-East and South-East against the redoubt. The 2nd line (also 9 battalions) was from the first closely involved with the first, moving very shortly after it. Very soon after the beginning of the attack, therefore, the whole of these 18 battalions had passed out of the hands of their commander. The six battalions, 17th and 18th Regiments, brought up to support the Right Wing, turned upon the flanking trenches and carried them after a desperate struggle; but these 6 battalions, whose original total strength was under 5,000, had lost over 2,000 on the July 15th and 20th, and were now completely shattered. The attempts of individual detachments against the redoubt only served to increase the losses. Krudener's Right Wing was henceforward no longer a tactical body, but a confused mass of men, who had lost most of their officers and over whom the commander of the whole force could exert no influence. The circumstances were very similar with Krudener's Left Wing.'

Schackoffskoi's attack was altogether better conceived. The reinforcements were sent in at the right time, and the 5 battalions in 1st Line, supported only by 1 battalion of the 2nd Line, carried the Turkish advanced position, while 5 fresh battalions remained still in hand. Schackoffskoi seems to have made a bold and successful use of his Artillery, 3 batteries of which were advanced to support the Infantry. In Krudener's attack, with the exception of 2 H.A. guns, ordered up from the Reserve late in the day to assist in checking the retreat which was beginning on the right flank, the Artillery appears never to have quitted its first position. Having effected very little in the way of preliminary preparation, it probably effected less in the way of direct support to the attacking force. It is noteworthy that Schackoffskoi's force had only 50 guns, while that of Krudener (including those of the General Reserve) had 110, although it is expressly stated that the ground over which the latter General fought only permitted a very limited development of his Artillery fire. A properly executed reconnaissance would surely have ensured a previous recognition of this fact.

Schackoffskoi's success must be mainly attributed to the more intelligent conduct of his attack, even after allowance has been made for the unquestionably greater strength of the Grivitzka work. The rashness of this General in pressing desperately forward, instead of remaining in the position first carried, has furnished a subject of

comment to several writers. It would seem, however, that under all the circumstances he was quite justified in adopting the boldest line of action. The only possible way to aid Krudener was to press the Turks to the utmost. Had Schackoffskoi remained satisfied with the position carried, both Skobeleff and Krudener would have suffered more severely. This position might have been held through the night,* but, Krudener's force having been completely shattered, the Turks would, unquestionably, have retaken it next morning, probably causing the Russians even heavier loss.

The General Reserve was extremely small, and instead of being employed as a compact force to effect a decided object, it was, comparatively early in the day, divided between the two attacks. This small Reserve was, moreover, so posted that its prompt utilisation by the left attack was practically out of the question.

The success obtained by Skobeleff's small detachment is very remarkable. This General, at all events, showed that he could appreciate the relative functions of the three arms, and could fully utilise them. His comparatively insignificant force did, in fact, effect a very real diversion in Schackoffskoi's favour, and a flank attack in force on the left side of the Tutschenitza would probably have effected great results. At this period, however, the Russians appear to have favoured front attacks.

Fortification has usually been held to confer an advantage on the defence, requiring a numerical superiority in a higher or lower ratio on the part of the attack. The tactical power of earthworks has been immensely increased by the introduction of breechloaders. These two elementary considerations seem to have been entirely overlooked by the Russian General Staff in the second attack on Plevna. The *morale* of the Russian troops was excellent, but their individual intelligence was quite insufficient to correct the errors of a system of tactics now obsolete. Superior discipline, coherence, and manœuvring power gave the Russians little or no advantage over their enemy in an operation of the kind above described. Had the force detailed for the attack been calculated on the lowest estimate consistent with a recognition of the advantages to be derived from earthworks, there is small doubt that, in spite of all tactical errors, Plevna would have fallen on July 30th.

* If, as seems probable, these works were open, or only slightly closed at the gorge, the Russians, unprovided as they were with a proper supply of intrenching tools, could not possibly have held them for any length of time.

CHAPTER IV.

OPERATIONS IN THE SOUTH AND EAST.

THE fighting which took place at the Schipka position and on the Lom, between the first Russian defeat on the 20th July and the fall of Plevna on the 10th December, was not without influence on the intervening operations before the latter place. In order therefore to fill up all gaps in the narrative, and to aid in the formation of a true estimate of the strategical importance of Plevna, it is proposed to give a brief sketch of Gourko's operations South of the Balkans, of the Turkish attacks on the Schipka position, and of the Lom campaign.

OPERATIONS IN ROUMELIA.

The first period of the Russian trans-Balkan operations terminated with the occupation of the Schipka position on the 19th July. The second period, from the 20th July to the 6th August, commenced with the reconnaissance of the Tundscha Valley, and terminated with the vain attempt to arrest the advance of Suleiman's Army and the subsequent retreat to the Balkans.

Gourko's command was strengthened by a Brigade of the 9th Division, VIIIth Corps, despatched across the Balkans to Hainkioi: including the 6 battalions of the Bulgarian Legion, it now numbered $16\frac{1}{2}$ battalions, 30 squadrons, and 32 guns—in all about 16,000 men.

On the 22nd July a series of reconnaissances was commenced.

1. Colonel Mazilevich, with 4 squadrons of Dragoons, 1 sotnia of Cossacks, some mounted Sappers, and a few mountain guns, started for Eski-Saghra on the 22nd July, with orders to endeavour to reach Karabunar station on the Jamboli-Adrianople railway, to cut the telegraph, destroy as much of the line as possible, and further to make an attempt to cut the bridge over the Maritza at Tirnova. Mazilevich reached Arabadzikioi on the 24th, and sent two detachments, one to Belibreg to cut the Belibreg-Kaisarli section of the railway, the other to the South by way of Gidzul to cut the railway and the Tirnova bridge. The main body advanced nearly to Karabunar, which proved to be occupied by the Turks. The railway was cut between Belibreg and Kaisarli, but the detachment reported the presence of strong forces of all arms in the

Reconnaissance of
Tundscha
Valley.

neighbourhood. At and South of Karabunar nothing could be effected, and the Circassian Cavalry threatened Mazilevich's right flank in considerable force. The right bank of the Sasli-reka proved to be occupied by the Turks. In the evening of the 24th Mazilevich retired on Eski-Saghra.

2. Colonel Korevo, with a similar detachment, started for Eski-Saghra on the evening of the 22nd July, with orders to move on Kayadzik, to cut the railway, destroy the station, and reconnoitre the country as far as possible. The station and a portion of the line were damaged, but little further advance could be made.

3. A detachment of Hussars was ordered on the 24th to Jeni-Saghra, which was found to be occupied by the Turks.

As a general result of the above operations the railway Jamboli-Tirnova-Philippopolis had been cut in two places, while it was established that Jeni-Saghra was occupied, and that a large Turkish concentration was taking place between Karabunar and Tirnova.

Partial concentration at Eski-Saghra.

On the 24th July a Hussar Regiment and the Bulgarians were ordered from Kazanlik to Eski-Saghra, and, on the 25th, Prince Nicolas Leuchtenberg was placed in command of the force now assembled there—6 battalions, 15 squadrons, and 14 guns.

From the 25th to the 28th July several slight Cavalry affairs took place in the directions of Haskioi, Karabunar, and Jeni-Saghra. An attempt to cut the telegraph line at Haskioi beyond the Maritza completely failed. It was evident that the Turks were rapidly gaining in strength. Gourko determined to take Jeni-Saghra, threaten the right flank of Suleiman's force, break up the railway as much as possible, and endeavour to hold the line Eski-Saghra-Jeni-Saghra (about 18 miles), a two days' march from the Balkan passes.

Turkish movements.

The precise disposition and strength of the Turks at this time cannot be stated. Their forces divide into two main groups: Raouf Pasha, with about 15,000 men between Slivno, Jamboli, and Jeni-Saghra, and Suleiman's new army near Gidzul, Karabunar, and Tirnova. Detachments of the former group had been broken up by the Russians during the first period of their operations, and Raouf appears never to have been able to concentrate a force sufficient to arrest Gourko's movements. The first detachment of Suleiman's Army disembarked at the mouth of the Maritza on the 19th July, and in about three days 25,000 men were forwarded by rail to Adrianople and sent on thence to Tirnova. About the 26th, a force of 49 battalions fresh from the Montenegrin War, with 2,000 Circassian Cavalry, was concentrated between Tirnova and Karabunar. Shortly afterwards Raouf was recalled on account of difficulties with Suleiman.

It is doubtful whether the Russians were fully aware of the distinct grouping of the two Turkish forces opposed to them. Gourko, with the 4th Rifle Brigade and the rest of the Cavalry, left Kazanlik for Jeni-Saghra on the 27th July, ordering the force at Hainkioi as well as Leuchtenberg's command to meet him there. The two former columns effected a junction North of Jeni-Saghra on the morning of the 30th; but the third had not arrived, nor was any information as to its movements obtainable.

Movements
on Jeni-
Saghra.

In accordance with Gourko's orders, Leuchtenberg, with the greater portion of his command, left Eski-Saghra on the 29th, previously despatching a Cavalry advanced guard towards Jeni-Saghra and a flanking detachment towards Azabli (Asaplı). The advanced guard could not get beyond the Karaula*, where it was opposed by a force of 4 to 6 battalions with 6 to 8 guns and some Circassian Cavalry, probably moving from Jeni-Saghra to effect a junction with Suleiman's force. The other detachment fell in with a considerable force of all arms, and succeeded only in making its way back to Eski-Saghra with some loss. By 2 P.M. the mass of Leuchtenberg's troops arrived near the Karaula, and an engagement ensued lasting till nightfall. Towards evening Leuchtenberg learned that the Turks had occupied Arabadzikioi (7½ miles South-East of Eski-Saghra) in force—the advanced guard of a strong movement on Eski-Saghra.

The general situation on the morning of the 30th is extremely interesting. On the Russian left, Gourko, with the 4th Rifle Brigade and the 1st Brigade, 9th Division (10 battalions), 5 sotnias of Cossacks, and about 22 guns, was preparing to attack Jeni-Saghra from the North. Near Dalboka, Leuchtenberg, with 4 battalions of Bulgarians, 18 to 20 squadrons, and about 8 guns, was opposed by a Turkish force which had already completely checked his advance, and had been subsequently reinforced, probably from Rachimahale station. At Eski-Saghra there remained 2 battalions of Bulgarians, 4 to 6 squadrons, and 2 guns, expecting an attack in great force from Arabadzikioi.

Situation of
30th July.

On the 30th, Gourko attacked and took Jeni-Saghra, the Turks partly retreating towards Djouranli. Gourko pushed on to effect a junction with Leuchtenberg, and arrived near Karabunar† in the evening, his troops being much fatigued. On the same day Leuchtenberg was engaged between Dalboka and the Karaula and sent back the Bulgarians to reinforce the small detachment at Eski-Saghra, hoping to

* 'Karaula' appears to be the term for a post station.

† This Karabunar lies on the Jeni-Saghra-Eski-Saghra road, and must not be confounded with the other village of the same name, which lies on the railway about 8 miles North of Tirnova.

hold his ground with the Cavalry till Gourko arrived. The Turks towards evening succeeded in pressing back Leuchtenberg's troops and effected a junction with a portion of Suleiman's force near Djouranli. Leuchtenberg bivouacked for the night of the 30th near Hirsta (Kristani).

On the 31st, Eski-Saghra was attacked by the Turks in great force, and in the afternoon the Bulgarians, who had suffered heavy loss, abandoned the place and retreated on Kazanlik. On the same day Gourko was engaged with the Turks near Djouranli, and in the afternoon a junction with Leuchtenberg's force was effected.

Retreat to
the Balkans.

Though victorious at Djouranli, Gourko was now in the presence of Suleiman's whole army, the disastrous second battle of Plevna had rendered it impossible to reinforce him, and further operations could not be undertaken. On the evening of the 31st the whole force moved to Dalboka and a general retreat to Hainkioi began on the 1st August. By the 6th the whole force, except some small Cavalry detachments, had retired into or across the Balkans. The 'Advanced Guard' was broken up, and Gourko returned to Russia to take command of the 2nd Cavalry Division of the Guard, then under orders for Bulgaria.

In little more than three weeks—from the 12th July to the 6th August—this force had successfully turned the Schipka position; it had explored a considerable area, cut the railway in two places, and carried temporary panic to Constantinople. It had moreover discovered the arrival and hindered the concentration of a new Turkish Army. The Cavalry had been well handled and had shown considerable efficiency, and it is noteworthy that Dragoons, Hussars, and Cossacks were all employed in dismounted service against the Turkish Infantry. The whole operation was, however, in no sense a mere Cavalry raid, but rather the preparatory movement of a strong advanced guard, which, had two more Army Corps been available, might probably have been carried on to Adrianople. Whether with the then Russian strength in Bulgaria this could have been effected, even had Osman adopted another course than that which has rendered him so famous, must remain very doubtful.

Losses of
Advanced
Guard.

The total losses of the Advanced Guard have been variously stated, but probably exceeded 1,600. The horses suffered very severely from overwork, and for some time the Cavalry was unfit for service.

TURKISH ATTACKS ON THE SCHIPKA POSITION.

For a week Suleiman gave no sign. On the 13th August a weak Turkish reconnaissance by the Kerditsa (Ferdii) Pass penetrated nearly to Elena without meeting with any resistance. On the 16th the Russians defending the Hainkioi Pass were attacked. On the 18th the bulk of Suleiman's force moved to the West, reaching Kazanlik on the 19th. After nineteen days, therefore, the Turks were about a two days' march from their position on the 31st July. On the 19th August information was received at Tirnova by General Radetski, commanding VIIIth Corps, that a strong Turkish force had occupied Bebrova and threatened Elena, and also that the enemy had shown in force near Kazanlik. It seemed highly probable that Suleiman would attempt to turn the Schipka position, and that the force near Kazanlik was only intended for a demonstration. Radetski hurried off in the direction of Elena with the 4th Rifle Brigade, despatching one Regiment of the 9th Division to Schipka. At Slataritza, on the evening of the 20th, he received information that the Schipka position was threatened by a large force. By noon on the 21st it was known at Tirnova that a great attack on the Schipka had begun. Fresh dispositions were made, and the 4th Rifle Brigade, with the 14th Division, and 3 batteries, were ordered to Schipka.

Suleiman
Pasha's
offensive.

The Russian strength in the Schipka position up to 11.30 A.M. on the 21st was 1 Regiment of the 9th Division and 5 battalions of Bulgarians: reinforced at noon on that day by a second Regiment of the same Division, it amounted to 11 battalions with 27 to 30 guns.

Russian
strength in
Schipka
position.

On the 21st, Suleiman directed successive frontal attacks against the main Russian position on 'Mount St. Nicolas' with an immensely superior force. During the night repeated attacks followed on the 'steel battery' on the eastern side.

Attacks on
Schipka
position
from 21st
to 26th
August.

By the morning of the 22nd the Turks had strongly entrenched themselves in front of the position, and batteries for 20 guns had been constructed. A heavy Artillery and Infantry fire was kept up on the whole front, to which the Russians could only reply feebly, having to spare ammunition. In the afternoon the Turks endeavoured to move round both flanks of the position, and to threaten the Gabrova road: during the night they entrenched themselves on both flanks of the Russian position, and Infantry fire was carried on.

On the 23rd, the Russians were attacked in front and both flanks, the assault being prepared by the fire of 38 guns. The attacking

force on their right flank nearly succeeded in reaching the Gabrova road. By noon the last reserves were engaged, and at 4 p.m. two companies were withdrawn from the left to reinforce the right. The ammunition was almost exhausted, the troops were worn out with three days of nearly continuous fighting, and the situation appeared to be hopeless. Suleiman telegraphed to Constantinople that the position was taken. Shortly after 5 p.m., however, three companies of the 4th Rifle Brigade mounted on Cossack horses arrived, and became at once engaged on the Russian right. The position was saved, and by 8 p.m. the fighting ceased. Later, the rest of the Brigade came up, and on the 24th at 5 a.m. General Radetski, with the vanguard of the 14th Division, arrived.

Early on the 24th a fresh attack on Mount St. Nicolas took place, and, later, Radetski endeavoured to drive back the Turkish left with a very inadequate force: little or no advantage was obtained on either side.

On the 25th the Russians again took the offensive, and some severe fighting took place on the Turkish left.

On the 26th Suleiman abandoned the offensive, and a complete pause, broken only by desultory Infantry and Artillery fire, occurred at the Schipka position.

Losses.

The Russian losses from the 21st to the 26th August are given as 100 officers and 3,500 men; those of the Turks doubtless exceeded 10,000.

The defence had been gallant in the extreme, while Suleiman's troops had developed admirable fighting qualities; but very little manœuvring skill was displayed on either side. The whole idea of a front attack on the position was utterly wrong. After Gourko's successful exploit, the possibility of turning the position must surely have occurred to Suleiman, and the reconnaissance of the 13th had shown one route at least by which the attempt might have been made. But it is difficult to believe that the course adopted ought not to have succeeded. The natural advantages of the position would not appear to have compensated for the overwhelming numerical superiority available for the attack. It seems that it was possible, for Infantry at least, to move over the hills all round the position without difficulty, and this fact must be taken into full consideration in estimating the difficulties of the defence. Suleiman must have had not less than 45,000 men; and had he thrown sufficient strength into either of the flank attacks, the position would probably have fallen before the arrival of the reinforcements. The Russians on their side had neglected to make use of the delay of the Turks, to supplement the defences of the place to the utmost, trusting doubtless to the improbability that Suleiman would make

a front attack, in preference to an advance on Tirnova by way of Elena, or a junction with the Osman-Bazaar force, *vid* Slivno. There was, moreover, here as elsewhere, a great deficiency of entrenching tools, and there were at the time no Sappers with the force.

During the latter part of August the Russians were still anxious for the safety of the position. The direct attacks had all been repulsed, but the Turks, utilising the many mountain paths, could gain points commanding the Gabrova road, and already the Russian garrison had been in difficulties as to their food and water supply. The possibility of an evacuation was taken into consideration, but on the 27th August General Nepochoitschitski, Chief of the Staff to the Grand Duke, visited the position and reported in favour of a continued defence. On the 28th, one Brigade each of the 2nd and 11th Divisions was ordered from Selvi to Gabrova to be ready for any emergency. The force available for the defence was now as follows :—

Schipka position	25 battalions.	Russian strength in Schipka position at end of August.
Travna Pass	1 „	
Selensderno	4 „	
Gabrova (Reserves)	9 „	
<hr/>		
Total	39 „	
<hr/>		

Two companies of Sappers were also employed in throwing up defensive works, and the artificial strength of the position was greatly increased. The Turks meanwhile limited themselves to small reconnaissances in the direction of Gabrova by way of Selensderno, Bredek, and Travna.

Thus passed the most critical period of the Russian campaign—the anxious defensive in front of Plevna before the arrival of reinforcements. The capture of Lovtcha on the 3rd September and the great defeat before Plevna on the 11th September followed, and meanwhile the Czarevitch's Army was slowly pressed back towards the Jantra.

On the 13th September a bombardment of the Mount St. Nicolas position by 4 heavy mortars was begun, and on the night of the 16th a desperate attempt was made to storm this point. The Russians were surprised and the assault at first succeeded, but, according to Suleiman's report, the other Turkish movements did not take place at the appointed time, so that the storming party was not supported. In the course of the 17th the Russians retook all the lost ground. The Russian loss was 31 officers and about 1,000 men, that of the Turks probably not less than 3,000. After this the Turks made no further

Suleiman's second attack.

real efforts. On the 9th January, 1878, their position was doubly turned by two Russian columns under Skobelev and Mirski, with the result of the surrender of the whole force.

OPERATIONS ON THE LOM—MEHEMET ALI.

The Russians from the first appear to have anticipated the greatest danger on their left flank. The largest Turkish force was known to be in the East, and it was based on the strong fortresses of the Quadrilateral, while troops and stores of all kinds could be easily transported by sea from Constantinople to Varna and thence by railway to Schumla and Rustchuk. To defend the left flank, the whole XIIth and XIIIth Corps under the Czarevitch had been detailed, the first to mask Rustchuk, the second to hold in check the Turkish force at Schumla. The XIth Corps, a Brigade of which had been detached to Plevna, did not form an integral part of the Czarevitch's Army, but was ordered to remain at Cesarevo and echeloned on the Cesarevo-Tirnova road, to prevent an advance on Tirnova by way of Osman-Bazaar and to reinforce the right flank of the XIIIth Corps if necessary. The country East of the Jantra is very undulating, and large tracts are covered with wood and dense oak scrub. There are hardly any roads, and the deep and rocky ravines in which some of the affluents of the Lom flow render communication very difficult. The country generally, and especially towards the Balkans, is very unfavourable to military operations.

Russian
advance to
the Lom.

On the 3rd July a Turkish force belonging to the Rustchuk command had abandoned Biela and the important Jantra bridge there. By the 11th, after some slight Cavalry skirmishes, the Jantra valley was occupied by Cavalry of the XIIth Corps, the Infantry moving slowly after. On the 18th July the Czarevitch crossed the Jantra, and on the 21st a Cossack reconnaissance, under the Grand Duke Vladimir, advancing by way of Buzin, succeeded in cutting the Schumla-Rustchuk railway and telegraph line. A second reconnaissance was simultaneously pressed up to the advanced posts of Rustchuk. The Czarevitch proceeded with extreme caution and deliberation. It was opposed to the Russian plan to commit the force to any serious operation, but the extremely unprepared state of the Turks at the time renders it probable that great results might have been obtained by a vigorous offensive. The apparent purposelessness of the Czarevitch's movements serves to illustrate the drawbacks of the want of a

definite objective. By the 15th August, the two Corps, numbering about 40,000 Infantry, 5,000 Cavalry, and 200 guns, were scattered over a front of nearly fifty miles; the left flank resting on the Danube near Pyrgos, and the right at Ayazlar, opposite Eski-Djumaa, with outposts up to the line of the White Lom.

Mehemet Ali, the new commander in Bulgaria, reached Schumla on the 21st July and at once set about a complete reorganisation of his scattered command. The bulk of the troops were moved from Schumla and distributed from Rasgrad to Eski-Djumaa. These places were strengthened with earthworks, particularly the former, an important strategical centre on the Varna-Rustchuk railway and the junction of roads to Rustchuk, Eski-Djumaa, Osman-Bazaar, Schumla, and Turtukai. The Turkish distribution was roughly as follows:—

Mehemet
Ali's dis-
positions.

Eski-Djumaa	13 battalions.
Schumla	10 „
Rustchuk	20 „
Osman-Bazaar	7 „
Rasgrad	46 „
Silistria	17 „
Tatar Oglou Bazardjik . . .	13 „
Varna	10 „
Total	136 „

The battalions were not all up to full strength; but Mehemet Ali, on the arrival of the Egyptian contingent, must have had a field force, exclusive of the fortress garrisons, of 55,000–60,000 men, with several regular Cavalry Regiments and 2,000–3,000 Circassian irregulars. The number of guns is very variously given, but was probably little over 100.*

On the 17th August Mehemet Ali inspected the Eski-Djumaa force, and on the 20th that at Rasgrad, returning to Schumla on the 22nd, where Prince Hassan arrived on the 23rd, having despatched the greater part of his contingent from Varna to Eski-Djumaa. Prince Hassan subsequently took command of the Eski-Djumaa force, Achmet Eyoub Pasha retaining that of Rasgrad.

Mehemet Ali's plan was that Suleiman should leave 45 battalions to

Turkish
plan of
operations.

* The precise number of field guns at this period cannot be accurately stated, but there is no doubt that the Turks were relatively very weak in Artillery. Later the deficiency in this arm must have been made good, since Baker in his statement of the strength of the Turkish Army of the East in October (p. 66) gives the number of field guns as 261.

watch the Schipka position and should cross the Slivno Pass to Osman-Bazaar with the rest of his force, the combined armies to push forward between Biela and Tirnova. Suleiman refused his co-operation, and was apparently supported in his refusal at Constantinople. Meanwhile Mehemet Ali determined on a gradual advance of his whole force.

On the 22nd August a Russian detachment belonging to the XIIIth Corps, advancing from the direction of Popkeui, was repulsed near Sarnasouflar (where the advanced troops of the Eski-Djumaa force had entrenched themselves) and retired on Haidarkeni and Ayazlar. The Sarnasouflar force was strengthened, and on the 23rd the Russians were attacked by 12 battalions under Sahli Pasha and driven out of Ayazlar, retiring on Popkeui. For a week the Russians were allowed to rest at Popkeui and Sultankeui, while at Karahassankeui, eight miles further North and near Kacilievo, they still held posts on the right bank of the Black Lom.

Turkish
advance.

Mehemet Ali now ordered a general advance of the Rasgrad force on Karahassankeui and a simultaneous attack by the Sarnasouflar force on Popkeui. On the 30th August the Russians, greatly outnumbered, were driven out of Karahassankeui after resisting all day, and fell back across the Lom, the Turks crossing the river shortly afterwards near Haidarkeni. In the following days the Russians retreated towards the Baniska Lom to Orsikova, in the direction of Kopritza. On the 31st Popkeui was found to be abandoned.

On the 1st September the left of the Czarevitch's Army was occupied by a reconnaissance from Rustchuk under Achmet Kaiserli, who had replaced Eshref Pasha as commandant of the fortress. This reconnaissance was followed up on the 4th by an attack which resulted in the Russian left being slightly pressed back.

Near Kacilievo, on the right bank of the Black Lom, there remained a Brigade of the XIIth Corps, and a further detachment of the same Corps occupied a position near Ablava, fronting South-East towards the Turkish force which had taken Karahassankeui and subsequently occupied Gagova. To drive the Russians out of Kacilievo, Mehemet Ali now ordered two Divisions of the Rasgrad force to Solenik and one Brigade to Nissova. A Brigade of the Karahassankeui force was ordered at the same time to Orgartschin. These troops were in position on the 4th September, and on the 5th the Russians were attacked and defeated near Kacilievo, falling back across the river towards Orendjik. In the afternoon the position near Ablava was attacked by the Turks from Orgartschin, acting without orders from Mehemet Ali. The attack was repulsed; but the Russians, threatened in front and on both flanks, were compelled to abandon the whole position

and to fall back to the Baniska Lom. The Russian loss in the affair of the 5th is given as 56 officers and 1,283 men.

By the actions at Ayazlar, Karahassankeni, and Kacilievo, Mehemet Ali had succeeded in completely clearing the right bank of the Black Lom of the Russians. By the 7th September the whole XIIIth Corps was in retreat to the Baniska Lom. The Russian disposition had now, however, assumed a more compact form. The left flank of the XIIth Corps entrenched itself at Metschka, South-West of Pyrgos, the right at Trestenik on the Rustchuk-Biela road, with advanced posts at Pyrgos and Pepelen. The left of the XIIIth Corps rested near Balabanlar and the right at Kopritza (8 miles South-East of Biela), with advanced posts at Jenikoi, Orsikova, and Voditzka. To close the interval between the right flank of the XIIIth Corps at Kopritza and the XIth Corps at Cesarevo, the 26th Division, fresh from Russia, was sent to Verboka and a Brigade from Gabrova to Tchairkeui, which was entrenched. Contact between Cesarevo and Tchairkeui was maintained by the 11th Cavalry Division. Several bridges over the Jantra were constructed in view of the possibility of a further retreat.

Retreat of
Russians.

The Turks had attempted no pursuit of the XIIIth Corps, and Baker states that for two days the touch was altogether lost. Rustchuk was heavily bombarded on the 7th, 8th, and 11th September. The preparations for the third attack on Plevna were in progress, and Mehemet Ali was pressed from Constantinople to advance at once to the Jantra. His plan was to follow up the XIIIth Corps, advancing the Rasgrad and Sarnasouflar forces to the Baniska Lom, the right to rest at Sinankeui, the left on a fordable branch of the Jantra, touching a Turkish force at Jaila: the Russian XIIth Corps to be occupied by demonstrations from Rustchuk. This plan was communicated to Suleiman, whose co-operation was again strongly urged.

Turkish
advance to
Baniska
Lom.

The advance began on the 13th September, and a skirmish occurred at Voditzka with a Russian advanced post, which retired on Tchairkeui. On the 15th skirmishes occurred at Sinankeui and near Orsikova. By the 18th a partial Turkish concentration was effected on the right bank of the Baniska Lom, near Tcherkovna and in front of Verboka. Till the 21st the time was passed in councils of war and in reconnoitring the Russian position.

On the 21st the attack on the Russian position in front of Tchairkeui took place, and was utterly mismanaged by the Turks, who, out of 48 available battalions, did not succeed in bringing more than 8 into action. To quote General Baker, 'it really required a study on the part of the Turkish Staff to avoid a successful result.' The study was

Battle of
Tcherkovna.

completely successful. The turning of the Russian right, which was entrusted to the Egyptians, came to nothing; the weak attack on their left was easily repulsed. In the centre alone the troops succeeded in retaining a position 300 yards from the Russian trenches till nightfall. The Russian loss was under 500, that of the Turks about 1,600. For continuing the attack next day 56 fresh battalions were available (including Fuad Pasha's Division, which was at Erendjik, about 10 miles North), but indecision supervened. It became known that Russian reinforcements had arrived at Biela, and on the 24th the whole Turkish army began to retire in very considerable disorder* on Sarnasouflar.

On the 2nd October Mehemet Ali was recalled, and posted shortly afterwards to the command of the Sofia force, while Suleiman was appointed in his stead: Achmet Eyoub was at the same time replaced by Fazli Pasha. Mehemet's operations had resulted in complete failure, for which however he should not be altogether held accountable. As a foreigner he may have been regarded with suspicion, but in any case he was never able to rely on the loyalty of his subordinates, and his generals appear to have sunk patriotism in their personal jealousies. The incapacity of the Staff was extreme, and this, with the deficiency of transport, explains the lameness of the whole operation and the seemingly purposeless delays. It must be doubted, however, whether Mehemet Ali possessed sufficient force of character to make a General. Self-reliance and the power of prompt decision are essential qualities in a commander, and the perpetual councils of war held at Mehemet Ali's Head-Quarters seem to argue the want of both.

SULEIMAN PASHA'S OPERATIONS.

Suleiman
Pasha's dis-
positions.

Immediately on his arrival Suleiman set about a redistribution of his troops, massing the greater number at Rasgrad with strong wings at Rustchuk and Osman-Bazaar. The Turkish Army of the East was much scattered, but was still a very formidable force.† Suleiman was superior in Infantry to the Czarevitch by at least 25,000 men. A long pause ensued, however, broken only by small engagements brought about by reconnaissances from the Russian left. By the end of October it was recognised on both sides that the fall of Plevna was only a matter

* 'War in Bulgaria,' Chap. XII.

† General Baker gives the following as the strength in October of the Turkish Army in the East:—

Infantry, 105,238; Cavalry, 5,755; Field Guns, 261. The disposition of this force is described in Appendix V.

of time, and that Osman must either attempt to break out, or be relieved. Suleiman proposed to advance from Osman-Bazaar on Elena and effect a junction with a part of the Schipka force, while Mehemet Ali, leaving Chakir Pasha at Babakonak, should move all the available troops of the Sofia force to the East, and cross the Trojan Pass to Lovtcha. There was no possibility, however, of the execution of such a combined movement. The Turks no longer possessed a numerical superiority in Bulgaria. The Sofia force was only able to act on the defensive, endeavouring to hold the Western Balkans against Gourko's advance. Moreover, the original dispersion of the Czarevitch's Army was now far less marked, and strong entrenched positions had been formed from Metschka to the confluence of the Baniska and Black Loms.

On the 18th November a series of reconnaissances was begun by the Turks, and on the 19th the Russian outposts near Pyrgos were driven in. On the 26th Suleiman threw his right wing against the Russian left near Metschka and Trestenik. The Turks were repulsed and fell back across the Lom, losing about 1,200 men. The Russian loss is given as 28 officers and 728 men. On the same day Turkish demonstrations were made in front of Kacilievo and Osman-Bazaar.

Commence-
ment of
operations.

On the 1st December, Suleiman reached Osman-Bazaar, and on the 4th the Turks attacked a fortified position not far from Elena held by 2 Regiments. The Russians were surprised and crushed by overwhelming forces; they were completely routed, retreating partly to Slataritzza and partly to Jakovitzi, losing nearly 1,900 men, 11 guns, and 300 prisoners. On the 5th the Russians were attacked at Slataritzza and the place was taken. On the same day Suleiman is stated to have received information that Mehemet Ali could not move, having to defend the Babakonak Pass against Gourko. Ordering his generals to hold fast and entrench their positions near Cesarevo, Slataritzza, and Elena, Suleiman determined to attack the Czarevitch. The concentration was delayed by bad weather, and the great attack did not take place till the 12th, two days after the fall of Plevna. On that day two strong Turkish columns advanced from Rustchuk and Kadikeni, the right being directed on Metschka, the left on the interval between Metschka and Trestenik. The Turks were repulsed and fell back across the Lom. The Russian loss is stated to have been 24 officers, 775 men; that of the Turks was probably much greater.

Thus ended the Lom campaign, which had been thoroughly mismanaged by the Turks. With a considerable army based on strong fortresses, they had never been able to break through what was for a time only a thin investing line. The natural difficulties of the country and the want of communications must be taken into full account; but

General
remarks.

the failure cannot thus be entirely explained. Properly combined movements had proved uncertain, or impracticable from a want of due subordination among the superior officers; and even when large forces had been successfully concentrated, the Staff had proved unable to handle them.

On the other hand, the Czarevitch's army, though it performed no brilliant exploits, had completely fulfilled the task allotted to it, without the diversion of troops from other parts of the theatre of war. If, however, it was never intended that Rustchuk should be besieged, nor that any serious operation should be undertaken, the utility of the advance up to and beyond the line of the Black Lom may perhaps be questioned. By this advance the dispersion became so great that a retreat was inevitable, as soon as ever the Turks could take the offensive. No particular advantage was gained by the movement, and it rendered a temporary co-operation of a portion of the force with the other armies altogether impossible. The Jantra offered an excellent natural line of defence, and one which might easily have been rendered extremely strong. Considering the great numerical inferiority under which the Russians at first laboured, it becomes a question whether it would not have been wiser to have held either the Jantra line or that of Metschka-Trestenik-Tchairkeui (on which they subsequently fell back), until it was decided that the Czarevitch should enter upon some real operations. The leisurely advance up to and beyond the Black Lom, followed by the somewhat undignified, but inevitable, retreat directly the Turks chose to take the offensive, would thus have been spared.

It is noteworthy that, as events proved, it would have been perfectly safe to reinforce the Plevna Army before the battle of July 30th by at least a Division of the Czarevitch's force, and had this been done Plevna would, in all probability, have fallen on that day. By such a movement, rapidly executed, the Russians might have neutralised their numerical inferiority. There is no reason to suppose, however, that the Russian Staff realised the inadequacy of the force then assembled before Plevna, while there was a certain amount of stiffness and want of elasticity in their earlier military arrangements which would probably have prevented the adoption of such a measure.

CHAPTER V.

OPERATIONS IN AUGUST—TURKISH SORTIE—CAPTURE OF LOVITCHA.

THE news of the Second Battle of Plevna created the greatest astonishment, and violent extremes of opinion found expression. On the one hand, this very real Turkish success was magnified beyond all due proportion, and the cardinal fact that an inferior force had attacked a superior force in a position naturally and artificially strong, was very generally overlooked. On the other hand there was a tendency to minimise the Russian defeat and to underestimate its probable results. As a matter of fact, however, this second Turkish victory, together with Suleiman's arrival South of the Balkans and Mehemet Ali's activity on the Lom, changed the whole aspect of the campaign. The Russians had for a time to abandon all offensive operations, and during the greater part of August their position was virtually a painfully anxious defensive. Their forces were widely separated; they were outnumbered at all points, and nowhere could they hope to obtain any decided advantage. The error of commencing an offensive campaign with inadequate forces was at last sufficiently evident, and the Czar's presence at the seat of war was perhaps for the moment advantageous, since he could personally convince himself of the reality of the emergency.

The Russian situation.

RUSSIAN REINFORCEMENTS.

Reinforcements were at once sent for, but were not immediately available. The 2nd Infantry Division (Lieut.-General Prince Imertinski) and the 3rd Infantry Division (Lieut.-General Karzoff) had been mobilised about the 19th April, the 24th Division (Lieut.-General Delingshausen) and the 26th Division (Lieut.-General Baumgarten) about the 22nd April. These four Divisions were ordered to the Danube at once. On the 2nd of August the Czar signed an order for the mobilisation of the Guard Corps, and later, about the middle of the month, for the mobilisation of the 2nd and 3rd Divisions Grenadier Corps.*

Russian reinforcements.

* Only the troops first available and destined to be employed before Plevna are here enumerated. A table detailing the full strength of the reinforcements, with their complement of Cavalry and Artillery, is given in Appendix VI. It

Calling
of the
Militia.

On the 3rd August the 1st Class* of the Militia was called out by Ukase. This class gave a contingent of untrained men, which, taking into account the exemption of Bessarabia, numbered about 185,000. These militiamen took their places at the depôts for training at once, becoming available as Ersatz troops when sufficiently drilled.

A part of the reservists, called up on the first mobilisation of November 1876, had been formed into reserve battalions, one per Regiment. The 48 reserve battalions, corresponding to the 12 Infantry Divisions then mobilised, were now formed into 3 Reserve Divisions numbered 42, 43, and 44, and these Divisions became available to relieve the regular troops doing duty at etappen stations in Russia and Roumania.

The 2nd and 3rd Divisions reached the Danube towards the end of August, the 26th Division in September, the Guard Corps and 24th Division in October, and the Grenadier Corps late in the same month. Ersatz troops to replace the losses of July began to arrive about the middle of August, and were forwarded in batches to those Regiments which were below strength. Though the preparations were hurried on, and the new mobilisations were carried out with very fair rapidity, the distances to be traversed were so great, and the communications so difficult, that the greater part of the reinforcements could not be expected before the middle or end of September. A complete pause took place, therefore, before Plevna.

Meanwhile the rest of the IVth Corps (the 16th Infantry and 4th Cavalry Divisions) were brought over to the right bank of the Danube as quickly as possible, and pushed on to Plevna. The 3rd Rifle Brigade arrived a little later, reaching Gorny-Studen on the 17th August. Some of the siege guns conveyed to the Danube for the siege of Rustchuk were ordered up to Plevna, as the confidence of the troops in their Field Artillery had been greatly shaken.

Employ-
ment of the
Roumanian
Army.

Negotiations were also opened for the employment in 1st Line of the Roumanian Army. The Roumanian 4th Division, a portion of

appears that three Infantry Divisions each were originally allotted to the Ist and IIInd Corps, formed in March (*see* p. 8), and that the 24th Division belonged to the Ist and the 26th Division to the IIInd Corps. These Divisions were now nominally formed into the XVIth Corps, and the 2nd and 3rd Divisions into the XVth Corps, but they seem to have been handled as independent Divisions. The XVIIth Corps, formed of the 23rd Infantry Division and the 42nd Division (Reserves), and the XVIIIth Corps, formed of the 43rd and 44th Division (Reserves), are also spoken of, but it seems probable that these Corps, as Corps, existed only in name. Again, the Grenadier Corps is sometimes called the Vth Corps. The Russians appear never to have been able to work the Army Corps system.

* The first class comprised the men of the four junior years of age (*see* p. 2).

which had occupied Nicopolis in July, moved up to Rybina, and, building a bridge there, established itself *à cheval* of the Vid. The negotiations were delicate and protracted, and the arrogance of the Russian Staff engendered some ill-feeling between the two armies, which, however, passed away on a closer acquaintance, and as soon as the Roumanians had proved their unexpected fighting power. On the 24th August a portion of the 3rd Roumanian Division crossed the Danube on pontoons at Korabia, 9 miles above Nicopolis. A bridge was begun on the 25th at Magura, a little lower down, and completed on the 27th; the rest of the 3rd Division crossed by the 28th, followed shortly afterwards by the 2nd Division: both divisions subsequently moved up to the North of Plevna. At a Council of War held at Gorny-Studen, on the 29th, the final arrangements were made, and Prince Charles of Roumania was appointed to the command of the Russian Army of the West, with General Zotoff (previously commanding IVth Corps) as chief of the Staff. Pending this arrangement, Zotoff had taken command of the force before Plevna, and General Kriloff that of the IVth Corps.

After the great defeat of the 30th July, the Russians took up a post of observation *à cheval* of the Plevna-Bulgareni high-road from Trestenik to Poradim. Their outpost line (about $18\frac{1}{2}$ miles long) roughly followed a semicircle distant 6 miles from Plevna, touching the Vid a little above Rybina, and closing on Bogot. About 5 miles in front of the left flank of the Trestenik-Poradim line, an advanced position was formed, extending from Sgalivitze to Pelischat. Here the Russians worked hard at entrenchments, and the position was fairly well adapted for defence. North-West of the village of Sgalivitze there is a rounded hill commanding the Grivitza road. This hill was crowned by a strong redoubt, flanked by numerous trenches. Between the hill and the village there is a little valley, and beyond the village a line of natural rampart extending for two miles, and very steep in parts. Four batteries were constructed on this ridge, which commanded the plain below, and in front of the batteries Infantry trenches were formed whose parapets were concealed by branches of trees. The position was further naturally strengthened by several pools and some marshy ground at the foot of the ridge. Towards the South the slopes become less steep, but were covered with thick oak scrub, which offered a considerable obstacle to an attack. Further South, and near Pelischat, there is another hill, which was crowned by Russian batteries. Still further to the South the ground slopes gently towards Bogot. The space for the action of the Russian batteries at Pelischat and Sgalivitze was rather limited, as in front there lay

Russian
disposition.

some low undulating hills, which enabled an advance from Plevna to be carried out unseen to within 1,000 or 1,200 yards, and consequently diminished the defensive advantages of the position. In front of the left of the position and on these hills a small lunette was constructed as an advanced position, garrisoned by 2 companies with 2 guns.*

Reserves of the IXth Corps, partially entrenched, were massed near Trestenik, 3 miles North of the Plevna-Bulgareni road. These Reserves were under the command of Krudener, whose Head-Quarters were at Karagatch. Reserves of the IVth Corps, also entrenched, were massed near Poradim, the Head-Quarters of Zotoff. An entrenched position was also formed about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Selvi, across the Selvi-Lovtcha road, as a protection against an advance from Lovtcha on Gabrova. Selvi was held by troops of the VIIIth Corps, subsequently relieved on the arrival of the first reinforcements towards the end of August.

Estimate of
Russian
strength
before
Plevna.

The Russian strength in front of Plevna before the arrival of the reinforcements was little over 40,000, with about 225 guns. Allowing 40,000 for the original strength of the 4 Infantry Divisions of the IVth and IXth Corps, adding the 3rd Rifle Brigade (about 3,500) and deducting 10,000 for the losses during July, which had not been yet made good, there remains a total of not more than 33,500 Infantry.† The Cavalry strength (2 Divisions and the unattached Cossacks) may be taken at about 6,500. To the total strength (40,000) above given may be added the 4th Roumanian Division (10,000); but, on the other hand, a force of about 5,000 was detailed early in August for operations against Lovtcha, and remained detached till the capture of the latter place.

Turkish
strength in
Plevna and
Lovtcha.

The Turkish combatant strength in Plevna was probably about 45,000, with 2,500 cavalry and 60-80 guns.‡ Lovtcha was held with a force estimated in Skobeleff's reconnaissance at 15,000, with 25 guns, but this strength was considerably reduced before the Russian attack.

The situa-
tion in
August.

Osman Pasha, by his well-conceived movement on Plevna and his prompt appreciation of the capabilities of the position, had not merely

* Unfortunately there is no available map which shows the ground near Sgalivitze and Pelischat in full detail. The above description can, however, be fairly well followed on the Austrian map.

† The detached Cavalry and Infantry Brigades of the XIth Corps had been sent to Selvi; the latter was moved up to Gabrova on the 28th August, and both subsequently rejoined their Corps in front of Osman-Bazaar.

‡ Higher estimates of the Turkish strength, up to 60,000, have been given, but there is reason to believe that the above is nearly correct.

caused the Russians a very heavy numerical loss, but he had completely disconcerted their plans and won time for combined action on the part of the Turkish Generals. After the second battle of Plevna the initiative had passed away from the Russians and rested with the Turks. After this battle, however, the real strategic importance of the Plevna position to the Turks became somewhat diminished. The course of the war henceforth depended entirely on the power the Turks might possess of prompt offensive action, and the continued resistance of Plevna, though it delayed the end and cost the Russians many thousands of lives, could not possibly avert the catastrophe. When once the Russian reinforcements arrived, the Turkish collapse was only a matter of time. The month of August was in fact the crisis of the war and the great chance of Turkey. That Osman could have effected a successful march to Sistova in the early days of the month is very doubtful. The Russians, in spite of their losses, would have offered a very stubborn resistance, and it would, moreover, have been necessary to retake Nicopolis. To carry out such a movement with the requisite promptitude called for many more qualities in officers and soldiers than were needed for the defence of the Plevna redoubts, and it is probable that Osman did not feel sure that his army was fitted for the task. On the other hand, Osman remaining at Plevna detained a considerable Russian force there, while Mehemet Ali was quite able to occupy the numerically inferior force of the Czarevitch holding the line of the Lom. It was therefore open to Suleiman by a ten days' march to cross the Trojan or the Slivno passes and to bring a new army composed of admirable fighting material to the aid either of Osman or of Mehemet Ali. The Trojan Pass is by no means easy, and the road thence to Plevna passes rather near to the Russian position at Selvi. The Slivno pass, however, presents no difficulties, and the latter plan was strongly urged by Mehemet Ali. General Baker's work amply proves, however, that anything approaching to a combined movement was impossible. The Pashas sank patriotism and even military loyalty in their own personal rivalries. Mehemet Ali was never sure of the co-operation of his own subordinates, and though he descended to entreaties to Suleiman to lend him a hand, it was all in vain. The proposed movement would have given an overwhelming superiority to the Turkish Army of the East, and to meet it the Russians would probably have been forced to let go their hold of the Schipka position. Suleiman, however, seems to have had a single aim—his own individual and separate glorification. He was bent on a front attack on the Schipka position. He seems to have had the art of despatch writing, and he was supported at Constantinople.

In any case the early part of August was a most anxious time for the Russians. They began to use the spade in earnest; the Pelischat-Sgalivitze position grew in strength and the Turks for some days gave no sign. The deficiency in technical troops was rendered apparent by the extremely bad state of the bridges and communications in the occupied portions of Bulgaria. The sanitary arrangements in the Russian camps were of the slightest description, and in consequence the health of the army, hitherto excellent, began to suffer.

RECONNAISSANCE ON LOVTCHA.

Skobelev's
reconnais-
sance.

Pl. V.

Immediately after the battle of the 30th July, in order to gain information and also to keep up the spirits of the troops, Skobelev was ordered to carry out an important reconnaissance on Lovtcha. The latter is the principal village on the Plevna-Gabrova-Schipka route. It is situated mainly on the left bank of the Osma in a bend convex to the East, and is about 22 miles from Plevna. The distance between the advanced Turkish posts at the two places was, however, little over 12 miles. From Lovtcha roads branch through Trojan to Philipopolis and through Mikré to Jablonitza (*see* p. 30). South-East from Lovtcha runs the high-road through Selvi to Gabrova. The distance from Lovtcha to Selvi is about 22 miles. In front of the village (*Pl. V.*) and rising direct from the right bank of the river is a low range of hills running nearly North and South, the highest and most southerly of which was termed the 'Red Hill.' These hills are again fronted by a higher and nearly parallel range crossing the Lovtcha-Selvi road. The valley between the two ranges is partially wooded. Immediately behind the town rises a higher hill.

Lovtcha had been held by the Turks under Adil Pasha since the 27th July. The wisdom of this occupation has been questioned; but the position was one of considerable importance to the Turks. It directly covered the Trojan Pass, by which reinforcements and provisions could be drawn from the South, and it enabled communication to be kept up with Suleiman Pasha, while forming an extended right flank of the main Plevna position. While Lovtcha could be held a strict investment of Plevna was impossible. And, moreover, it was an important post on the Plevna-Gabrova road if an advance on the rear of the Russian Schipka position was in contemplation. On the other hand, Plevna and Lovtcha were rather too far apart to afford each other an efficient mutual support, and the total Turkish force was

barely sufficient for the defence of the two. In any case there seems to have been no proper attempt to maintain communication. Skobelev, on the 30th July, soon found that he had nothing to fear from Lovtcha; the attempted diversion from Plevna on the day of the Lovtcha assault came to nothing, and practically the two positions were independently held. The Russian Cavalry was able during August to pass between them unmolested.

Skobelev left the Head-Quarters of the Commander-in-Chief on the 3rd August. The detachment detailed to him consisted of 4 battalions of Infantry (64th Regiment and 1 battalion, 118th Regiment, IVth Corps), the Caucasian Cossack Brigade, with 1 field and 1 H.A. battery. Concentrating this force on the road half way between Selvi and Lovtcha, he advanced on the 6th, throwing out his Cavalry to the right as far as the Plevna-Lovtcha road. Reaching the easterly range of hills before Lovtcha, the Artillery opened fire, while a portion of the Infantry was pushed forward through the wooded ground lying between the two ranges. The Turkish position on the westerly range was found to be strongly entrenched, and the hill behind the village was crowned with a large redoubt. The fire was kept up till the Turks had disclosed their strength and time was gained to make a sketch of the ground. The position was evidently too strong to be taken without a considerable force, and Skobelev, after camping for the night in an exposed position, in the hope of drawing the Turks from their trenches, withdrew his detachment on the 7th to Kakrina, 10 miles East of Lovtcha, and a little North of the Lovtcha-Selvi road. Leaving the Infantry there, the Cavalry was pushed round the right flank of the Turkish position up to Trojan on the Upper Osma. Trojan was found to be nearly deserted, but information was obtained as to Suleiman's movements South of the Balkans, which tended to prove that there was no immediate danger from the side of the Trojan and Rosalita Passes. About the middle of August very bad weather occurred, and serious operations against Lovtcha were deferred.

Skobelev's
reconnaissance.

On the 16th August the Army Head-Quarters were moved from Biela to Gorny-Studen. On the 20th the first of the reinforcements—the 2nd Infantry Division—reached Gorny-Studen, and moved at once on Selvi, relieving the 14th Division, which was ordered to Gabrova.

On the 21st a Turkish movement from Lovtcha on Selvi took place which at first seemed likely to assume greater proportions. The Turks, however, soon withdrew. On the 22nd a similar movement took place in weaker force. On the 21st also, Suleiman moved to the attack of the Schipka position, and on the 22nd Mehemet Ali attacked

Ayazlar. There is here, perhaps, a trace of something like combined action by the three Turkish Generals, but the Lovtcha movement was quite inconsiderable, and Osman's only serious sortie was reserved for the 31st, by which time Suleiman had half wrecked his army. The coincidence may have been accidental, but from this time up to the Toherkovna battle, on the 21st September, the Army of the Czarevitch was seriously pressed and fell back slowly on the Jantra, while some of the most desperate fighting of the whole campaign occurred round the Schipka position. Besides the movements of the 21st and 22nd, several other unimportant outpost affairs occurred before Plevna during the month. The latter part of August is thus marked by the Turkish offensive.

Russian
general dis-
position on
31st August.

On the morning of the 31st August the general disposition of the Russo-Roumanian army was as follows :—

Right Wing.—Roumanian 4th Division between the Vid and the Plevna-Nicopolis road.

Centre.—IXth Corps between Plevna-Nicopolis and Plevna-Bulgareni roads. Reserves near Trestenik.

Left Wing.—IVth Corps between the Plevna-Bulgareni and Plevna-Lovtcha roads. Reserves near Poradim.

In greater detail the troops holding the advanced Sgalivitze-Pelischat position were disposed thus :—

Outpost Line.—Grivitza, Radichevo, Tutschenitza, Bogot (about 9½ miles), furnished on right by 2 squadrons, 4th Hussars, and on left by 2 squadrons, 4th Lancers, all IVth Corps.

Right Wing.—Entrenched at Sgalivitze.

(a) 2 battalions, 118th (Shuja) Regiment, 2 squadrons, 4th Hussars, 2 field, and 2 H.A. batteries (IVth Corps).

(b) 20th (Galiz) Regiment, 1 battery and 1 Sapper company (IXth Corps).

Left Wing.—Entrenched near Pelischat, 62nd (Sougdal), 63rd (Ugliz) Regiments, 2 squadrons, 4th Lancers, and 4 batteries. About half a mile in front of the position was a lunette garrisoned by 2 companies.

Reserves.—Entrenched near Poradim, 117th (Jaroslaff), 119th (Kolonna), 120th (Serpuchoff) Regiments with 2 batteries.

Besides the above the following troops of the IVth Corps were detached at the time, viz. :—

4th Dragoons watching Osma valley near Karahassan.

61st (Vladimir) Regiment at Karagatch, 8 miles West of Bulgareni, en route from Simnitza.

The position of the 4th Cossacks is doubtful.

In addition, the 64th (Kazan) Regiment, 1 battalion, 118 (Shuja) Regiment (both IVth Corps), 2 Cossack batteries, the Caucasian Cossack Brigade, and the 30th Don Cossacks were near Kakrina and the Selvi-Lovtcha road watching Lovtcha.

TURKISH SORTIE.

At about 6.30 A.M. on the 31st August information was brought from the outpost line between Tutschenitza and Grivitza that a strong Turkish force was moving out of the entrenchments South of the Plevna-Bulgareni road, covered by a body of Cavalry estimated at 2,500. The Russian outposts were pressed back, the Hussars retiring on Sgalivitze, and the Lancers on Pelischat, while the Turkish Cavalry moved on towards the Pelischat position, their advance being well covered by the hills in front. Wheeling outwards the Turkish Cavalry unmasked a long chain of Infantry skirmishers extending along the ridge, and spreading out right and left as if to embrace both flanks of the Pelischat position.

Turkish
sortie from
Plevna.

It was expected, doubtless, that Osman would make straight for Sistova or Nicopolis, and the Russians at first believed the movement on Pelischat to be merely a strong reconnaissance intended to mask a serious attack on the IXth Corps, and the Roumanian 4th Division, or on the 2nd and 3rd Roumanian Divisions, which had just crossed the Danube, and were somewhat *en l'air*. For some time, therefore, no orders were issued. The Turks continued to advance rapidly under a heavy Artillery fire, and by 8 A.M. they seized the lunette in front of Pelischat. The lunette was shelled by 3 batteries, and retaken by a battalion of the 62nd Regiment. A short lull followed the fighting round the lunette, after which the attack was recommenced with great vigour. By 10 A.M. the Turkish right had been strongly reinforced, and an attempt was made to turn the Russian left. A strong column moved to the attack of the lunette, while another detachment endeavoured to penetrate between this work and the Sgalivitze position. The lunette was again taken by the Turks, and General Pomeranzef, commanding the 16th Division, who directed the defence on the Russian left, was obliged to abandon the village of Pelischat, which was burned by the Turks. The Russian Artillery redoubled its fire, which had previously been somewhat deliberate.

By 10 A.M. it had become apparent that the attack was seriously intended, and information arriving that the Roumanians and the IXth Corps were not threatened, Zotoff issued the following orders :—

Russian
fresh dis-
positions.

(1) One Brigade, 5th Division, to move at once along the Bulgareni-Plevna road, to attack the Turkish left.

(2) From the Reserves of the IXth Corps, 3 Regiments, 31st Infantry Division, to be held in readiness two miles North of Poradim.

(3) 61st Regiment (16th Division) at Karagatch to move on Poradim as rapidly as possible.

(4) Roumanian 4th Division to concentrate at once at Tchalis-sovat.

Turkish
attack.

By 12 noon a long Turkish Infantry line extended along the front of the whole Pelischat-Sgalivitze position, while about 40 guns, posted on the westerly ridge, shelled the Russian entrenchments. At about 1 P.M. a general attack took place, directed on the Pelischat entrenchments, and on the South and West of Sgalivitze. The attack on Pelischat was repulsed mainly by the fire of the Russian batteries, and Kriloff moved out 6 squadrons of Cavalry with one H.A. battery against the Turkish right flank. The lunette was reoccupied by the Russians, and the main force of the Turkish attack swerved to the left. South and West of Sgalivitze severe fighting took place for some hours. South of Sgalivitze the Turks were repulsed by 1 battalion, 20th Regiment and 4 guns, reinforced by 2 battalions, 120th Regiment and 1 battery drawn from the Reserve at Poradim. The main attack West of Sgalivitze was carried out with great vigour right up to the Russian trenches, but the Turks were repulsed by 2 battalions, 20th Regiment, 2 battalions, 118th, and 3 batteries, and suffered very severely during their advance over the open ground. Simultaneously with the Infantry attack, the Turkish Cavalry of the Left Wing attempted to turn the Russian right, but the movement was discovered by 2 squadrons of the 4th Hussars, and easily arrested by Artillery fire.

Second
Turkish
attack.

At about 3 P.M. a second attack took place, which was not carried out with the same vigour, and was easily repulsed. The 62nd and 63rd Regiments on the left, and 2 battalions of the 20th and 118th on the right, now attempted to take the offensive, but were repulsed by a third Turkish attack carried out partly by fresh troops and well supported by Artillery fire. By 4.30 P.M. the Turkish Infantry retired over the ridge, and retreated on Plevna, covered by the fire of their Artillery.

A pursuit was attempted by the advanced Infantry (62nd and 63rd Regiments, 2 battalions, 20th, and 2 battalions, 118th), and 8 squadrons of Cavalry, but the horses of the latter were suffering from

long outpost work, and nothing was effected.* The Russian Brigade ordered along the Bulgareni-Plevna road to take the Turks in flank did not arrive on the scene of action in time to be of service.

The Russian loss is given as 30 officers, 945 men; that of the Turks was estimated at 3,000, and was unquestionably very heavy. Losses.

It is not easy to understand the motive of the sortie above sketched. Remarks.
The Turkish attack was carried out with a determination which proves it to have been something very different from a mere reconnaissance in force. But the time for any less operation than a general attack by the whole Plevna Army was long past. The Russians had recovered from the defeat of the 30th July; their position was a fairly strong one, and their reinforcements had begun to arrive. The Turkish force employed—about 22,000 men—was too weak to have had the smallest chance of gaining any great result, or even of seriously hampering the Russian preparations against Lovtcha. And the attack on an entrenched enemy of nearly double strength would hardly tend to raise the spirits of the Plevna garrison. Heavy fighting had taken place in the East on the previous day, the Russian 35th Division having been driven out of Karahassankenoi, but there is no reason to connect this with the Pelischat-Sgalivitze affair. It has moreover been suggested that Osman wished to commemorate the beginning of the Ramadan, or the anniversary of the Sultan's accession to the throne. Whatever was the precise object of the attack, it was fought throughout with great bravery and determination on the part of the Turkish Infantry, and its general conduct contrasts markedly with that of most of the Lom battles.

CAPTURE OF LOVTCHA.

Skobelev's detachment near Kakrina had been watching Lovtcha since the 7th August. Before the end of this month the first of the reinforcements, consisting of the 2nd Division (Prince Imeretinski) and Movement
against
Lovtcha.

* General Zotoff states in his report:—'To my great regret I was unable to pursue the enemy as vigorously as I wished, with Infantry wearied with 9 hours of fighting, and 2 Cavalry Regiments, which for a month had been employed on outpost duties without relaxation, and which were mounted nearly the whole of the 31st August, and were unable to unsaddle and feed their horses.'

'The fighting of the 31st has thus ended by a brilliant success of the troops of the IVth Corps over the Turks, who have suffered enormous loss; but I am unable to conceal the fact that the defeat of the enemy would have been complete if the Brigade of the 5th Division, which I sent along the Grivitza road, had attacked the enemy in flank, which it unfortunately was unable to do.'

the 2nd Brigade 3rd Division, had reached Selvi, relieving a detachment of the VIIIth Corps, which moved up to Gabrova. About the 28th, 1 Brigade of the 2nd Division was also despatched to Gabrova, but as the pressure on the Shipka position diminished, this Brigade rejoined its Division at Selvi.

On the 31st August Lieut.-General Prince Imeretinski, then in command at Selvi, received orders to take Lovtcha. The whole force placed at his disposal consisted of:

Skobelev's Detachment.	{	64th Regiment.
		1 Battalion 118th Regiment.
		1 Field battery (16th Brigade).
		Caucasian Cossack Brigade.
		2 Sotnias Erivan Cossacks.
		1 Cossack battery.
		A small detachment of Sappers.
		A squadron of the Imperial Escort.
		2nd Infantry Division, with 6 batteries.
		2nd Brigade 3rd Division, with 3 batteries.
		3rd Rifle Brigade.
		1 Heavy battery, composed of 4 Krupp guns taken at Nicolopolis.
		30th Don Cossacks.

Total—26 battalions, 84 guns (about 21,000 men), exclusive of the Cossacks and their battery. Movements of Turkish troops from Lovtcha to Plevna had recently taken place, and the garrison of Lovtcha at this time did not exceed 10 battalions.

Skobelev moved from Kakrina on the 1st September, charged with the task of occupying the chain of heights A and B (*Pl. V.*), which commanded the Turkish entrenchments on the right bank of the Osma. He was further to select positions for the batteries, and to throw up epaulments and Infantry trenches if possible.* The Caucasian Brigade, with the Squadron of the Escort, and the Cossack battery, were

* The following is an extract from Prince Imeretinski's orders of the 31st August:—

‘General Skobelev has for his mission:—

‘1st. To occupy the heights A B, in order to place all his guns in battery there immediately on his arrival.

‘2nd. To carry out all works, and to make all necessary preliminary dispositions, such as the reconnaissance of the position, the designation of the number of guns which can be placed on the summits of these heights to bombard the enemy's works, to measure the ranges, and to proceed, if possible, to the construction of epaulments and infantry trenches.’

Detail of
Imeretinski's force.

Skobelev's
advance on
Lovtcha.
Pl. V.

ordered to take up a position in front of Iglav ($7\frac{1}{2}$ miles below Lovtcha) and to watch the Plevna-Lovtcha road, as it was expected that the garrison would receive reinforcements from Plevna. Two sotnias, 30th Don Cossacks, were ordered round to the South of Lovtcha to observe the road leading from Trojan.

The main body moved from Selvi by detachments, the 2nd Brigade, 2nd Division, taking up a position near Kakrina on the 1st September; the 2nd Brigade, 3rd Division, started from Selvi at 11 P.M. on the 1st, followed at 2 A.M. on the 2nd by the 1st Brigade, 2nd Division, and by the 3rd Rifle Brigade at 4 A.M. Only a single road was available, and this was not in good order.

Advance of
main body.

Reaching the Spring (*Pl. V.*), two miles East of Lovtcha, at about 2 P.M. on the 1st September, Skobelev proceeded at once to reconnoitre the heights A and B. The hill A was only weakly held, and was carried without great difficulty by one battalion, 64th Regiment, supported by two guns posted on the road; but the westerly ridge, just above the river, was found to be strongly occupied, and had been strengthened by shelter trenches, particularly the Red Hill (*Pl. V.*), at its southern end, where there were 12 guns in position. The hill rising above the village on the West side formed a second defensive position; it was strengthened by shelter trenches on the slopes, and crowned by the large redoubt. Batteries, mounting 10-12 guns, had also been thrown up.

During the night of the 1st September the hill A was entrenched, and batteries for 24 guns were thrown up on the hill B, covered by shelter trenches in front. Before daybreak the guns of the field battery present with the detachment were hauled up to the summit of the hill B by Infantry.* This battery opened fire early in the morning of the 2nd on the ground in front of the hill A.

Preliminary
operations.

On the night of the 2nd the greater portion of the main body had arrived; 4 batteries were placed in position on the hill A, and 2 more batteries on the hill B. By the morning of the 3rd, therefore, 56 guns were in position on hills A and B. In the evening of the 2nd, Major-General Dobrovolski, with the 3rd Rifle Brigade, reached Prissiaka (3 miles North-East of Lovtcha), driving back the Turkish picquets. This force partially entrenched itself during the night on the portion of the ridge in front of Prissiaka, thus coming up into line with the troops holding the position A-B. On the morning of the 3rd, by 5 A.M., 1 field battery and the heavy battery were also placed in position here.

* The slopes are stated to be 35° in some places.

The general
attack.

The general attack took place on the 3rd. After a thorough Artillery preparation, Skobelev, with his 4 Infantry battalions, was to lead on the left, by the assault of the Red Hill, the key of the whole position, while Dobrovolski with the Rifle Brigade was to attack the Turkish left as soon as the Red Hill and the neighbouring trenches should have been carried. The 2nd Division and 2nd Brigade, 3rd Division, were to be held in reserve, massed behind the easterly ridge.

The Artillery opened fire all along the line at 5 A.M., with 60 guns (40 9-pounders, 16 4-pounders, 4 siege guns, probably 12-pounders), and continued in action on the Russian left till about 2 P.M. At 6.15 A.M. the Turks opened a heavy rifle fire from their trenches on the Rifle Brigade, which must have been badly posted if, as is stated, a loss of 8 officers and 150 men occurred before any advance took place. This was followed up by a Turkish attack, which was carried out to within 200 yards of the Russian lines, but was repulsed by the 12th Rifle battalion. In order not to keep the troops inactive, but contrary to the original plan, the Russian right attack on the height No. 4 was begun at about 8 A.M. The opposite slope was defended by two lines of shelter trenches, one half-way down, the other on the brow of the hill. The 7th Regiment, with one battery, ordered up to support the Rifle Brigade, arrived in time to take part in the attack, and after three hours' fighting the position was carried, the Turks withdrawing their left wing across the river.

Attack on
the Red
Hill.

By 2 P.M. the Turkish batteries were nearly silenced, and Skobelev received orders to advance. The Red Hill was carried by the 64th, supported by the 11th Regiment, the 1st Brigade, 2nd Division (5th and 6th Regiments), simultaneously attacking the heights Nos. 2 and 3. The Turks had been much shaken by the Russian Artillery, and the resistance seems to have been slight; by 3 P.M. the whole right bank of the Osma fronting Loytcha was in the hands of the Russians. Two batteries drawn from the Reserve were posted on the Red Hill, and a little later two more batteries on the road a little farther North. Skobelev, leaving 1 battalion, 64th Regiment, on the Red Hill, followed the Turks across the river with the rest of the Regiment, and, passing through the village, occupied its westerly outskirts. The 7th and 8th, together with the 11th and 1 battalion, 118th Regiment, crossed immediately afterwards.

Attack on
Turkish
second
position.

A pause was necessary to rest the troops, the 32 guns posted on the Red Hill and the road meanwhile shelling the redoubt and the trenches on the left bank of the river. At 5.30 P.M. the general attack on the Turkish second position commenced. Skobelev advanced with 8 battalions, leaving 4 in reserve in Loytcha, and directing his

principal effort on the Turkish right flank. The 5th and 6th Regiments and the Rifle Brigade forded the river lower down, with the 12th Regiment held in reserve; a part of this force attacked the Turkish left. The attack advanced up the steep slopes under a heavy fire, which, however, became more and more wild as the Russians neared the redoubt. The first line of trenches was soon carried, and part of the Reserve was brought forward to the attack on the redoubt. The Turks withdrew their guns in the direction of Mikré, but the redoubt was obstinately defended. The Russian guns shelled the work up till the last stages of the attack, and it was finally carried by a general rush from all sides at about 7 P.M.

The greater part of the fugitives had taken the direction of Mikré, 12 miles South-West of Lovtcha, and the Caucasian Brigade, with the Cossack battery, were ordered in pursuit. A large number of Turks were cut down, or killed by the Russian shells.*

The Russian losses are given as 39 officers and 1,477 men. Those of the Turks must have been very much greater. Losses.

The capture of Lovtcha was an important step in the direction of the isolation of Plevna; and the whole operation has been somewhat fully described, because in several respects it marks an advance in the Russian tactics as compared with those of the two Plevna battles. The Infantry arrived in front of the position overnight and were spared a tiring march before coming into action. For the first time the Russians employed the spade in the attack, and batteries were thrown up, and armed by night. The Infantry assault on the Red Hill was thoroughly prepared by Artillery fire, and directly this position was carried, guns were brought up and posted there to prepare the attack on the second position: these guns were employed in support of the Infantry up to the last.† There seems to have been none of the successive flinging of battalions on to earth. Remarks.

* The statement in the Russian reports that 3,000 Turks were cut down by the Cossacks, which has been adopted by several writers, is probably an exaggeration, but the total Turkish loss was unquestionably very severe.

† The following extracts from Skobelev's orders show to whom the improved employment of the Artillery was due:—

'The chief part in the first period of the battle belongs to the Artillery. The order of attack will be communicated to the battery commanders, who are recommended not to spread their fire. When the Infantry advances to the attack, they are to support it with the whole power of their fire. The fire is to be redoubled when the enemy brings up his Reserves, and it should reach its utmost limits when the attacking troops are stopped by any unexpected obstacle.

'When the range allows, shrapnel is to be fired against entrenchments and troops.'

works just too late to support each other, which caused such terrible losses at Plevna; but Capt. Kouropatkin, whose notes* are well worth a study, and whose criticisms are remarkably candid, states that in some instances the supports crowded in on the skirmishing line, forming a single, close-packed line, which advanced slowly, while some of the men commenced firing at over 1,100 yards range without taking aim.† On the other hand the Russians had a great numerical superiority, probably three to one—a superiority they did not attain even in the third Plevna battle. It is noteworthy that at Lovtcha, as at Plevna, a direct front attack was made, though the Russian strength was amply sufficient for a turning movement in force, by which loss might doubtless have been saved and the whole of the garrison captured. The Osma appears to have been easily fordable, so that such an operation presented no difficulty; and moreover, by proper dispositions a considerably greater Cavalry force might have been rendered available for this service. The order of march from Selvi is somewhat remarkable. The Brigade of the 3rd Division was interpolated between the two Brigades of the 2nd Division; and these 3 Brigades, though destined in the first instance to be held in reserve, all preceded the Rifle Brigade, detailed for the right attack.

It is noteworthy that the task of posting the guns, and of tracing the trenches for the troops of the left wing, was committed to Captain Kouropatkin, an officer of the General Staff, though there must have

* The following relating to the Infantry attack are also worthy of notice:—

‘The Infantry should avoid disorder during the action, and should not confound the offensive march with the charge. It should not forget the duty sacred to all, “to help one’s comrades at all risks.”’

‘Ammunition should not be uselessly expended, as the nature of the ground renders the supply of cartridges difficult. The importance of order and silence in action is again brought before the troops.’

‘The *hurrah*! should be raised only when the enemy is really within reach, and when the bayonet is about to be used. The losses in a well-conducted attack are trifling; retreat, above all in disorder, results in great sacrifices and in shame.’

‘These orders are to be read in every company, so far as they relate to the Infantry.’

There is no doubt that the Artillery produced a very much greater effect at Lovtcha than subsequently at Plevna, and this is due in a measure to its more judicious employment.

Translated from the *Revue Militaire de l'Étranger*, by Capt. A. O. Green, *R.E. Occasional Papers*, R.E. Institute, Vol. III., No. 8.

† This tendency to open fire at distances beyond the effective range of their rifles is partly due to the fact that the Russians themselves suffered considerable losses from the Turkish Infantry fire, at a range of nearly 2,000 yards. Instances of loss at even greater ranges than this occurred frequently during the campaign.

been at least one Brigade Commander of Artillery with the force, while the actual execution of the earthwork was superintended by an Infantry Lieutenant (Kozello) of the 64th Regiment. With the exception of a small detachment of Sappers, under an Ensign, this force of 22,000 men was unprovided with technical troops.

On the evening of the 3rd September information reached Lovtcha from the Commander of the IVth Corps, that a strong force was moving from Plevna on Lovtcha. On the morning of the 4th, Skobeleff moved out from Lovtcha and came in contact with the advancing Turkish column. A brief Artillery engagement took place, and the latter moved off to the right, in the direction of Mikré, probably with the object of covering the Teteven and Jablonitza Passes. The Commander of the IVth Corps appears to have made no attempt to arrest the advance of this Turkish force, by operating against its flank.

It is not easy to explain Osman Pasha's action with respect to the reinforcement of the Lovtcha garrison. He must have known on the 2nd September that serious operations had begun, and that the Turkish defenders were quite incapable of offering an adequate resistance to the great force which the Russians could bring to bear against them. If he held that the occupation of Lovtcha was of primary importance, he should have strongly reinforced its garrison at once, or at least he might have endeavoured to lessen the pressure there by a reconnaissance in force on the Russian main positions. If, on the other hand, Osman was of opinion that Lovtcha and Plevna could not both be held, he should have spared the garrison of the former by withdrawing it in time. No adequate compensation for the very heavy Turkish losses was obtained.

The Russians at Lovtcha rested during the 4th September, and on the morning of the 5th, Imeretinski, leaving behind the 2nd Brigade, 3rd Division, moved on Plevna, reaching Bogot that evening.

The moral effect of the capture of Lovtcha doubtless tended to raise the spirits of the Russian Plevna army. Turkish earthworks vigorously defended had at last been successfully assaulted, and great hopes as to the result of the coming operations against Plevna were naturally excited. These hopes, however, were destined to be completely disappointed.

CHAPTER VI.

THIRD BATTLE OF PLEVNA.

General
situation at
beginning of
September.

WITH the preparations for the assault on Lovtcha the long Russian defensive of more than a month ceased, and a new phase of the campaign began. The month of August had been a critical time for the invading army, and during its latter half the Turks had taken the offensive at three different parts of the theatre of war. But this Turkish offensive was desultory; it had all the weakness of divided action, and there is no trace of a directing military genius which could originate and carry out a combined plan of operations. Probably no worse method of conducting a campaign than the War Council permanently sitting at Constantinople could have been devised, and it affords a striking example of the possibilities of abuse for military purposes which the telegraph offers.

The great crisis of the war had now passed, and the position of the Russians, even after a third disastrous defeat at Plevna, was never again so desperate as it appeared to be after the 30th July. That this crisis was safely passed, may fairly be attributed in a great measure to the unexpected efficiency of the Roumanian Army, to its proximity to the seat of war and its readiness for action; but, on the other hand, it must be remembered that without the co-operation of the Roumanians the third battle of Plevna either would never have been fought, or must have been postponed for at least a month, and that in this battle, by which nothing in the direction of the capture of the place was really gained, the loss of the allies amounted to nearly two-thirds of the number of the whole Roumanian contingent. The whole question turns upon the power of offensive action really possessed by the Turkish Plevna army; and before assuming that the Roumanian alliance saved the Russians from a crowning disaster, it seems necessary to solve the very difficult question as to whether, the Roumanians apart, Osman Pasha could have crushed the Russian force holding the Trestenik-Poradim line, and have subsequently seized Nicopolis and Sistova, acting in concert with a general advance of the Turkish Army of the Quadrilateral. Osman Pasha's troops gave ample proof of their capabilities in the Pelischat-Sgalivitze affair as well as in the defence of the Plevna redoubts; but the success of an operation, such as that above indicated, can hardly be said

to be certain. On the other hand, Mehemet Ali's unsupported action resulted in complete failure without the diversion of a man from Plevna, while Suleiman's insane policy would in any case have exerted a ruinous influence on the Turkish cause. It would seem, therefore, that the Roumanian contingent, though of great value to the invaders in shortening the campaign and in preventing the necessity for bringing an equal number of troops from Russia, cannot be held to have saved them from being driven into the Danube, and that the apparently desperate situation in which the errors of the generals and the dearth of troops had placed the Russian Army, was mainly neutralised by the immobility of Osman's force and the complete incapacity of the Turks for combined offensive operations on a large scale—an incapacity the reasons for which lie deep in the political and social conditions of the country.

Briefly, the general situation in the early days of September was as follows:—In the Dobrudscha, General Zimmerman with about 22,000 Infantry held the line of Trajan's Wall from Tchernavoda to Kustendje, and remained purely on the defensive. In the East, the Turks had taken the offensive over the whole line of the Black Lom, with Biela as objective. The XIIth and XIIIth Corps, under the Czarevitch, fronted Rustchuk and Ayazlar respectively, and were extended over a distance of about 45 miles. The line thus occupied—from Metschka to Kopritza—had been artificially strengthened, and the junction of the two Corps on this line was about ten miles in front of Biela. The Turkish offensive came to an end, however, with the battle of Tcherkovna (p. 65) on the 21st September; and for some time afterwards the Russian Army of the East, which had been reinforced and was greatly superior in Artillery, had a decided advantage over the Turks in this portion of the theatre of war.

Situation
early in
September.

On the 3rd of September, the Russians held, roughly speaking, the line—Nicopolis-Grivitza-Lovtcha-Selvi-Schipka-Tirnova-Biela-Pyrgos, while the Turks had failed to drive them either from the Trestenik-Poradim or the Schipka positions, and had even proved unable to hold Lovtcha. Unless the Turks could organise a vigorous combined offensive, it was evident that sooner or later a revulsion in favour of the Russians must take place; but a new defeat at Plevna, followed by a fresh period of depression, was first to occur.

The capture of Lovtcha was doubtless believed at the Russian Head-Quarters to have been a great stroke of preparation for the attack on Plevna. The latter place had now become their most urgent objective, since it appeared necessary at all cost to relieve the Russian right flank from the constant menace of Osman's army. And, moreover,

the Russian communications were long, difficult, and precarious, and it was most desirable that Plevna should be taken before bad weather set in. Without waiting, therefore, for further reinforcements, which could not be expected to arrive before the end of the month, it was determined to commence operations on the 7th September.

Preparations
for attack.

In preparation for the attack much had been done before this date. A reconnaissance of the position was carried out during August, and it is stated* that a map to a scale of $\frac{1}{21000}$ was prepared and copies distributed to the Corps Commanders. Moreover, gabions, fascines, and hewn logs for gun platforms had been made ready, and some labour had been expended on the roads and bridges to fit them for heavy transport. Wells had been dug to facilitate the water supply of the army, and, finally, the troops had been to some extent practised in escalading parapets.

On the 3rd September, Prince Charles of Roumania arrived and took command of the Allied Army, with General Zotoff as Chief of the Staff. On the same day orders for a preliminary concentration in front of Plevna were issued—the 4th Roumanian Division between Breslanitz and Rybina; the IXth Corps at Sgalivitz; the IVth Corps at Pelischat. The total available Infantry force consisted of five Russian Divisions (2nd, 5th, 16th, 30th, and 31st), with the 3rd Rifle Brigade and three Roumanian Divisions (2nd, 3rd, and 4th): of the latter the 2nd Division, now termed also the 'Reserve Division,' was not destined, however, to take an active part in the operation.

On the evening of the 5th, Prince Imeretinski, with the Lovtcha force, arrived at Bogot, and on the 6th, all the troops were ready to close in upon the Turkish position. On the latter day also, General Levitzki, Assistant-Chief of the Staff to the Commander-in-Chief, arrived at Poradim to explain the wishes of the latter to Prince Charles. On the 7th the Grand Duke Nicolas moved from Gorny-Studen to Poradim, at which place the Head-Quarters of the Invading Army were now established, while on the same day the Emperor, with a numerous staff, arrived at Radenitz.

Plan of
operations.

The 'general idea' of the coming operations seems to have been as follows:—

1. The attack to be directed on three points—viz. the Grivitz position, the Central, or Radichevo works, the Krischin position.
2. Batteries to be constructed and armed by night along this front.

* *Das verschanzte Lager von Plevna*, p. 23. This map has not, however, come to hand. That reproduced in *Pl. II.* is on a scale of $\frac{1}{42000}$ and is stated to have been made in October. Subsequent to the fall of Plevna, a fully detailed map of the district to a scale of $\frac{1}{21000}$ was carried out.

3. Under cover of the Artillery fire, the Infantry to advance gradually, and to gain or create cover as near as possible to the Turkish works; the Artillery to approach the redoubts as the fire of the latter became dominated.
4. Artillery fire to be kept up for several days, and as far as possible by night, which would, it was believed, silence the enemy's guns, lessen the material resisting power of his works, and shake the *morale* of his Infantry.
5. After the bombardment, the Infantry to advance to the assault, over the whole front, if possible, as a surprise.
6. Finally a considerable Cavalry force to cross the Vid before the general assault, and to cut the Turkish line of retreat.

This plan of operations had at least one point in common with that which led to the defeat of 30th July. It was indeed carefully—and as it proved, vainly—prescribed that the assaults should be simultaneous; but proper tactical contact and mutual interdependence between attacks require much more than a mere common time of commencement, and it is hardly too much to say that again detached and *practically independent* assaults were to be delivered on comparatively distant points. But, on the other hand, great deliberation was now to be practised; the Infantry would be for some days in the immediate front of the positions to be assailed, and a careful scheme of final attack, based on a full knowledge of the ground, might be matured by each of the subordinate commanders. And in place of an Artillery preparation, the failure of which had been attributed to its short duration and to the want of guns of heavier metal, a long bombardment was now to be tried, in which 20 Russian siege guns and the 4 captured Turkish guns would take part. From this time the operations before Plevna partook largely of the character of fortress warfare.

It may be useful to give a recapitulation of the Russo-Roumanian forces assembled before Plevna by the 6th of September.

Forces of
the Allies.

RUSSIANS.

IVth Corps. (Lieut.-Gen. Kriloff.)	16th Infantry Division. (Lt.-Gen. Pomeranzef.)	1st Brigade	61st Vladimir* Regt.
		2nd "	62nd Susdal "
	30th Infantry Division. (Lt.-Gen. Schnitnikoff.)	1st "	63rd Ugliz "
		2nd "	64th Kazan "
		1st "	117th Jaroslaff "
		2nd "	118th Shuja "
	4th Cavalry Division. (Lt.-Gen. Leontieff.)	1st "	119th Kolomna "
		2nd "	120th Serpuchoff "
		4th Dragoons	4th Hussars
		4th Lancers	4th Don Cossacks

* The titles of the Infantry Regiments are given, because in many accounts of the battle, translated direct from Russian sources, the regiments are thus distinguished, and not by numbers, while in other accounts numbers alone are employed.

IXth Corps. (Lieut.-Gen. Krudener.)	5th Infantry Division. (Lt.-Gen. Schilder- Schuldner.)	1st	"	17th Archangel Regt.
		2nd*	"	18th Vologda "
	31st Infantry Division. (Lt.-Gen. Veliaminoff.)	1st	"	20th Galiz "
		2nd	"	121st Penza "
	9th Cavalry Division. (Lt.-Gen. Loshkareff.)	1st	"	122nd Tamboff "
		2nd	"	123rd Kosloff "
Mixed Corps (Major-Gen. Prince Imeretinski.†)	2nd Infantry Division.	1st	"	124th Voronesch "
		2nd	"	9th Dragoons
	3rd Rifle Brigade. (Maj.-Gen. Dobrovolski.)	1st	"	9th Lancers
		2nd	"	9th Hussars
	Infantry, 3rd Division, 1st Brigade, 10th Ingermanland Regiment.‡	1st	"	9th Don Cossacks
		2nd	"	5th Kaluga Regt.
Unattached	8th Division, 1st Brigade, 8th Dragoons.§	1st	"	6th Libau "
		2nd	"	7th Revel "
	Caucasian Cossack Brigade {	Don	" "	8th Esthonia "
				Vladi-Kaukas Regiment.
	Cavalry	Don	" "	Kouban Regiment.
				21st Regiment.
				26th "

ROUMANIANS.

IIInd Corps. (General Tchernat.)	3rd Division. (Col. Cantilli)	1st Brigade.	"	8th Line Regiment.
				10th Militia¶ "
		2nd	"	12th " "
				2nd Line "
	4th Division. (Col. A. Angelesco)	1st	"	9th Militia "
				11th " "
		2nd	"	3rd Rifle battalion.
				4th Artillery Regiment.
				7th Line "
				14th Militia "
		1st	"	15th " "
				5th Line "
		2nd	"	13th Militia "
				16th " "
				2nd Rifle battalion.
				3rd Artillery Regt.

* The 19th Regiment, and a 4-pounder battery, belonging to the 5th Infantry Division, were at Nicopolis.

† Both Imeretinski and Skobeleff were subsequently promoted to the rank of Lieut.-General by an order of September 12th.

‡ The Regiment 'Ingermanland,' or 'Ingrie,' was apparently present on the day of the general assault, and it is therefore here included. It seems, however, to have taken no part in the fighting, but to have been detained as a guard at Head-Quarters.

§ The 8th Dragoons appears to have been detached from the VIIIth Corps for service before Plevna. This Regiment replaced the 9th Hussars in the operations carried out by the 9th Cavalry Division West of the Vid, while the 9th Hussars was attached to the General Reserve.

|| Besides these Regiments, other bodies of Cossacks appear to have been present. A sotnia of the 34th Don Cossacks, for example, is stated to have covered the right flank of the Russian Brigade, which attacked the Grivitza redoubt, while three more sotnias of the same Regiment formed a guard at Head-Quarters.

¶ The 'Militia' Regiments are termed *Dorobanz*, the 'Regular' Cavalry (Red Hussars), *Roschiori*, and the 'Irregular' Cavalry, *Kalarash*.

2nd, or 'Reserve' Division. (Col. G. Angelesco.)	{	1st	"	{	1st Line Regiment.
				{	7th Militia "
	{	2nd	"	{	1st Rifle battalion.
				{	4th Line Regiment.
	{	3rd	"	{	6th " "
				{	8th Militia "
Cavalry.	{	3 Brigades.	"	{	3rd Line "
				{	5th Militia "
	{	3 H.A. batteries.	"	{	4th Rifle battalion.
				{	2nd Artillery Regt.

The following Table gives an abstract of the force above detailed :—

	Corps, or Division	Infantry				Cavalry	
		Battalions	Field 9-Prs.	Guns 4-Prs.	Siege Guns	Squadrons	H.A. Guns
Russians	IVth Corps . . .	24*	48	48	—	16	12
	IXth Corps . . .	21	48	40	20	16	12
	2nd Inftry. Division	12	24	24	4	—	—
	3rd " "	3	24†	—	—	—	—
	3rd Rifle Brigade .	4	—	—	—	—	—
	8th Cavalry Div. .	—	—	—	—	4	—
	Don Cossack Brgde.	—	—	—	—	12	6
	Caucasian Brigade.	—	—	—	—	12	6
	Total . . .	64	144	112	24	60	36
Roumanians	3rd Division . . .	13	36	—	—	—	—
	4th " . . .	13	36	—	—	—	—
	Reserve Division .	16	36	—	—	—	—
	9 Cavalry Regts. .	—	—	—	—	36	18
	Total . . .	42	108	—	—	36	18
	Grand Total	106	364	24	—	96	54

It is not easy to arrive at an exact estimate of the fighting strength represented by the above table. Allowing 800 men per battalion and 120 per squadron, the total force would reach 84,800 infantry and 11,520 cavalry. But the IXth and IVth Corps, in the previous fighting at Nicopolis, Plevna, and Pelischat-Sgalivitze had lost about 12,500 men killed and wounded, and this loss had not been by any means completely made good. It seems, however, that the IXth Corps had

Estimate of
strength of
Allies.
Infantry.

* The Infantry and Artillery of the IVth Corps, which had been detached for the Lovtcha operations, rejoined their Corps on the 6th September.

† These three 9-pr. batteries, belonging to the 3rd Infantry Division, were brought from Lovtcha by Imeretinski.

received reinforcements from the Ersatz to the number of 8,000, and some of the slightly wounded had doubtless returned to duty. On the 2nd September General Krudener stated* that the IXth Corps had 15,000 and the IVth Corps 17,000 men present for duty. Imeretinski's 16 battalions had been engaged only at Lovtcha, and, deducting their losses, may be taken at about 11,400 strong. The 10th Regiment (Ingermanland) of the 3rd Division was fresh from Russia, and presumably in full strength. This gives a total of 45,800 Russian Infantry, and including the three Roumanian Divisions (30,000), a grand total of 75,800 is reached.†

Cavalry.

The Cavalry had suffered but little in action, but from various causes its numbers had been somewhat reduced, and the total Russo-Roumanian strength in this arm may be taken at 9,500, or an average of about 100 sabres per squadron.

Estimate of
Turkish
strength.

There are no means of ascertaining accurately the extent of the Turkish losses in the previous fighting, nor of the strength of the reinforcements forwarded from time to time to Plevna from Sofia. It is doubtful, however, whether the latter were sufficient to greatly raise the fighting strength, and it seems probable that the total Turkish force was at this time not more than 50,000, including 2,500 Cavalry, with 80 guns.‡

State of
Plevna
defences.

The difficulty in arriving at an exact idea of the Plevna defences at the time of the third battle is very great. The Russian knowledge of the positions and trace of the works was manifestly imperfect, and only information from the Turkish side, which is not forthcoming, could clear up all doubtful points. All through August the Turkish troops, assisted by about 1,000 Bulgarian peasants, had worked hard at their defences, and the Russians had made no effort to disturb them. The works stated in the Russian accounts to have existed at the time do not always agree with the Russian map (*Pl. II.*), nor with the Swiss map (*Pl. III.*). No. 2 Grivitza redoubt appears to have been unknown, but a work is said to have existed 650 yards West of No. 1, which latter is generally known as *the* Grivitza redoubt. The nearest work to the main Grivitza redoubt on the West is about 1,800 yards distant, while No. 2 Grivitza redoubt is nearly due North of

* *Russian Army and its Campaigns*, p. 234.

† There is a little uncertainty as to the precise strength of the Roumanians at this period, and the above estimate (30,000) may be excessive.

‡ The number of Turkish guns varies in different accounts from 80 to 110. At the fall of Plevna 77 guns were captured (including 12 mountain guns); but several others were buried, or thrown into the Vid. Todleben credits the Turks with 100 guns during the period of the investment, but a few guns apparently entered Plevna subsequent to the 3rd attack. The total number at this time was probably little over 80.

No. 1, and only about 400 yards from it. It is stated, moreover, that an entrenched camp had been thrown up 'near Bukova, forming the centre of the northern line of trenches and batteries;' that No. 1 of the Central Group had been greatly extended by 'rows of lunettes and batteries;' and that there were three redoubts on the right bank of the Vid and three others fronting South.* The Russian October map (*Pl. II.*) shows a very much larger number of works, and many of them are in quite erroneous positions.† A comparison of this map with that given in *Pl. III.*, which was executed after the fall of Plevna, is very interesting, as showing the difficulty of making out the character and even the sites of earthworks in an undulating country. As far as can be ascertained, the Turkish defences may be summed up as follows:—

1. An entrenched camp on the heights above Opanetz.
2. An entrenched camp with a line of trenches and batteries North of the town, connected by a covered way with—
3. The Grivitza position, redoubts Nos. 1 and 2, with a small advanced trench (*k*, *Pl. III.*) nearly due East of the former.
4. The Central, or Radichevo Group, defending the sector between the Plevna-Bulgareni *chaussée* and the Tutschenitz ravine:—8 redoubts, with numerous trenches on their front and flanks North of the Plevna-Pelischat road, and a large work, No. 10, on an isolated knoll between the latter road and the Tutschenitz ravine. This knoll was undefended on the 30th July.
5. The Krischin group, defending the Green Hills and the Lovtcha-Plevna road. The Krischin redoubt, No. 14, a little to the North of the Krischin village, and two smaller works, Nos. 11 and 12, connected by a trench: the former of these works was only about 150 yards from Plevna. These works seem to have been hardly worthy at the time of the name of redoubt; they were formed by heightening, throwing forward slightly the parapet of the connecting trench, and carrying traverses to the rear. Some work had been done on the rear faces, but very little, and the traverses forming the flanks were not completed. The profile on the fronts was a fairly strong one. On the slope in front of works Nos. 11 and 12 were many lodgments and rifle pits, and there appear also to have been some few shelter trenches on the 2nd and 3rd Knolls. Besides the above it seems there was another unfinished redoubt, probably No. 13,

* General Zottoff states in his report that by September Plevna had developed into 'a colossal fortified camp in the modern sense of the word.' As applied to the fronts attacked by the Russians the term is not exaggerated.

† In this map, moreover, there are many other errors, and some of the villages, as for instance Blasigas (*see Pl. III.*), are wrongly placed.

North-East of the Krischin redoubt, and an entrenched camp about 600 yards North of No. 12.*

6. On the right bank of the Vid it is stated that there were three redoubts, of which one was near Oltschages, and another near the bridge carrying the *chaussée* across the river. These works were probably unfinished.

Between the Krischin redoubt and the Vid it appears probable that there were no defences at this time.

The Grivitzza position was the key of the North-Eastern, and the Krischin Group of the Southern, defences. The Central Group was on a lower level, and, though artificially rendered very strong, it was commanded by the Radichevo ridge, which Osman Pasha, either from want of time, or from the fear of creating a position too large for his strength, had not occupied.

Extent and
garrison of
front
attacked.

The front about to be attacked had an extent of some $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles : accepting the above estimate of the Turkish strength, and supposing that Osman Pasha could have applied his whole force to garrison this front, he would have had about $3\frac{1}{2}$ men per yard. But the Opanetz camp and the incomplete works on the line of the Vid could not be left altogether without troops, and, deducting for these defences, the number of men per yard will be only about 3—a fair, but by no means excessive, allowance, when it is considered that the whole of the defences consisted of provisional works armed with field guns only.

DISPOSITIONS FOR ATTACK.

On the afternoon of the 5th September the following orders for the general dispositions of the allied troops in the investment were issued :—

Dispositions
for attack.

1. General Krudener, with the IXth Corps, to advance towards Grivitzza village and establish himself between the Plevna-Bulgareni and Plevna-Pelischat roads. To throw up epaulments for the Field Artillery, as well as two large batteries for the 20 siege guns, and trenches for the Infantry. The Corps to place 3 Infantry Regiments

* Great differences exist in the accounts relating to the southern defences ; and as to the positions of the two redoubts near the Lovtcha-Plevna road, captured by Skobeleff on the 11th, the greatest diversities of opinion manifest themselves. Many writers call work No. 23 the Krischin redoubt, and speak positively of works Nos. 19 and 24 as captured by Skobeleff. Other variations have also been met with. It is believed, however, that the above description of the defences is substantially correct. The source of all the discrepancies may probably be traced to a loose adoption of the terms '1st, 2nd, and 3rd Knolls (or crests) of the Green Hills.' These Knolls are not very marked features, and the terms have been very naturally rather indiscriminately applied.

and 6 9-pounder batteries in 1st Line; 3 Regiments and 4 4-pounder batteries to be held as 2nd Line, or Corps Reserve; 1 Regiment and 1 4-pounder battery to be detached to the General Reserve.

2. General Kriloff, with the IVth Corps, to take up a position on the Radichevo ridge, and to construct batteries and trenches. The Corps to place 3 Regiments of the 16th Division, with 5 9-pounder batteries, in 1st Line; the 1st Brigade, 30th Division, in 2nd Line; and to detach the 2nd Brigade, 30th Division, to the General Reserve. The 64th Regiment and a 9-pounder battery, which had been with Imeretinski at Lovtcha, to rejoin the Corps.

3. General Prince Imeretinski, with the 2nd Infantry Division and its Artillery, and the 3rd Rifle Brigade, with 3 batteries of the 3rd Division and 4 siege guns, to advance on the left of the IVth Corps towards Tutschenitza. The troops of the IVth Corps hitherto detached to Imeretinski to rejoin their Corps at once.

4. Colonel A. Angelesco, with the 4th Roumanian Division, to move from Verbitza and to take up a position North of the Bulgareni-Plevna *chaussée*, on the right of the IXth Corps. Three Regiments of Irregular (Kalarash) Cavalry to cover the right flank of this Division, and to extend as far as the Vid.

5. General Loshkareff, with the 9th Cavalry Division and 2 H.A. batteries, to take post temporarily on the Bulgareni-Plevna *chaussée*, between the Roumanians and the IXth Corps.

6. General Leontieff, with the 1st Brigade, 4th Cavalry Division, and 1 H.A. battery to cover the left flank of the IVth Corps, and to maintain communication with the Don Cossack Brigade under Colonel Tchernosuboff, and the Caucasian Brigade under Colonel Tutolmin, which latter Brigades were to observe the Plevna-Lovtcha road under the orders of General Skobelev.

7. The General Reserve, consisting of the 2nd Brigade, 30th Division, the 20th Regiment, 3 4-pounder batteries, with the 4th and 9th Hussars, to take post West of Pelischat at the crossing of the Grivitz-Tutschenitza and Plevna-Pelischat roads.

8. Three Sotnias, 34th Don Cossacks, to form the guard at Headquarters, which are to be with the General Reserve.

9. Ammunition. Flying Park of the IXth Corps at Sgalivitze and of the IVth Corps on the height between Tutschenitza and Bogot; Reserve Park of the IXth Corps at Bulgareni bridge, and of the IVth Corps at Leschan bridge. Baggage of the IXth Corps in rear of Karagatch and of the IVth Corps in rear of Poradin.

10. Hospitals. The Divisional ambulances and field hospitals to follow the troops. Places for dressing the wounded to be established

for the IXth Corps at the 'Three Springs' on the Plevna-Pelischat road, 2 miles in rear of the line of batteries, for the IVth Corps at Tutschenitza, for the Roumanians at Verbitza. As many country carts as possible to be collected at these places.

11. Knapsacks to be left in the respective bivouacs, under guard of men fit only for light duty. Each soldier to carry with him 2 lbs. of cooked meat and 4 lbs. of bread.*

The movement of the 3rd, and of the Reserve Roumanian Divisions took place a little later. Including the former, which co-operated with the 4th, these dispositions provided, roughly speaking, 20,000 (Roumanians) for the Right Attack, about 25,000 (IVth and IXth Corps) for the Centre, and from 11,000 to 12,000 for the Left; together with a General Reserve of three Regiments, about 7,000.† Subsequently, however, the Wings were strengthened at the expense of the Centre, and the distribution became more equal. In his report General Zotoff speaks as if the Left was intended as the principal attack, while those of the Right and Centre were to be of secondary importance. Thus he states in one passage: 'On the side of the Lovtcha road, where it was proposed to deal the decisive blow . . . ;' and in another: 'The attack on the redoubt (No. 10) was intended to facilitate the attack on the principal point, and particularly on the works which defended Plevna on the side of the Lovtcha road, and constituted by their position the strategic and tactical key of the entrenched camp.' Other Russian writers have naturally followed this cue; but it is scarcely necessary to point out that there is nothing whatever in the dispositions, previous to the battle, which would indicate that special importance was attached to any one of the three points of attack, and moreover, the General Reserve posted in rear of the centre was quite unable to afford any support to the Left Attack. The enhanced importance of the latter appears to have been an afterthought suggested by the results of the fighting.

The day of the great assault was apparently not definitely fixed at this time, and it seems probable that it was intended to await the results of the Artillery attack before making the final decision. It is stated, however, that the 9th September was the day originally contemplated, and that the failure of the Artillery to produce the effect anticipated led to the postponement of the Infantry attack till the 11th.

* The official order, in which the Roumanians, though detailed for the Right Wing, are placed last in the dispositions for the Infantry attack, has been adhered to above.

† The 10th Regiment is not included in this estimate.

ARTILLERY ATTACK OF SEPTEMBER 7TH.

The night of the 6th September was dark, but the positions to be taken up and the roads were well known, so that the closing movement was effected with great order, rapidity, and silence. The troops of the IXth Corps carried fascines, gabions, and platform timbers for the siege batteries: two Regiments were thrown forward nearly to Grivitza village to cover the working parties.

Artillery
attack, 7th
September.

Only the 3rd Sapper battalion appears to have been available, and of this the 4th company under Colonel Sasski was attached to the IXth, and the 3rd company under Colonel Radefski to the IVth Corps. A detachment of 40 Sappers, under Captain d'Adelberg, was detailed to the Roumanians. Two Sapper companies, under Colonel Prebiko, were told off for the construction of the two siege batteries for 12 and 8 guns respectively, assisted by 4 Infantry battalions as working party, while 4 more Infantry battalions brought up the requisite *matériel*. The entrenching tools were served out from the Engineer Park. The Commandant of the 2nd Sapper Brigade* was charged with the general superintendence of the works, and was assisted by three officers of the Corps Staffs.

At 8 P.M. the working parties arrived on the ground. The night was dark and the wind favourable. The Turks seem to have been unaware of what was occurring; there was no attempt to disturb the Russians, and by 6 A.M. the work was completed and the batteries armed. The first siege battery (S_1 Pl. III.), mounting 8 guns, was built South-East of the Grivitza redoubt, at a range of about 4,300 yards; the second (S_2), with 12 guns, was South-West of the first, at a range of about 5,200 yards from the Grivitza redoubt, and 4,500 from redoubt No. 1 of the Central Group.† Three 9-pounder batteries of the IXth Corps were in position on the hill in front of the siege batteries and South of Grivitza, at ranges of about 3,000 yards from No. 1, and 3,500 from the Grivitza redoubt. The IVth Corps had placed 5 9-pounder batteries (40 guns) in position on the eastern end of the Radichevo ridge, at a range of about 2,600 yards from redoubt No. 1 of the Central Group. The Roumanians brought 4 9-pounder batteries (24 guns) into action due East of the Grivitza redoubt, at about 4,000 yards range.

* General Richter, commanding the 3rd Sapper Brigade, was in charge of the Sistova Bridge.

† This was the intended position; but it seems that, in the darkness of the night of the 6th, the battery was wrongly placed and had to be changed the next night.

The Infantry of the IXth Corps was massed and hidden in the hollows near the batteries—two Regiments in 1st Line, in advance of the batteries, and three Regiments in rear as a Corps Reserve, one on the right, and two on the left. The Infantry of the IVth Corps in 1st Line (three Regiments) was hidden in the Radichevo valley and on the reverse slopes of the ridge behind the batteries; the IVth Corps reserve—three Regiments—was posted a mile in rear, on the Pelischat road. The Infantry of the Roumanian 4th Division was massed in rear and on the right of their batteries.

At 6 A.M. the 12-gun siege battery fired a salvo, and the bombardment commenced from 20 siege guns and 88 9-pounders. The Turks soon replied with vigour, and the fire was maintained on both sides with varying intensity throughout the day. The greater part of the Russian guns were directed on the Grivitza redoubt, and the fire is stated to have been fairly accurate, but the eight Turkish guns mounted there replied all day. On the morning of this day, Imeretinski moved from Bogot to the West of the Tutschenitza, and in the afternoon his troops took up a position in front of Brestovatz, while General Skobelev was despatched to reconnoitre the Krischin position.

8TH SEPTEMBER.

8th September.
ber.

On the night of the 7th the Artillery circle was drawn closer, and a few of the 4-pounder batteries became available. The three 9-pounder batteries of the IXth Corps were moved to within 2,500 yards of the redoubts of the Central Group, and two additional 9-pounder batteries were brought into action. The IVth Corps brought an additional 9-pounder battery and some 4-pounder batteries into action further West on the Radichevo ridge against redoubt No. 10 of the Central Group.

At daybreak the 3rd Roumanian Division moved from Rybina and took up its position on the right of the 4th Division, bringing some of its guns into action North of the Grivitza position at about 2,500 yards range. The Reserve Roumanian Division moved from Bresljanitza to Verbitza to serve as Corps Reserve to the 3rd and 4th Divisions.

The 9th Cavalry Division crossed the Vid at Rybina and moved towards Dolny-Dubnik (*Pl. II. and VI.*).

On the left wing Imeretinski gradually brought his Artillery into action, and on this day the 4 siege guns and about 68 field guns took part in the bombardment at ranges under 2,000 yards.

The total number of guns in action on the 8th was approximately as follows:—

Roumanians	30 (3·14" and 3·53") field guns.*
IXth and IVth Corps	{ 20 (6") siege guns.
	{ 88 (4·2") field „
	{ 40 (3·4") „ „
Imeretinski's Corps	{ 4 (5·89") siege guns
	{ 68 (4·2") and 3·4" field guns.
Totals	{ 24 siege guns.
	{ 226 field „

The firing continued all day, and was directed on the Grivitza redoubt, Nos. 1, 4, 9, and 10 of the Central Group, the Krischin redoubt, and Nos. 19 and 23 on the side of the Lovtcha road. Some of the Turkish works appeared to have suffered slightly, and the fire from the eastern front slackened towards the afternoon; that from the Grivitza redoubt, especially, becoming very feeble. On the West side of the Tutschenitza an Infantry engagement took place in the afternoon, at about 5 P.M., and about the same time the 1st Brigade, 4th Division, Roumanians, supported by the 2nd Brigade, captured some advanced trenches† in front of the main Grivitza redoubt. This was the first Infantry affair in which the Roumanians were engaged, and it appears to have been carried out with creditable gallantry. The losses are given as 6 officers and 170 men killed and wounded.

9TH SEPTEMBER.

During the night of the 8th the Russian Artillery fired slowly to prevent the Turks from repairing their works, and the 8 guns of the first siege battery were moved to the IVth Corps Artillery position on the Radichevo ridge to shell the redoubts of the Central Group. The bombardment went on throughout the 9th except from the 12-gun siege battery, the ammunition of which had begun to run short. The guns of the Grivitza redoubt were silent, but the Roumanians, who made a reconnaissance towards it, were driven back by heavy Infantry fire. During the afternoon a general movement of the IVth Corps to the left along the Radichevo ridge took place, bringing the extreme left nearly to the Tutschenitza ravine. The 123rd and 124th Regiments (2nd Brigade, 31st Division, IXth Corps) were moved from the right

9th September.

* The proportion of light and heavy field guns cannot be stated exactly in these cases.

† The position of these trenches is indicated by the letter *k*, *Pl*, III. They were afterwards merged in the works of the Roumanian attack.

to the left of the position of their Corps to fill the gap. A portion of the Artillery of the IXth Corps was advanced to within 1,800 yards of the redoubts of the Central Group, and on this day the IXth Corps brought altogether 8 field batteries into action.

10TH SEPTEMBER.

10th September.

The firing slackened slightly as the ammunition was beginning to run out, and defects* had shown themselves in the carriages. The Turkish Artillery was silent for want of ammunition. As a general result of the 4 days' bombardment the Grivitza redoubt and No. 1 of the Central Group appeared to be considerably damaged, while the other works had suffered but slightly. The Russian losses from the Turkish Artillery fire were from 300 to 400 during the whole period, and those of the Turks were probably even less.

Rain began to fall on the afternoon of the 10th, which rendered the bringing up of ammunition very difficult, and during the night several thunderstorms occurred, which rendered even the roads almost impassable.

It was evident, under these circumstances, that the bombardment could not be maintained, and that the assault must take place at once, or the extremely moderate advantages gained by the vast expenditure of ammunition would be lost. The Infantry attack was therefore ordered to take place on the 11th September, which was the Emperor's *fête* day—a coincidence which probably commended itself to the imagination of the troops.

FIGHTING ON THE GREEN HILLS FROM 8TH TO 10TH SEPTEMBER.

Preliminary operations on the Green Hills.

Immediately after the capture of Lovtcha, Imeretinski's mixed Corps was, by an order of the 4th September, directed on Plevna, in order to take part in the great attack. The force reached the village of Bogot on the 5th September, and the detached troops of the IVth Corps (64th Regiment and 1st battalion of the 118th, with 1 field battery) rejoined their Corps at once. On the same day Skobeleff, advancing

* Similar defects were reported in the carriages used at Kars. The Russian siege and field gun-carriages are of the 1866 pattern and have sides of sheet iron stiffened by riveted angle iron; they have not by any means the stiffness and solidity of the more recent iron carriages adopted by other nations. Those supplied by Krupp to the Turkish Government seem to have stood all the tests of service.

A new pattern carriage proposed by Colonel Engelhardt, and provided with a means of checking the recoil, has since been adopted by the Russians.

along the Lovtcha-Plevna road with 3 sotnias of Cossacks and 2 H.A. guns, reconnoitred the Krischin position. He appears from the first to have been strongly impressed with the importance of the latter, and the ground was known to him by reason of the fighting of the 30th July. But, in spite of Zotoff's report, there is little reason to doubt that, at the Russian Head-Quarters, the Grivitza position was still held to be the key of the entrenched camp.

Skobelev's position was somewhat peculiar. By an order of the 6th September, Imeretinski had placed him in command of the 'Advanced Guard,' or 'First Echelon' of the mixed Corps, consisting at first of the 5th and 8th Regiments* and the 9th and 10th battalions of the 3rd Rifle Brigade, with 3 9-pounder batteries of the 3rd Artillery Brigade, 4 heavy guns, and one sotnia each of the Vladi-Kaukas Cossacks, and the 21st and 26th Don Cossacks (8 battalions, 3 sotnias, 28 guns).

On the 7th, Imeretinski's Corps was directed towards Radichevo, apparently as a reserve on the left rear of the IVth Corps. On the 8th, the whole force moved to the Lovtcha-Plevna road, and established itself in front of the wooded and vine-covered hills which lie due South of Plevna.

The first contact with the enemy occurred on the 8th. On the morning of this day the 3rd battalion of the 8th Regiment occupied the village of Brestovatz without fighting, and 2 9-pounder batteries were established in positions previously selected on the raised plateau South of the village. The guns opened fire on the Krischin redoubt at about 4,000 yards range, and on the 2nd Knoll at about 3,100 yards. The Turkish Artillery opened on the Russians directly they showed on the plateau, with but slight effect. The Russian fire was kept up till 3 P.M., when the 5th Regiment was ordered to advance and to occupy and entrench the hill in front immediately to the North of the village.† The advance was commenced by the 2nd and 3rd battalions of the Regiment, the 1st battalion following as 2nd Line about 500 yards in rear. The 1st battalion of the 8th Regiment and four companies of the 2nd battalion acted as a general reserve to the attacking

Occupation
of Bresto-
vatz.

Attack on
2nd Knoll.

* This apparent splitting up of the Brigades of the 2nd Division seems very remarkable. With one exception, however, the accounts appear to be unanimous on the point. Skobelev's report only mentions the Regiments by name, and the whole question turns upon whether the 6th or the 8th Regiment bears the title of 'Esthonia' (the other Regiment bearing that of 'Liebau'). If the former, as is stated in *Leconte's Guerre d'Orient*, Skobelev would have had the 5th and 6th Regiments, and the 6th and 8th Regiments must be interchanged in the following pages. This seems more probable; but, on the other hand, a similar splitting up of Brigades was not uncommon.

† This hill is usually, but not invariably, termed the '1st Knoll' or 'Crest' of the Green Hills, and it has been thus indicated on *Pf. III.*

Repulse of
5th Regi-
ment.

force: the third battalion of the 8th Regiment, with the rifle company of the 2nd battalion, remained in occupation of Brestovatz. Colonel Eljanoffski, commanding 5th Regiment, had been called up to receive special instructions, and appears to have been told to advance his Regiment in the order above stated; to remain himself with the 2nd Line, and, if confronted by a strong resistance, to halt and wait for further orders. The two battalions in 1st Line advanced in two lines of company columns, preceded by a thick chain of skirmishers. The line of advance* lay, for about 900 yards, across a bare space swept by the Turkish Artillery fire, and then over undulating ground planted with vines and detached trees. The 2nd Knoll appeared at first to be unoccupied, and the Regiment suffered very little from the Artillery fire, but the Turks began to show in force as the Russians approached. The advance was badly conducted, and little attempt was made to take advantage of the ground, while the two lines of company columns closed in on each other and on the skirmish line. At about 500 yards the Turkish Infantry fire became very hot, and the Regiment, which was in considerable disorder, was halted in order that Skobelev might personally examine the situation. The Turks immediately advanced a strong line of skirmishers, and, being received by a hot fire from the Russians, they lay down and replied vigorously. The Colonel of the 5th Regiment was wounded, and the men gradually began to advance in no sort of formation. The Regiment appears to have been completely out of hand, and it very soon became fully committed to the movement. Captain Kouropatkin says: 'The bravest and most active being ahead, isolated groups of men followed running in the rear,' till, 'of 10 companies only a few parties, of 15 to 20 men each, remained together.' The Turks retreated, and the Russians, crossing the 3rd Knoll, began to descend into the valley beyond the latter,† where the fire from the redoubts and shelter trenches began to tell heavily. The advance was brought to a stop and the foremost troops sheltered themselves in a ditch, waiting for reinforcements. The Turks soon took the offensive in front, and at the same time a vigorous attack, supported by Cavalry, took place from the Krischin redoubt, on the left and rear of the 5th Regiment. The left wing was taken by surprise and cut to pieces, and the retreat immediately became general. Skobelev arrived on

* The precise direction of the line of advance cannot be stated, but it probably lay close to and East of Brestovatz, and pointed slightly West of North.

† Skobelev's report states that the Russians captured some Turkish lodgments at the foot of the heights on which the redoubts stood: Captain Kouropatkin does not mention this, and from his account it appears as if the advance of the 5th Regiment did not extend very far beyond the crest of the 3rd Knoll.

the spot in time to post the 3rd battalion, 5th Regiment, on the crest of the 2nd Knoll to cover the retreat. This battalion received the Turks with volleys, and, reinforced by a battalion of the 8th Regiment, with the two rifle battalions in reserve, succeeded in checking the pursuit. One sotnia each of the Caucasian and 26th Don Cossacks, and a half sotnia, 21st Don Cossacks, were also employed in covering the retreat, and subsequently in collecting the wounded.

The Russian losses amounted to about 900 men, of whom 700 belonged to the 5th Regiment. Skobelev attributes the repulse to the early loss of the Colonel of the Regiment, to the insufficiency of his own reconnaissance, in which the strength of the Turkish position had not been fully recognised, and to the want of an adequate reserve on the Left Wing.

The 2nd Knoll was occupied by 2 battalions of the 8th Regiment and 2 battalions of the 3rd Rifle Brigade, but the night passed quietly. At 2 A.M. on the 9th September, Skobelev received orders that the general assault was postponed, and he drew back his Right Wing slightly, entrenching it on the 1st Knoll between the Lovtcha-Plevna road and the Tutschenitz ravine. Here 'two deep trenches' were dug, and the ground in front, forming a natural glacis, afforded a good field of fire. The 5th Regiment had been altogether withdrawn, and the trenches were occupied by the 8th Regiment.

At 5 A.M. on the 9th an attack took place, directed on the centre of the Russian position between Brestovatz and the trenches East of the road. The Turks were received by the fire of 3 9-pounder batteries and the heavy battery posted on the plateau in rear of Brestovatz, while a fourth 9-pounder battery, advancing boldly, came into action in the open, but lost the greater portion of its gunners and horses in a few minutes. Checked by the Artillery fire and that of the 8th Regiment in the trenches, the Turks retired about 6.30 A.M. At about 8 A.M. a second attack took place, directed more towards the Russian right. Two companies of the 8th Regiment received the Turks with volleys at short range and compelled them to retire, but after being reinforced they advanced again to within 50 yards of the Russian trenches. Two companies of the 10th Rifle battalion were moved up to the right of the 8th Regiment, and attacking the Turks in flank, drove them back. The Russian estimate of the Turkish force employed in the above attacks was from 6 to 10 battalions.

No further fighting occurred on this day; but, in order to be pre-

* The precise position of these trenches cannot be identified on the maps, and they were, doubtless, subsequently filled in by the Turks. They were apparently on the crest of the 1st Knoll to the right front of the village of Brestovatz. There was, properly speaking, only one trench with a break of about 50 yards to allow the passage of Infantry and Artillery.

Losses,

Turkish
attacks on
9th Septem-
ber.

pared for all emergencies, Skobelev reinforced the right of the 8th Regiment with the 9th Rifle battalion, and added 3 companies of the 6th Regiment* to the special reserve, posting 2 more companies of the latter Regiment on the extreme right, close to the Tutschenitza ravine, to guard against a flank attack. Three 9-pounder batteries and the heavy battery remained in the centre facing Brestovatz, and on the left the 10th Rifle battalion was posted and entrenched, with 2 battalions, 6th Regiment, in rear as supports. The reserves at Skobelev's disposal consisted of the 5th and 7th Regiments, the 12th Rifle battalion, 3 4-pounder batteries, and 1 9-pounder battery.

At midnight Skobelev received the following order from Imeretinski:—

‘Lient.-General Zotoff orders the height which commands Plevna from the South to be carried to-day, 10th September. General Zotoff calls this height the 3rd Knoll. There are under your orders for this attack the following troops, viz.: the 2nd Brigade, 2nd division (7th and 8th Regiments), the 9th and 10th Rifle battalions, the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd batteries, 2nd Artillery Brigade, and the 3rd battery, 3rd Brigade. There are also ready to be placed under your orders, should you require reinforcements, the 1st Brigade, 16th Division (61st and 62nd Regiments) which has received orders to cross the Tutschenitza and to reach at dawn the height on my Right Wing. Major-General Dobrovolski's troops† are placed behind the village of Brestovatz.’‡

Skobelev's
orders for
10th Sep-
tember.

On the receipt of this despatch Skobelev addressed orders, of which the following are extracts, to the troops forming his command:—

‘The 7th and 8th Regiments, the 10th Rifle battalion, and all the guns in battery will keep their positions.’

‘The troops in 1st Line are to take all precautions necessary in face of the enemy.’

‘I call the attention of the troops of the Left Wing to the massing of the enemy's forces behind the redoubt and facing our Left Wing.’

‘The 9th Rifle battalion and the battalion, 7th Regiment, placed in rear of Brestovatz must send some water-carriers to Brestovatz, where

* This Regiment was not apparently under Skobelev's orders at the time, and the 3 companies above alluded to must have been sent up by Imeretinski at Skobelev's request.

† 11th and 12th Rifle battalions apparently. Imeretinski omits all mention of the 1st Brigade, 2nd Division (5th and 6th Regiments) of which the former had been already very roughly handled, and the latter had been already partly placed at Skobelev's disposal.

‡ The orders received by Imeretinski from Head-Quarters seem to have effected his complete deposition. It will be seen above that Skobelev was placed in command of a great portion of his senior general's force for the attack, while the whole of the remainder was to be at his disposal as a reserve. And, moreover, Skobelev received, on the evening of the 10th, direct instructions from the Commander-in-Chief, to whom also his report of the subsequent operations is addressed.

6 companies of the 8th Regiment are posted, and to the spring, where the Caucasian Cossack Regiment is stationed. The 7th Regiment is to take post on the road, in advance of the Artillery—one company as a picquet, which will spread out to the left of the road as far as the village of Brestovatz, where it will communicate with the 8th Regiment. Colonel Tchernosouboff* will guard the left flank beyond the Lovtcha-Plevna road against all attacks which the enemy may make from this side.'

'In case of a night alarm the troops of the 2nd Line must not, under any pretext whatever, open fire, but simply await orders where they are.'

'Should an attack occur, the Artillery will direct their fire according to observations made during the day.'

'For troops placed to the left of the road, the nearest water is at Brestovatz, and then at Krischin: for troops placed to the right of the road, in the ravine in rear of the post of the 8th Regiment, then on the road at the last height in front of Plevna.'

At daybreak on the 10th September, the 8th Regiment, supported by the 9th Rifle battalion, occupied the 2nd Knoll, which was immediately entrenched. Skobelev was unwilling to advance further on this day 'in order not to engage all the troops and not to expose them to a fight against odds before the time came for a general attack on Plevna.' He also points out that the delay in making the attack was due to the necessity of entrenching the positions gained, without an adequate supply of tools. It was necessary for the men to scrape up the earth by the help of canteen covers and with their hands, while the vines were torn up by hand to clear the field of fire. Sixteen 9-pounders were placed in battery on the 2nd Knoll, in rear of the position occupied by the 8th Regiment and 10th Rifle battalion; the 61st Regiment was also brought up to the 2nd Knoll, with the 62nd Regiment in reserve.

Occupation
of 2nd Knoll.

The general disposition was now as follows:--The 1st battalion, 8th Regiment, occupied the trenches on the right of the batteries; the 2nd battalion, with the rifle companies of the Regiment, held the trenches on the left in line with the Artillery and opposite Krischin. Four companies of the 3rd battalion, 8th Regiment, occupied a second line of trenches. The 1st battalion, 61st Regiment, was posted on the left of the 2nd battalion, 8th Regiment, opposite Krischin, with three companies in a line of trenches. Two rifle companies of the 61st Regiment covered the battery position during the night. The 10th Rifle battalion was on the right, in rear of the road leading

* Commanding Don Cossack Brigade.

towards the Tutschenitza ravine, with two companies in 1st Line and the remaining two in 2nd Line, both entrenched. The 62nd Regiment formed the general reserve, and was posted in rear of the 1st Knoll on the right of the Lovtcha-Plevna road.* The Turks opened fire from the redoubts as soon as the Russians began to take up their position, and the 2 batteries in 1st Line replied. During the night the Turks twice approached the Russian trenches, but were easily repulsed by the fire of the 8th Regiment.

On the evening of the 10th, Skobelev received orders relating to the plan of the general assault, which was fixed to take place at 3 P.M. on the 11th.

THE GENERAL ASSAULT, 11TH SEPTEMBER.

Disposition
for attack.

On the evening of the 10th, orders for the general assault on the next day were issued. The Artillery fire was to begin at daybreak all along the line, ceasing at 9 A.M.; it was to begin again at 11 A.M. and continue till 1 P.M.; finally, from 2.30 till 3 P.M. the firing was to be as rapid as possible, and to be followed immediately by the Infantry attack. This hour was probably selected in the hope that the Artillery fire might be able to effect something in the way of immediate preparation. By the plan of alternate firing and pausing, it was intended that the final assault should take place as a surprise.

The distribution of the Infantry for the Right, Centre, and Left Attacks was as follows:—

Distribution
of troops.

Grivitza Works.—The Roumanian 3rd and 4th Divisions to attack from the North and North-East, supported by the 1st Brigade, 5th Division (Russians), with 2 4-pounder batteries, advancing from the South through Grivitza village.

Central Group.—The 1st Brigade, 30th Division, and the 2nd Brigade, 16th Division, to attack from the Radichevo ridge.

The Krischin Works.—The 1st Brigade, 16th Division, the 2nd Division, and the 3rd Rifle Brigade, with 9 batteries, to attack from the South.

The 2nd Brigade, 31st Division, to act as special reserve to the centre attack.

The 1st Brigade, 31st Division, to cover the whole line of batteries between Radichevo and Grivitza, but to take no part in the attack.

* Skobelev's report does not state the positions of the 6th and 7th Regiments at this period. They were both, however, apparently under his orders at the time.

The General Reserve, 2nd Brigade, 30th Division, and the 20th Regiment, with 3 batteries, and the 4th Hussars with 1 H.A. battery, to remain in rear of the centre. General Reserve.

General Leontieff, with the 1st Brigade, 4th Cavalry Division, and the Caucasian and Don Cossacks, with 2 H.A. batteries, to cover the left flank, to cross the Vid and effect contact with General Loschkareff's Cavalry. Cavalry.

The 9th Hussars to take post on the Bulgareni-Plevna *chaussée* between the IXth Corps and the Roumanians. A Roumanian Irregular Cavalry Brigade (3 Regiments) to cover the right flank up to the line of the Vid.

General Loschkareff, who was now on the left bank of the Vid, near Gorny-Dubnik, with 4 Russian and 4 Roumanian Cavalry Regiments, to effect contact with Leontieff's Cavalry, and to fall upon the Turks in case of their retreat across the river.

The troops to take with them two days' provisions, and the positions of the field parks and hospitals to be regulated by the orders of the 6th September.

The night of the 10th was very wet, and the morning of the 11th cold and foggy, so that the arrangements prescribed for the Artillery could not be carried out properly. At noon the fog lifted a little, and the redoubts could be seen. A heavy fire from over 250 guns was begun and kept up till about 2 P.M. Towards 3 P.M. the fire recommenced in a fine cold rain which caused the smoke to hang low, but it was lifted from time to time by the wind, so that objects could be fairly well made out.

RIGHT ATTACK.

The Grivitza position was to be attacked in four columns, No. I. (a Brigade of the 3rd Division, Roumanians) operating from the North; No. II. (a Brigade, 3rd Division, Roumanians), from the North-East; No. III. (2nd Brigade, 4th Division, Roumanians), from the East; No. IV. (1st Brigade, 5th Division, Russians), from the South. The batteries of the Roumanian 3rd Division had previously shelled the Turkish position from the North, at a range of about 2,800 yards, and those of the 4th Division from the East, at about 1,800 yards. The Roumanians got into movement soon after 3 P.M. Right attack.

No. I. Column found the slopes North of the position to be steep and difficult, and the Turkish defences, which had been supposed to be only a line of Infantry trenches, proved to contain a strong redoubt (No. 2) nearly equal in size to the Grivitza redoubt. The attacking column did not get nearer than 80 yards to this redoubt and No. I. Column.

was driven back with considerable loss to the ridge, about 700 yards to the North, where it entrenched itself.

No. II.
Column.

No. II. Column appears to have lost its way in the fog, which is stated to have been particularly thick in the neighbourhood of the Grivitza position; arriving alone, and too late to be of any service, it was repulsed at about 4.30 P.M.*

No. III.
Column.

No. III. Column, advancing rather North of East to the attack of No. 1 Grivitza redoubt, had to traverse a deep valley, at the bottom of which the troops were somewhat sheltered by the brushwood. The formation of attack was as follows:—The 1st battalion, 5th Regiment, and the 2nd Rifle battalion, in 1st Line, directed on the South-West and North-East angles of the redoubt, respectively; each battalion with 2 companies extended as skirmishers and 2 companies as supports. Between these two battalions and a little in rear, as 2nd Line, moved the 2nd battalion, 5th Regiment, and the 13th Militia Regiment. The 1st Brigade of the Division remained in rear of the Centre, in reserve. Two batteries (12 guns) were brought into action about 800 yards East of the redoubt and hastily protected by earthworks. The attack was received by a destructive fire from the redoubt, and from some trenches to the right, which flanked the ground in its front. It was necessary to carry the latter before attempting to storm the redoubt, and the attack was repulsed three times. At about 6 P.M. the 2nd Rifle battalion and the 16th Militia Regiment carried the trenches after some desperate fighting. Finally, at about 7.30, a portion of the Roumanian force entered the redoubt simultaneously with the Russian Brigade.†

No. IV.
Column.

No. IV. Column, which, for some unexplained reason, seems to have started about 1½ hour late, passed through Grivitza village about 4 P.M. on its way to attack the Grivitza redoubt, and, after an ineffective Infantry fire delivered in the fog, moved slowly up the slopes South of the redoubt. The 17th Regiment advanced on the right, with a slight lead, and the 18th Regiment on the left, with an interval which increased during the forward movement; each Regiment with two battalions in 1st Line, Rifle companies as skirmishers, and the 3rd battalion as reserve. The 2 4-pr. batteries which were in the centre came into action against the Turkish trenches

* The accounts of the proceedings of this column are very vague. Some appear to intimate that it lost its way and never reached the redoubt at all. Others simply state that it arrived alone and was repulsed. It seems probable that it arrived on the East front of redoubt No. 2, and, like No. I. column, was driven back by the Turkish fire.

† Some writers state that the attacking force after entering the redoubt was driven out again by the Turks, but subsequently succeeded in retaking the work. The whole history of the Right Attack appears to be somewhat vague and contradictory.

South-West of the redoubt which flanked the approach. It is stated also that a Sapper company with a detachment formed of the Pioneers of the two Regiments took part in the attack, and that a sotnia of the 34th Don Cossacks covered the right flank. The Brigade suffered considerably from the Infantry fire from the front and left flank, and from Artillery fire from the most northerly works of the central group. Major-General Rodionoff, the Brigadier, was obliged to halt the column several times under cover of the ground to restore order to the advance. As the redoubt was neared, a portion of the 18th Regiment carried some of the flanking trenches, and the interval between the two Regiments, through which the two batteries had directed their fire, became closed up. The 17th Regiment finally made a rush for the redoubt, descended into the ditch and climbed the steep and slippery exterior slope on to the parapet, where Colonel Schlitter, commanding the Regiment, was mortally wounded. A portion of the 18th Regiment entered the gorge about the same time, together with some Roumanian troops of the 2nd Rifle battalion, who arrived from the North-East, while the rest of the 18th Regiment, passing round to the left of redoubt No. 1, made an attack on No. 2, which, though unsuccessful, served to prevent the arrival of reinforcements for the garrison of the former work.

Capture of
Grivitzza
redoubt.

At about 7.30 P.M. the Brigade had assembled in the captured redoubt; Colonel Rykatscheff took over the command from Major-General Rodionoff, wounded, and, after some order had been restored to the ranks, distributed the force partly in the redoubt and partly in the adjoining trenches. The interior of the redoubt and the bottom of the ditch were covered with dead bodies. Five guns and a standard constituted the trophies of the Allies.

The losses of the Right Attack were:—

Losses.

Russians	.	.	22 officers	.	.	1,305 men
Roumanians	.	.	56 „	.	.	2,511 „
						<hr/>
Total	.	.	78 „	.	.	3,816 „
						<hr/>

This was out of a total force engaged of about 18,000. The Roumanians had more men killed than wounded.

During the night the Turks from No. 2 Grivitzza redoubt and the neighbouring trenches made three attempts to approach the captured work, but were driven off.

CENTRE ATTACK.

In the centre the whole plan of battle was completely disarranged by an unforeseen occurrence. Soon after 10 A.M. Skobelev's troops

Centre
attack.

West of the Tutschenitza became engaged, and it seems to have been thought that a Turkish movement from redoubt No. 10, directed on the Russian position near to the western extremity of the Radichevo ridge, was occurring. The fog was thick; and either thinking from the firing of Skobelev's troops that the plan had been changed, or deceived by a false alarm, the 63rd Regiment, which was on the extreme left of the ridge, advanced at about 10.30 A.M. to attack redoubt No. 10, and was very shortly afterwards followed by the 117th Regiment, nearest to it in line. The two Regiments reached the line of trenches running South-West from the redoubt towards the Tutschenitza ravine. The ground in front of the position was devoid of cover, and the Turks received the Russians with a terribly destructive fire at short range. The two Regiments were soon completely shattered, and shortly before 2 P.M. they returned to their positions on the ridge with a loss of half their strength. The whole affair appears to have taken place without the knowledge, or to have been beyond the control, of Lieut.-General Schnitnikoff, commanding the 30th Division, and these two Regiments, which had been destined to lead in the general assault at 3 P.M. were already practically *hors de combat*.

Notwithstanding this, however, in order to carry out the pre-arranged plan, General Schnitnikoff ordered the 64th and 118th Regiments to attack soon after 3 P.M. Four batteries of the IVth Corps shelled the work, and these Regiments, following a line of advance further to the North, reached a small valley West of the redoubt, where they found cover. At about 4.30 P.M. the right flank of the attack succeeded in reaching the ditch,* the left slightly refused on account of the arrival of Turkish reinforcements either from Plevna or from the northern redoubts of the central group. For a short time success appeared possible; but there was no Reserve available at the critical moment, and the two Regiments began to fall back hurriedly, the Turks sallying out and firing volleys into them. Further pursuit was checked by the fire of two battalions who lay down at about 200 yards from the redoubt, and the retreat continued. A single battalion which had remained in reserve in the valley, was ordered forward just in time to join in the retreat. By 5 P.M. this second attack was completely over. Desultory picquet firing had meanwhile occurred on the left of the Radichevo ridge, and subsequently the 123rd and 124th Regiments were moved from their position in rear of the centre to the left of the ridge, in order to replace the 63rd and 117th Regiments, but

* Some accounts state that a few of the men penetrated into the redoubt: this appears to be somewhat doubtful, but eye-witnesses, who watched the attack at a distance of about 1,000 yards, were at the time impressed with the idea that the redoubt was taken.

did not arrive in their new position till about 5 P.M. The 119th and 120th Regiments from the General Reserve replaced the 123rd and 124th in rear of the batteries, and the 20th Regiment was told off to Schnitnikoff as a special reserve. The General Reserve had now therefore ceased to exist. At about 5.30 P.M. the Artillery fire reopened on redoubt No. 10, and soon afterwards the 123rd and 124th Regiments were sent to the attack, over nearly the same ground as that traversed by the 63rd and 117th. The firing became very hot for about half an hour, and these two Regiments, which were unable to get nearer than 200 yards to the redoubt, fell back to the ridge soon after 6 P.M., just as darkness was coming on.

The Centre Attack had thus failed completely, and the losses of the 6 Regiments actively engaged were 110 officers and 5,200 men, nearly half of whom belonged to the 63rd and 117th Regiments. Losses.

LEFT ATTACK.

On the 10th September Skobelev had made a reconnaissance on the East side of the Tutschenitz, and had selected positions for the Artillery, from which the redoubts to be attacked (Nos. 12 and 11), and the slopes in their front and left, could be shelled. At 7 A.M. on the 11th, 1½ 9-pounder batteries of the 2nd Artillery Brigade, and the heavy battery (16 guns in all), were ordered to cross the Tutschenitz ravine under the escort of two companies of the 62nd Regiment.* The fire of these guns rendered considerable aid in the operations of the day. Left attack.

The task before Skobelev was to take the 3rd Knoll† of the Green Hills, and then the redoubts on the hills beyond. Two battalions, 61st Regiment, in the centre, in two lines of company columns, with the 10th Rifle battalion on the right, and 3 companies of the 8th Regiment on the left, formed the 1st Line of the attack. The 3rd battalion, 62nd Regiment, and 3 batteries followed in support. It was intended to occupy and entrench the 3rd Knoll, and to wait for the hour of the general assault (3 P.M.) before proceeding to attack the redoubts.

At about 10 A.M. the advance began, and the Knoll was occupied without difficulty, the Turks falling back on the redoubts and some trenches and rifle pits in front, from which they opened fire on the Russians. The latter were somewhat spared by the high crop of maize, and the ground was very soft; but the supply of tools was miserably insuffi- Occupation of 3rd Knoll.

* The position taken up by the batteries is shown in *Pl. II.*

† The position of the 3rd Knoll is difficult to make out on any of the maps, and is not well shown either in *Pl. II.* or *Pl. III.* This so-called Knoll was probably not a very well-defined hill, and its position seems to have been immediately in front of the 2nd Knoll, as figured on *Pl. II.* and *Pl. III.*

cient, and it was necessary to borrow from the 7th and 62nd Regiments in order to obtain the means of creating substantial cover. The Turks very soon took the offensive, and began to press the Russians on the 3rd Knoll seriously; before 11 A.M. the Infantry fire had become very hot, and the 3rd battalion, 61st Regiment, was ordered into the fighting line. Considerable losses had already occurred in the 61st Regiment and the 10th Rifle battalion, and the 62nd Regiment was brought up as a reserve behind the 3rd Knoll, sheltered as much as possible from the Turkish fire. At about 2 P.M. a thick chain of Turkish skirmishers approached close to the Russian position, their fire causing losses not only to the 1st Line but also to the reserves. The 62nd Regiment, supported by the 9th Rifle battalion, was at once ordered to make a counter attack, and succeeded in pressing back the Turks on their entrenchments. At the same time the 7th Regiment was ordered to replace the 62nd in reserve.

Meanwhile the hour for the general assault was approaching, a third battery was brought up to the 2nd Knoll, and the disposition was now as follows:—In 1st Line, on the 3rd Knoll, the 61st and 62nd Regiments, with the 9th and 10th Rifle battalions; between the 2nd and 3rd Knolls, the 7th Regiment; in the trenches on the 2nd Knoll, 2 battalions each of the 5th and 8th Regiments, and 3 batteries; behind the 2nd Knoll, the 6th Regiment and the 11th and 12th Rifle battalions; and, finally, 1 battalion, 5th Regiment, in occupation of Brestovatz.

Assaults on
redoubts
Nos. 12 and
11.

At 2.30 P.M. the 3 9-pounder batteries on the 2nd Knoll opened fire over the 3rd Knoll on the redoubts, at about 2,400 yards range; and at 3 P.M. the 61st and 62nd Regiments, supported on the right by the 9th and 10th Rifle battalions, advanced to the final assault directed on redoubt No. 12. It was necessary to descend from the 3rd Knoll, to cross a small valley and a stream with steep banks, and to climb a bare slope for about 700 yards in front of the redoubt. The 7th Regiment was ordered to support the attack, and the 6th Regiment, with the 11th and 12th Rifle battalions—now the last reserve—replaced the 7th Regiment in rear of the 3rd Knoll. The entire Turkish position consisted of two works (Nos. 12 and 11),* connected by deep trenches and provided with supplementary trenches and rifle pits in front.

The attack was received by Infantry and Artillery fire from the redoubts and trenches, the former being excessively heavy. More-

* In the Russian accounts the works are spoken of invariably as redoubts; and Skobelev's report states that they were 'of good profile,' and speaks of No. 12 as a 'large and strong redoubt,' but at this time they were unfinished, as stated on p. 93, and inferior to the average of the Plevna works.

over from the Krischin redoubt, and some of the works of the Central Group, the Turkish Artillery was able to enfilade the line of advance. The greater portion of the 1st Line halted on reaching the stream, and only a few skirmishers attempted to climb the slopes beyond, and, lying down, opened an ineffective fire on the well-covered Turks.

It was necessary to bring up the 7th Regiment,* and to replace the latter by the last reserve—the 6th Regiment and the 11th and 12th Rifle battalions.

The 7th Regiment advanced in good order and crossed the stream, carrying with it a portion of the 61st and 62nd Regiments, but the Turkish Artillery and Infantry fire from the works Nos. 12 and 11, together with Artillery fire from the Krischin redoubt, was terribly destructive. Halfway up the slope, the attack again came to a standstill; while many of the men began to fall back and to make their way to the rear. The moment was critical, and it was necessary either to bring up the final reserves at once, or to withdraw the attacking line and to give up ground gained at great sacrifice. Skobelev decided to make a last effort, and threw the 11th and 12th Rifle battalions, with 12 companies of the 6th Regiment into the fighting line. The advance received a new impetus, the men rushing forward in detached groups; the foremost trenches were carried, and finally, at about 4.30 p.m., the redoubt was entered, one gun falling into the hands of the Russians.

The laggards soon began to arrive in large numbers and crowded into the work and the neighbouring trenches—a confused mass of men of several Regiments. The redoubt was almost completely open to the Infantry fire from the entrenched camp about 600 yards in rear, and to the Artillery fire of the Krischin work (No. 14), which commanded it at about 2,800 yards distance, and the Turkish shells began to drop into it, causing demoralising losses. To this was added Infantry fire from work No. 11, only about 500 yards distant, while an Infantry attack on the left flank soon threatened. At first the greatest disorder prevailed, some of the men 'fired from behind the parapet of the redoubt without exposing their heads, others fired into the air from the bottom of the ditch;' but subsequently Captain Kouropatkin succeeded in withdrawing some 300 men from the redoubt and trenches, and, advancing about 200 yards from the captured redoubt, opposed a line of skirmishers to the enemy's attack on the Russian left. This force, soon reinforced by other bodies of men from the captured redoubt, succeeded in check-

* Some accounts state that 3 field batteries advanced with the 7th Regiment; that in a few minutes only 8 guns were in action, the rest being reduced to a 'confused mass of killed men and horses,' and that the batteries were withdrawn as soon as possible by Infantry with drag ropes. Skobelev's report does not mention this circumstance, but the statement is attributed to him in the *Times* correspondence.

ing the Turks, and at about 5.30 p.m. the fire on this flank died away. A Cossack detachment, which about the same time penetrated into the village of Krischin, and an H.A. battery, which opened fire on the Krischin redoubt, are stated to have contributed great assistance in repulsing this attack. It was now of vital importance to create cover without delay on the exposed left flank, but, as usual, entrenching tools in any quantity were not available, and only 'a few shovels and axes' were at hand.

Meanwhile a portion of the trenches, about 100 yards to the West of the captured redoubt, still remained occupied by the Turks, and the fire from work No. 11 on the right flank caused much annoyance. Another Russian sortie of about 100 men, led by some officers, was made, and succeeded in dislodging the Turks from the intervening trenches; but, pressing on unsupported to attack the westerly redoubt, they were completely repulsed and chased back by the Turks, losing three-fourths of their number.

During the course of the attack Imeretinski, with his staff, had been actively employed in collecting and forming up the stragglers into detachments ready to be sent to the front. At about 5 p.m. reinforcements to the extent of 1,200 men, consisting of three fresh companies of the 6th Regiment, with some companies made up from fragments of the 7th, 62nd Regiment, and the 12th Rifle battalion, crossed the brook to join the advanced line, followed shortly afterwards by a further detachment made up of $2\frac{1}{2}$ companies of the 61st Regiment. A portion of this force was directed on to the exposed left flank of redoubt No. 12; but the companies of the 7th and 62nd Regiments attacked redoubt No. 11, and, aided by a simultaneous sortie from No. 12, the former work was entered from both sides at about 5.30 p.m., and Lieut.-Colonel Mostzevoi, of the 62nd Regiment, taking the command, prepared to defend it. The left attack was now ended, and the capture of the two redoubts had cost the Russians about 3,000 men.

In No. 12, Major-General Dobrovolski had assumed command, and, when he was mortally wounded, the direction of the defence devolved upon Major-General Tebjänik,* commanding 1st Brigade, 16th Division.

The darkness was now coming on, and the Turkish fire began to slacken, but the position was very precarious. The redoubts and the connecting trenches were held by detachments of the 7th, 61st, and 62nd Regiments, and of the 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th Rifle battalions. There remained on the 2nd Knoll, in rear of the captured position, 2

* The name is also spelt Tebiakina.

battalions of the 8th Regiment covering the left flank, and the shattered 5th Regiment, one battalion of which occupied Brestovatz, besides a number of stragglers and slightly wounded men of all regiments, who, during the night, were gradually collected and formed into detachments: 24 guns remained in the Artillery position on the 2nd Knoll. Besides the above there remained no further reserve.

Round the redoubts the greatest activity prevailed through the night, and every effort was made to turn the Turkish trenches for the purposes of the next day's defence. The men dug with the covers of mess tins, with bayonets, and with their hands. The shelter huts of the Turks were demolished, and the branches with which they were roofed served to strengthen the new parapets. It is stated that the traverses and revetments constructed of sods were very useful, as they could readily be demolished and removed. In the counterscarp of the redoubt niches were formed breast high; * on the open side, towards Plevna, of redoubt No. 11 a parapet of bodies was even made. But in spite of the labour, which it is easy to believe was not stinted, Captain Kourapatkin, who had charge of the work, states that on the morning of the 12th September the positions were 'nearly in the same condition as when they were taken.' It was a terrible lesson on the vital necessity of providing troops with a sufficient and immediately available supply of entrenching tools.†

Early in the night, Skobelev placed himself between the 2nd Knoll and the captured redoubts, being extremely anxious for the safety of his right and left flanks, which, for a distance of about 2,000 yards from the redoubts, were at first undefended, and covered with killed and wounded men. A weak battalion of the 8th Regiment was ordered up by Imeretinski, and one company was extended on each flank in skirmishing order as far to the front as possible, 3 companies remaining in reserve, subsequently reinforced by stragglers who were improvised into a battalion 1,000 strong.

Night
11th Sep-
tember.

In the darkness the Turks made an advance on the left flank, and some Infantry fire occurred, which soon died out. Immediately afterwards volleys were fired on the right flank. At first it was reported that the fire came from Russian troops; ‡ but subsequently it was

* With regard to the precise nature of the work attempted it is difficult to arrive at a clear idea. Skobelev's report (Translated by Captain A. O. Green, R.E., *Occasional Papers*, No. 7, 1878, p. 229) is not very intelligible on the subject.

† Whether any Sappers were employed in the captured positions cannot be stated; but the only technical troops present with Imeretinski's Corps at Lovtcha consisted of a detachment of 35 to 40 men, and this miserably inadequate provision was apparently not supplemented before the attack on Plevna.

‡ Skobelev seems to have thought that the IVth Corps were making a night attack on the positions before which they had been defeated in the day.

thought to be from the enemy, and the men of the 7th Regiment were ordered to reply. Here also the firing soon ceased, and it is even now impossible to ascertain what actually took place. Skobelev then completed his dispositions for the night: the right flank was covered with $2\frac{1}{2}$ companies of the 8th Regiment—one extended in line, the remainder in rear as a support: the line of skirmishers, formed of a single company of the 8th Regiment on the left flank, was prolonged to the left by a company from the improvised battalion. The rest of the force was drawn up in two lines a little in advance of the 3rd Knoll, and fronting towards the captured redoubts, with a single improvised company of Rifles in reserve.

Occasional firing occurred during the night, and it was necessary to use great efforts to keep the troops on the alert. Wearied out, they fell asleep as soon as they were halted; but from time to time they were made to stand up and were mustered, while strong patrols were at intervals despatched along the lines covering the flanks. At about 11 P.M. a small detachment of Vladi-Kaukas and Don Cossacks joined Skobelev, and a few Cavalry outposts were thrown out to the front, while small parties were told off to keep up communication between the redoubts and the rear. Skobelev retained 50 or 60 of the Vladi-Kaukas Cossacks in hand, and determined to sacrifice them in case of a night attack.

The situation was rendered more painful by the cries of the wounded, who were scattered about the ground between the 3rd Knoll and the redoubts, and whom it was difficult for the ambulance parties to find and collect in the darkness.

In the redoubts the ammunition, especially that of the men of the Rifle Brigade, was running short, and mistakes and confusion seem to have arisen from the difference of armament. Two ammunition waggons were at hand, but contained only Krenka cartridges. Finally a party of 20 Cossacks were sent to the rear to find the Berdan waggons, and succeeded by daybreak in bringing up a sufficient supply to the redoubts.

During the night the Turks made some desultory attacks on the redoubts, but the Russians do not seem to have been very severely pressed. From daybreak to 6 A.M. they were unmolested, and Skobelev withdrew some of the troops from the redoubts, where they were uselessly crowded.

There remained nothing to be done but to await the Turkish attack; while Osman Pasha, having completely defeated the centre attack, and inflicted losses which could not fail to shake the morale of the whole allied army, was now able to direct his whole attention to Skobelev's force.

Immediately after the capture of the redoubts Skobelev sent a report to the Commander-in-Chief earnestly begging for reinforcements, and stating that, with the force at his disposal, he was quite unable to follow up his success. At about midnight Colonel Orloff, one of the Grand Duke's aides-de-camp, arrived at Skobelev's position after a ride of nearly 15 miles from Head-Quarters, and, the whole urgency of the situation on the left flank having been explained to him, he returned, and must have reached Head-Quarters again before 5 A.M. At about 7 A.M. Skobelev received the following despatch forwarded from Imeretinski:—

'To General Prince Imeretinski:—By direction of the Commander-in-Chief, I give you and General Skobelev the order to fortify yourselves in the position you have taken to-day, and to hold out to the last extremity. We can send you no reinforcements, for we have none. I await detailed reports of the losses of the 30th August (11th September).

'ZOTOFF, Lieut.-General.'

The above must have been written before Colonel Orloff's mission, and, at about 10.30 A.M. on the 12th, the latter returned to Skobelev's position with a fresh despatch:—

'To General Skobelev:—By order of the Commander-in-Chief. If you cannot hold the positions which you have taken, you are to commence retreating slowly on Tutschenitza, but in any case not before evening, if possible. Send a copy of this order of His Imperial Highness to Prince Imeretinski. Keep this order a most profound secret. It is very plain to me that you will understand it, and take the necessary steps to carry it out.

'The Grivitza redoubt is in our hands, but we have no means left for continuing the offensive, and it has been decided to withdraw slowly.

'ZOTOFF, Lieutenant-General.

'31st August (12th September), 8.30 A.M.'

Even after the receipt of these two despatches, Skobelev appears to have gone on hoping, either that a portion of the IVth Corps would move across the Tutschenitza to his assistance, or that the attack would be recommenced so as to relieve the pressure on this side.

12TH SEPTEMBER.

Soon after 6 A.M. the Turkish Artillery opened on the captured works from the Krischin redoubt, and from the nearest works of the central group, about 2,500 yards distant. A half-battery of the 2nd

Turkish
attacks on
12th Sep-
tember.

Brigade, under Captain Vasilieff, was brought up into redoubt No. 12, and came into action just as an Infantry attack from the direction of the Krischin redoubt was developing. The Turkish Infantry advanced to within 350 yards, under heavy fire from the Russian Infantry and case from the guns, but subsequently retired, and lay down at about 1,000 yards range, keeping up a heavy fire. A Russian sortie from the redoubt was immediately repulsed.

At about 8 A.M. a second attack, in greater force, took place from the same direction; and Skobelev, who was on the 3rd Knoll, threw forward, on the Turkish right flank, a thick chain of skirmishers, who opened fire at 1,000–1,200 yards, while a battery of the 3rd Brigade was brought up to the 3rd Knoll, and opened with case. The Turks advanced against the redoubt with great bravery, but halted at about 700 yards and lay down, firing. The Russian fire on their flank, however, soon caused them to retire. At about the same time the Russians in No. 11 redoubt were engaged with a Turkish force which moved from Plevna, and endeavoured to turn the Russian right flank under cover of the ground.

The Russian position became more and more desperate; the battery on the 3rd Knoll had to be withdrawn, having suffered severely; and at about 10.30 A.M. a third Turkish attack occurred, directed on the front and left of redoubt No. 12, and supported by 2 field batteries. The Turkish fire was terribly hot, and some shells from the batteries seem to have produced a considerable moral effect on the garrison of the redoubt. The Russian troops began to evacuate redoubt No. 12, at first singly, but soon in groups, while the infection spread to redoubt No. 11. Just in time Skobelev himself went to the front, and rallying the men, led them back, but not before some of the foremost Turks had penetrated into the westerly redoubt. The third attack, like those which preceded, was repulsed.

Skobelev returned to the 3rd Knoll and reinforced the weakened garrisons of the redoubts with a few companies of the 8th Regiment, and a combined detachment of the 6th and 7th Regiments. The right wing was now threatened by the Turks advancing up the Tutschenitz ravine, and a company of Rifles, with 2 guns, was moved up to reinforce the right flank. The Russians began soon to yield ground in this quarter, but 2 fresh companies of the 6th Regiment were moved up, and the Turkish advance was temporarily checked.

The position in the redoubts was becoming still more critical. Two of the guns in No. 12 had been disabled and taken to the rear, and 3 fresh guns of the 3rd Brigade were sent up to replace them; but their ammunition waggon was almost immediately blown up by a

Turkish shell, causing great loss. At about 2 P.M. some more miscellaneous reinforcements, consisting of 2 weak battalions of the 5th Regiment, and a combined company of the 11th and 12th Rifle battalions were sent up by Imeretinski: 4 companies of the 5th were ordered into the redoubts, 3 were posted on the 3rd Knoll, and the remaining 3 in reserve on the left wing, and the Rifles in rear behind the 2nd Knoll.

The Turks soon advanced again on the left flank, which was immediately reinforced as far as possible; and after a hot fire on both sides for about three quarters of an hour, they withdrew.

At 2.30 P.M. Skobelev was informed of the arrival of the 118th Regiment, 1,300 strong; but thinking it impossible, under the circumstances, to relieve the garrisons of the redoubts, he posted it in reserve.

At about 3.30 P.M. Skobelev visited the redoubts and endeavoured to cheer the troops. The 3 guns of the 3rd Brigade were completely disabled, and the 2 remaining guns of the 2nd Brigade had lost all their gunners, and were ordered to be removed.

At about 4.30 P.M. the Turks made a final simultaneous attack in force on both redoubts. The Russian fire was unable to check their advance, and the defenders of No. 12 soon began gradually to leave the work. Some few men, with Major Gortaloff, on whom the command had devolved, remained to the last, and fell. By 5 P.M. the position was lost, and 3 Russian guns, with the previously captured Turkish gun, remained in the hands of the Turks. The defenders of No. 11 held out a short time longer; but the situation was hopeless, and Skobelev sent orders to Colonel Mostzevoi to retire.*

Loss of the
captured
redoubts.

The Russian retreat to the 2nd Knoll was covered by the 118th Regiment and two sotnias of Cossacks, and seems to have been carried out in good order. The position on the 2nd Knoll was strengthened as much as possible, and was held till 7 P.M. on the 13th, when the whole force retired on Bogot, in accordance with orders received.

* Zotoff, in his report describes the close of the fighting, in somewhat inadequate terms. 'Five furious attacks which the enemy delivered with considerable forces against the troops of General Skobelev during the course of the day, were brilliantly repulsed; and when the General, conformably with orders received, commenced his retiring movement on Tutschenitzza in the evening, the enemy did not dare to follow him up, and contented himself with occupying the redoubts which had been voluntarily abandoned.' This will hardly be deemed an adequate account of the circumstances.

It is perhaps worth noticing, that while the main facts above described are quite beyond question, the author of *Plevna, the Sultan, and the Porte*, who is stated to have been present with the Turks, gives a totally different account of the whole affair, and says that the Turks were on the defensive all the night of the 11th, holding two redoubts against the Russians who had taken a third. 'With a bravery which deserves to be recorded and honoured for all time, that isolated band held fiercely to their places, fighting all through that dreadful night' (p. 196).

Thus terminated the 3rd battle of Plevna; and the only result obtained by the Russians in return for a terrible loss of life, and an enormous expenditure of Artillery ammunition, was the Grivitza redoubt, the capture of which did not hasten the ultimate fall of the place by a day.

Russian
losses.

The Russian losses were approximately as follows :—

		Officers.	Men.
Bombardment, September 7th–10th		10	300
Green Hills, September 8th–10th		*—	900
September 11th	{ Right Attack { Roumanians	56	2,511
	{ 1st Brigade 5th Division	22	1,305
	{ 2nd " 16th "	110	5,200
	{ 1st " 30th "		
	{ 2nd " 31st "		
Sept. 11th and 12th. Left Attack	{ 1st " 16th "	160	7,200
	{ — " 2nd "		
	{ 3rd Rifle Brigade		
	{ 118th Regiment		
Total		358	17,416†

Of this number about 76 officers and 7,500 men were killed. The heaviest numerical loss fell to Skobelev's troops; but this force had by far the greatest share in the fighting; *before* the 11th it had lost over 900 men, and of the total (7,200) about 3,000 fell on the 12th in the defence of the captured redoubts. The losses in some of Skobelev's Regiments seem very great; thus the 5th Regiment lost 11 officers, 1,066 men; the 6th Regiment, 14 officers, 1,201 men; the 7th Regiment, 7 officers, 1,015 men; these Regiments having an average effective probably not exceeding 2,500 men. By far the most severe losses, whether considered in relation to the effective strength engaged, or having regard to the duration of time in which they occurred, took place in the resultless centre attack. It is interesting to attempt to estimate the per centages. Thus the Roumanian loss amounts to 12·3 per cent. of the 2 Divisions present, reckoning the latter at 20,000, but 18·1 per cent. of the total number actually engaged (about 14,000). The weak 1st Brigade, 5th Division (Russians), which co-operated with the Roumanians, lost fully 35 per cent. The 6 Regiments which attacked redoubt No. 10 lost about 40 per cent. Supposing Skobelev to have had an effective strength on the morning of the 11th of 13,000, and adding the weak 118th Regiment (1,300), his

* The loss in officers on the Green Hills from 8th to 10th September cannot be stated.

† Most accounts give a rather lower total—12,500 men (Russians) and 2,500–3,000 men (Roumanians), but some writers place the total at 21,000. It was some time before the extent of the losses was known even in the Russian army. The figures given above are taken from Lieut. Greene's work. The author had exceptional opportunities of obtaining accurate information on the subject, and his figures are no doubt substantially correct.

losses on the *two* days of fighting would be about 50 per cent., or an average of 25 per cent. on each day.* In reality, the percentage was rather higher, as the 118th probably suffered but little on the 12th. Of the whole strength of the Infantry engaged between the 9th and 12th September, the losses would be about 31 per cent; and of the whole allied force before Plevna about 23 per cent.

The total Turkish loss is, as usual, difficult to arrive at; in different accounts it ranges from 8,000 to 15,000. Osman Pasha forwarded a very modest despatch to Constantinople, announcing his great victory, but did not state his loss. During the bombardment the casualties were doubtless very slight, but in the unsuccessful and apparently rather useless attempts to retake the Grivitza redoubt, and on the Green Hills,† heavy loss occurred. It may, however, probably be taken, that the total loss was under 12,000.

Turkish losses.

On the evening of the 12th September the Allied Army held practically the same position as on the 10th, with the sole addition of the Grivitza redoubt. The batteries still remained within short range of the Turkish works, but great efforts were made to improve their cover, and throughout the 13th and 14th, in view of the possibility of a Turkish attack, the Russian troops worked day and night, throwing up Infantry trenches all along the front, from the Grivitza redoubt South to the Radichevo ridge, and then West along the latter nearly to the Tutschenitz ravine. The left flank was strengthened by a strong redoubt, constructed towards the western extremity of the Radichevo ridge. (*Pl. III.*)

Trench work subsequent to the battle.

At the same time the Roumanians threw up a battery close to the South-West corner of the Grivitza redoubt, which was intended to sweep the valley between Grivitza and Plevna, to hinder the Turks from bringing up reserves to this part of their position by day, and to shell redoubt No. 2. In order to connect the captured redoubt with the Roumanian position, a deep trench, about 1,300 yards in length, was carried from the former to the small outwork captured on the 8th September, forming a covered way leading to the redoubt. All this work is stated to have been entrusted to the 3rd company of Roumanian Engineers, and to have been begun on the evening of the 12th and completed in three days.

From the 13th to the 15th the Russian batteries bombarded the Turkish works with more or less vigour, probably rather with

Turkish attack on the Grivitza redoubt.

* Excluding the 118th Regiment, the losses of the Left Attack would be over 55 per cent.

† One writer, an eye-witness on the Turkish side, estimates the loss on the Green Hills on the 11th and 12th September at 1,000–1,100; but, as he also states that 8,000 Russian bodies were left on this part of the field, these figures are probably not worth much.

the tactical unfitness of their troops to carry out, the task.* With regard to the second view, which belongs to a class of very facile criticism, it is sufficient to state that it is not held by any of the Continental writers, who are unanimous in praising the behaviour of the troops, while they unsparingly condemn the way in which the latter were handled. That German troops, under equal numerical and material conditions, would have succeeded in taking Plevna on the 11th may perhaps be granted; but they would have so succeeded not by greater gallantry, but by a very different plan of attack, carried out under a far more enlightened system of tactics.

Causes of
the Russian
defeat.

The Russian defeat was due to the combined action of many causes, which it is far more easy to point out, than to rate at their proper relative value. Necessity may frequently dictate a front attack on an entrenched position; but all modern experience goes to prove that such attacks entail heavy losses even if successful, and should be always avoided if possible. In the 3rd battle of Plevna the attack was purely frontal, though it appears certain that this course of action was not inevitable. The state of the defences on the North between Bukova and Opanetz, and on the South from Krischin to the Vid, is not fully known, but there is no doubt that on the Southern line no works then existed between Krischin and the Vid, while on the North the plan of the position drawn up after the capitulation shows a gap of some 3,500 yards without any work, and, at the time of the assault, the Opanetz defences had not nearly reached their subsequent development. Having regard to the then aspect of the Turkish defences, it would seem clear, therefore, that the plan of attack should have prescribed a demonstration, supported by heavy Artillery fire, on the well-defended portion of the front and an Infantry attack in force round either flank of the position, or on its rear if (as appears probable) the Vid was easily fordable at the time. It appears almost certain that if such a plan had been adopted Plevna would have fallen; but it is not very clear that the Russian Staff possessed a sufficient knowledge of the position to carry it out. However this may be, the Russian attack was delivered on the strongest front which Plevna then offered, and there are no signs of an attempt to turn either flank. Skobelev's attack on the West of the Tutschenitzza was delivered well within the line of the Turkish defences, though perhaps on a weaker sector than the other attacks, while the purely Cavalry operations round the left flank of the position had nothing of the nature of a turning movement, and were planned in view of the probability of a Turkish retreat.

* Both Skobelev and Imeretinski are stated to have been bitterly opposed to the whole plan of attack.

The attacking force was certainly too weak for a general attack in force over a front of nearly $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles. The relative strength called for a demonstration at several points, combined with an attack in force round one flank of the position. And in such an operation the considerable Cavalry and Horse Artillery force, which actually rendered no assistance whatever, might have taken part. The Russian plan, however, was something very different; and the idea of making a principal attack West of the Tutschenitza, as advanced in Zotoff's report (p. 96), must unquestionably be considered an afterthought: the distribution of the troops and the retention of a main Reserve in rear of the centre point conclusively the other way. Thus in round numbers 20,000 Roumanians were originally allotted to the Right Attack, 25,000 Russians (IVth and IXth Corps) to the Centre, and 11-12,000 to the Left, with a general Reserve in the centre of about 7,000. Before the assault, however, the Wings were strengthened at the expense of the Centre, and the distribution on the 11th was approximately: Right Attack, 24,000; Centre, 23-24,000;* Left, 15-16,000; the strengthening of the right flank being probably due to a distrust of the fighting capacity of the untried Roumanian Army, and that of the left to a growing insight into the strength and importance of the Krischin position. There is here no sign of an intention to make one attack of more importance than the others, and the plan strongly resembles those of the previous battles—separate attacks, so far apart as to be without tactical contact, or the possibility of complete co-operation, varied in this case by a long Artillery preparation. The impression is rather that the greater importance was attached to the Grivitza attack (the Grivitza redoubt being erroneously held to be the key of the whole position), and that the operations West of the Tutschenitza were held to be somewhat subordinate. In the fighting of July 30th, Skobelev's small detachment, acting in this part of the field, had been able to render great assistance, and it would seem as if it were now intended to strengthen the pressure on the Turkish right flank. But the whole aspect of the position in this quarter had been totally changed by the construction of the Krischin works, and Imeretinski's force, though too strong for a mere demonstration, was certainly too weak to obtain a decisive result unsupported.

Again, the small General Reserve was so posted as to be completely unavailable for either of the flank attacks, and proved in the sequel to be merely a special reserve for the centre.

It appears, therefore, that the three attacks were mutually inde-

* Including in this case the General Reserve, which proved to be only a special Reserve for the Centre Attack.

Plan of
attack.

Distribution
of force.

pendent; that there was no provision for throwing a preponderating force against any weak point which might be discovered, nor for following up any advantage gained; and that the plan of attack practically committed the whole force to a particular line of action, so that it became subsequently impossible to take advantage of the incidents of the battle.

A faulty plan of operations is the less excusable in a case of this kind, because there was ample time for full and complete deliberation. The Turks in Plevna offered merely a passive resistance; the Russians were able to attack in any way and at any time they chose, and could mature their plans for days beforehand, with a full knowledge of the nature of the task before them.

Russian
knowledge
of position.

As to the degree of knowledge really possessed by the Russian Staff of the position to be attacked, but little is certainly known. There are indications, however, that this knowledge was very far from perfect. Thus, the existence of the 2nd Grivitza redoubt appears to have been a complete surprise to the troops of the Right Attack, while the nature of the Krischin defences was evidently imperfectly understood. Skobelev, in his report, candidly confesses the complete inadequacy of his reconnaissances. Cavalry reconnaissances were doubtless carried out during August and the early days of September, but they were not pressed home, and a comparison of even the October map of the Russians (*Pl. II.*) with that showing the complete defences of Plevna (*Pl. III.*), proves how difficult it is to make out the nature and even the positions of earthworks in a country such as that round Plevna. One of the most important lessons taught by the battle is that it is all important, before attacking positions provisionally fortified, to obtain a thorough knowledge of their defences. A well-entrenched position must be treated as an unknown fortress, and knowledge of the works must be obtained, if other means fail,* by pressing strong reconnaissances to close quarters, even at the sacrifice of men. Failing this, greater sacrifices in the attack will probably be entailed.

Defeat of
Centre
Attack.

The premature and complete defeat of the Centre Attack undoubtedly had a great share in determining the fate of the battle, but many matters relating to it remain unfortunately unexplained. The fog on the morning of the 11th, and the sounds of battle from the West side of the Tutschenitza, certainly rendered mistakes possible, but made it so much the more necessary to adhere strictly to the pre-arranged plan. When Generals Schnitnikoff and Kriloff first realised

* In the future, balloons are doubtless destined to play an important part in the reconnaissance of such positions as that of Plevna.

the premature advance of the 63rd and 117th Regiments cannot be stated.* These Regiments fought alone, unsupported, for more than 3 hours; and it would be interesting to know whether any attempts were made to recall them and when, and also whether any application was made for permission to prosecute the Centre Attack when it was once begun.

In any case it seems a terrible error to have left these Regiments unsupported, and then at the appointed hour to have begun the attack all over again with a fresh Brigade, but without any greater chances of success. The circumstance indicates a want of resource, and of the power of rapidly meeting an unforeseen occurrence, on the part of the Russians, of which there are many other instances in the campaign. It was a want of strict adherence to the plan of attack which caused the premature advance of the two Regiments; but, as soon as they were committed to the movement beyond the possibility of recall, a modification of this plan appears to have been urgently needed. Now, however, the plan was rigidly adhered to, no attempt was made to prosecute the Centre Attack and, even after the disastrous repulse of the two Regiments, the original scheme was carried out, although the condition of affairs in the Centre was totally changed before 3 p.m.

Nor is it by any means clear with whom the power of recalling or supporting the two Regiments, or of modifying the plan of action in the Centre after their defeat, really lay. General Schnituikoff is credited with the direction of the Centre Attack; but General Kriloff commanded the IVth Corps, from which the troops were drawn. And it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that a confusion of authority must have existed in the higher ranks also. Prince Charles of Roumania nominally commanded the allied army, with General Zotoff as Chief of the Staff; but his position must have been altogether changed by the arrival of the Commander-in-Chief with the Chief and Assistant-Chief of the Staff of the Army, Generals Neposchoitschitski and Levitzki. And further, the presence of the Emperor with another large Staff, together with General Milutin, Minister of War, would not tend to simplify matters.† Prince Charles appears to have concerned himself mainly with his own army; and both the

The Russian commands.

* General Zotoff is stated to have been present on the Radichevo ridge when these regiments broke loose at 11 A.M., and to have been unable for an hour to ascertain what had really occurred (*Daily News Correspondence*, vol. i., p. 473). According to other accounts, however, he was not within a mile and a half of this position at the time. Whether he took any decided steps cannot be stated.

† All of these officers took part in the Councils of War held on the 13th and 14th September, and the Emperor is stated to have presided.

Grand Duke Nicolas, Commander-in-Chief, and the Emperor were present in the Centre during the battle, but the precise part they played in the direction of affairs cannot be stated.* The former, on his arrival, must have assumed his full position; but the orders apparently emanated from General Zotoff, Chief of the Staff to Prince Charles, and no mention is made of Generals Nepochoitschitski and Levitzki, though, previous to the battle, the latter is stated to have arrived with special instructions from the Commander-in-Chief to Prince Charles: both these officers doubtless gave directions during the fighting.

Again, besides Kriloff and Schnitnikoff, there were present, in the Centre, Baron Krudener, commanding IXth Corps, and Generals Schilder-Schuldner, Pomeranzeff, and Veliaminoff, commanding 5th, 16th, and 31st Divisions, about whose positions and functions nothing definite seems to have been settled.

In the Left Attack the state of the command was highly anomalous. Major-General Skobelev, at first commander of the 'Advanced Guard,' or 'First Echelon' of Imeretinski's force, subsequently became practically independent, and Imeretinski seems to have been ordered simply to support him. It resulted from this, that the latter General, having gradually made over his whole force to his junior, had no command left, and seems to have made himself generally useful in superintending the collecting of stragglers. That he accepted his deposition and loyally supported his junior, reflects great credit on him, and under Skobelev's leading the force achieved a considerable success, but the situation was not greatly conducive to military discipline.†

To the apparent confusion in the commands was added—or perhaps was due—a very marked mixing up of the Brigades and Divisions engaged. Thus, in the centre in the first line, under General Schnitnikoff, commanding 30th Division, were:—

IVth Corps	{	16th Division, 2nd Brigade	{	63rd Regiment.
			{	64th "
		30th " 1st "	{	117th "
			{	118th "

In second line, or special reserve, *not* apparently under Schnitnikoff's orders:—

IXth Corps, 31st Division, 2nd Brigade	{	123rd Regiment.
		124th "

* One writer does not hesitate to attribute the determination to discontinue the attack to the effect produced on the minds of the Grand Duke's Staff by the terrible repulse in the Centre which occurred before their eyes, and to the injudicious humanitarianism of the Emperor himself, who shrank from further sacrifices.—*Neue Militärische Blätter*.

† Prince Imeretinski was, however, subsequently appointed Chief of the Staff to Todleben, and the latter speaks in flattering terms of his services in this capacity.

To cover the Artillery position, under the orders of Veliaminoff, or possibly Krudener :—

IXth Corps, 31st Division, 1st Brigade { 121st Regiment.
122nd „

In the General Reserve, apparently under the direct orders of the Commander-in-Chief, or possibly of Prince Charles :—

IVth Corps, 30th Division, 2nd Brigade { 119th Regiment.
120th „
IXth „ 5th „ 2nd „ 20th „

Detached to co-operate with the Roumanians :—

IXth Corps, 5th Division, 1st Brigade { 17th Regiment.
18th „

Detached to Skobelev's command :—

IVth Corps, 16th Division, 1st Brigade { 61st Regiment.
62nd „

This splitting up of Divisions, which marks the Russian order of battle, has been attributed to the fact that the Brigade, as an intermediate unit between the Division and the Regiment, was somewhat new to the Russian Army. The apparent complication of the order of battle must certainly have tended to add to the general confusion, and to make it difficult for the Generals to know over what troops their command really extended.

In the Right Attack there was an evident want of co-operation between the Russians and the Roumanians. Whether any preconceived plan of attack on the Grivitza redoubt existed or not, it appears that the time of starting of the Russian Brigade was altogether miscalculated, so that it arrived on the ground after the Roumanians had been for some time engaged. It seems to have been a mere fortunate coincidence that the Roumanians and the Russians finally entered the redoubt together towards nightfall.

In the Centre, as has been already noticed, three Brigades were successively launched against the strongly-entrenched position of which redoubt No. 10 was the centre, there being no more prospect of success for the last than for the first. The Turkish Infantry must have suffered comparatively little from the Russian fire during the advance, and they doubtless retired to cover in rear of the redoubt when the bombardment began again after the first repulse. There seems to have been no sufficient reason for attacking this position at all; but it was in any case a fatal mistake to attack in such a way that the Turks

Right
Attack.

Centre
Attack.

never felt the full weight of the force employed, and were able to defeat it in detail.

Left Attack.

On the left, the attack succeeded owing to Skobelev's able and energetic leadership; * but the success gained proved worthless, as there were either no means, or, more probably, no inclination, to follow it up.

Troops not engaged.

On the evening of the 11th there still remained at the disposal of the Commander-in-Chief the 10th, 20th, 119th, 120th, 121st, and 122nd Regiments, with a total strength probably not less than 12,000 men—more than one-fourth of the total of the Russian Infantry—which had not been engaged, besides the Roumanian Reserve Division. Zotoff, in his despatch to Skobelev (p. 117), must therefore have meant that it was not considered advisable to employ these Regiments, not, as stated, that no reinforcements existed. When he wrote, it had doubtless been already decided at Headquarters not to continue the battle. Without an intimate personal knowledge of the precise tactical condition of the beaten troops in the Russian Centre, one must hesitate to pronounce, as has been done by at least one writer, that it was a mistake not to reinforce Skobelev and reopen the fighting on the 12th. In support of this view, however, it may be noticed that the Russian soldiers possess great rallying power,† and that the 118th Regiment, which was engaged in the Centre and had been severely handled, was not too much disorganised to be sent to Skobelev on Kriloff's responsibility: this Regiment was, moreover, able to afford valuable aid in covering the former's retreat. The anxiety shown by Osman Pasha for the safety of his right flank must have suggested, apart from Skobelev's representations, that the position won was of great importance, and by the evening of the 11th it must have been sufficiently clear that, after all, the Grivitza redoubt was not the key of Plevna. In deciding, therefore, to give up the attack and to make no attempt to secure their hold of the two redoubts on the left flank, the Russians must have known what they were practically relinquishing.‡ But, whatever view is adopted with regard to the discontinuance of the

* One writer in concluding an account of the Russian defeat, says:—'Il fallait des tranchées, des ingénieurs, des pelles, de la persévérance, un Todleben comme premier renfort et moins de généraux de cosaques.' (*Guerre d'Orient*, p. 267.) The latter part of the sentence is more epigrammatic than fortunate, since Skobelev, almost alone of the Russian commanders before Plevna, was a veritable 'Cossack General.' It is, perhaps, worth noticing that he was 33 years old at the date of the third battle of Plevna, and was virtually in command of 16,000 men, at an age at which, in some armies, he would have been barely qualified to direct a company.

† An eye-witness states that 24 hours after the great defeat of the 30th July, the beaten troops were drilling as if nothing had occurred.

‡ If, as Zotoff's report appears to imply, it were really a question of choice as to which of the captured posts should be retained, the selection could hardly be doubtful. Skobelev was virtually *in* Plevna.

attack and the non-compliance with Skobelev's earnest appeals, there can be little doubt that the half-measure prescribed in Zotoff's despatch was the worst possible. If Skobelev's force was not to be reinforced, and if it were decided to make no effort to relieve the pressure which Osman could evidently bring to bear upon it on the 12th, even by a demonstration against other portions of the front, why was Skobelev ordered to hold on to the exposed and untenable positions and to retreat 'not before evening, if possible'? The heavy loss of the Left Wing on the 12th must be condemned as a useless sacrifice of life, from which nothing was either gained, or could reasonably have been expected. And the situation on that day—a great army looking quietly on while a victorious fraction of it was being half destroyed—was not one calculated to improve the general *morale*.

Turning to the Russian Infantry tactics, which also must have largely contributed to the defeat and to the high percentage of losses, many reflections present themselves. The Russian fighting line was practically a skirmish line, followed by the main body consisting of one or more lines in a close two-deep formation, and the general impression is that the lessons of the Franco-German war had been very imperfectly learned. It has been stated that the natural genius of the Russian troops predisposes them to dense formations and leads them to 'seek their tactical strength in masses.' This is the case with all troops whose tactical training has been insufficient or bad, and it is the very essence of a proper training that it corrects these natural instincts. If it were certain that in Russian soldiers the instinct is too strong to be overcome by their tactical training, the general estimate of the efficiency of this vast army as a fighting machine would be immensely reduced. There is no great reason, however, to believe that this is the case, for Skobelev on several occasions employed less antiquated formations with success. It is probable, however, that the Russian soldiers possess a lower average intelligence than those of other European armies, and this will somewhat lessen the value of their many excellent military qualities. Since the Crimean War the Russians had never fought against a European army, and the experiences gained in frequent campaigns against Asiatic tribes had not tended to raise their tactics to the standard of modern requirements. This, combined with a certain slowness in assimilating modern ideas, which seems characteristic of the country, sufficiently accounts for the great tactical defects brought to light in the Plevna battles.

The Russian order of attack for the battalion prescribes two Lines of company columns, the companies in 1st Line being either deployed into line, or retained in columns of half-companies ('platoons'), the

Infantry
tactics.

Russian
attack
formations.

2nd Line also in columns of companies with half company front. Each company in 1st Line extends a half platoon as skirmishers, who advance in groups of fours at a distance of 300 yards from the 1st Line and are reinforced by sending forward sections (one-eighth of a company) as required. The skirmishers are supposed to advance in rushes of about fifty yards, making use of cover and lying down to fire. The 2nd Line follows the first at a distance of 300-400 yards. The formation, therefore, consists of three lines—the skirmishers, the supports or 1st Line, and the reserve or second line. Both supports and reserves appear to retain the close two deep formation.

There is also a simpler formation occasionally adopted, which consists merely of the Rifle company of the battalion extended as skirmishers, and followed by the remaining companies deployed into line.*

Diagram.

The diagram † on the opposite page will serve to explain these two formations as applied to a three-battalion Regiment.

These formations are evidently very different to the dispersed order now generally adopted. They are quite unsuited to breech-loader warfare, and they serve fully to explain the heavy losses of the campaign, which usually exceeded those of the Franco-German war.‡

In the battle of the 11th September, and on other occasions, the attack seems to have begun at distances of 1,000 to 1,200 yards, or even more, and in some cases the supports and the reserve were soon more or less mixed up in the fighting line, while the advance was often disorderly, the troops passing out of the control of the battalion commanders. The losses rapidly accumulated, and the whole mass of men would then come to a standstill, to be again set in motion only by bringing fresh troops into the fighting line.

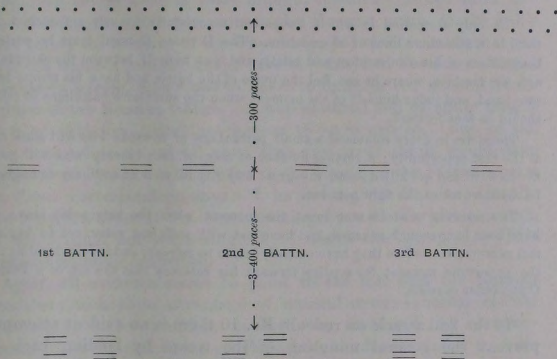
Skobelev, in the Left Attack, made the best of the faulty tactical system. Placing himself well to the front, so as to be able to judge personally of the exact moral condition of his fighting line, and retaining fresh bodies of men ready to be ordered up directly the critical moment was reached, he succeeded, with a relatively small loss, in carrying the two redoubts. Errors no doubt occurred in the minor details of the conduct of the Left Attack, but Skobelev's generalship has

* For a detailed account of the Russian tactics before the war see the *Revue Militaire de l'Étranger*, Nos. 380 and 382. 1877.

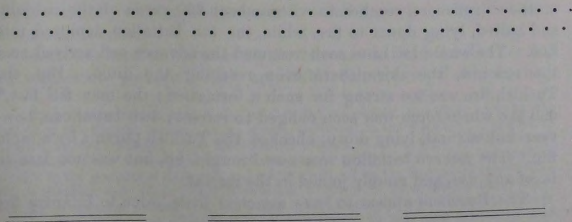
† Taken from *The Russian Army and its Campaigns*, 2nd edition, p. 443.

‡ Thus at the great Infantry battle of Gravelotte the losses on both sides were a little over 11 per cent. of the total forces brought together, and of the troops actually engaged—about 12·5 per cent. on the French and a little over 14·3 per cent. on the German side. The comparison is not, of course, satisfactory, because the Plevna works introduce a new factor; but the great losses of the Russians were unquestionably largely due to their dense formations.

Regiment in two lines of Company Columns, with Skirmishers.



Regiment in line, with Skirmishers.



deservedly received universal commendation. And with Infantry who possess a high tactical training, there is no reason to believe that such attacks may not succeed with even less loss than that suffered on the Russian Left.

General
Skobelev's
views.

Skobelev's own opinions, as expressed in conversation to Lieut. Greene, are worth quoting :—

The only formation in which troops can successfully assault entrenched positions is in successive lines of skirmishers. The Division General must be perfectly thoughtless of his own comfort and safety, and put himself between the skirmishers and the reserves, where he can feel the pulse of the battle and have his troops in his own hand, and judge himself of the moment when the successive battalions in reserve should be sent forward.

There are in every command a small percentage of cowards who will slink away at the first opportunity ; a certain number of men of rash bravery who will go too far forward and get killed ; and the great majority of men of ordinary courage, but liable to waver as the fight gets hot.

The reserves must be sent in at the moment when the reasonably brave men have been long enough engaged, and have met with sufficient resistance to begin to feel nervous, but before they have actually begun to retreat ; and it is in deciding upon the opportune moment for sending forward his reserves that the art of a Division Commander consists.

Attack on
redoubt
No. 10.

In the 2nd attack on redoubt No. 10 there is an evident attempt to prevent the general mingling of the troops by holding back the reserves, but the opposite extreme seems to have resulted. Thus, the attack was carried out by 6 battalions ; of these, 4 battalions were deployed in line with skirmishers about 200 yards in front, while the 5th battalion was in company columns at the centre of the line, and the 6th battalion was held back under cover about 1,200 yards from the redoubt. The advanced line, which had closed considerably on the skirmishers, reached to within about 300 yards of the redoubt, and halted, lying down to fire, while the 5th battalion deployed into line. The whole 1st Line soon resumed the advance and arrived near the redoubt, the skirmishers even reaching the ditch. But the Turkish fire was too strong for such a formation ; the men fell fast,* and the whole force was soon obliged to retreat ; two battalions, however, halted, and, lying down, checked the Turkish pursuit by a rapid fire. The reserve battalion was now brought up, but was too late to be of any use, and merely joined in the retreat.

Russian
infantry fire.

The Russians appear to have attached little value to Infantry fire

* Eye-witnesses speak of whole battalions appearing to go down together, and Russian accounts tell of movements impeded by the mass of killed and wounded. Allowing for exaggeration, it is still easy to conceive how deadly the effect of breech-loader fire must have been on men so ranked.

in preparing the attack. Their fire seems usually to have been wild and ill regulated, and the advance was conducted as if the great idea were to get over the ground as quickly as possible in order to close with the enemy.* When firing did take place, it was not in general a rapid preparatory fire previous to the last rush, but rather a sign that the force of the attack was already spent, and that a retreat was impending unless fresh troops were at once brought forward. Dragomiroff, one of the best known military writers in the Russian army, speaks in his orders before the crossing of the Danube (p. 14) of 30 cartridges as the maximum which a soldier should expend; this, and the directions not to lie down except under orders, serve to indicate the general backwardness of the Russian tactics. A well matured and carefully taught system of field firing does not appear to have existed. But, on the other hand, it is not at all clear that any great result would have been attained by more Infantry fire in the attack on the Plevna works. The *Times* correspondent says: 'I have watched Russian assaults when a perfect sheet of fire was streaming from the Turkish trenches, and yet I could not see a single head above the parapets.' This statement is amply confirmed.

Again, all evidence seems to point to the fact that the Russian skirmishers took little advantage of natural cover—another certain indication of faulty training, in both the men and the company officers. The Roumanians, on the other hand, are stated to have evinced greater intelligence, which may partly account for their relatively small losses. An eye-witness states that, at the battle of Lovtcha, he saw the Turks fire continuously for from five to ten minutes at a time when there was not a single Russian in sight, as the assaulting columns had stopped under shelter to recover their breath. Under a fire of this random description, an attack by well trained troops, skilfully led, ought certainly to stand a good chance of success at a moderate cost.

Much has been written about the 'fire tactics' of the Turks; but the term is not perhaps strictly applicable to a course of action which

* It is interesting to note that Todleben, at all events, was fully alive to the defects of the Russian tactics. In an article published in the *Voyennyyi Sbornik*, in August, 1876, he states: 'It is an essential remark to make that, for the tactical instruction of our troops, instead of dreaming of fire at long ranges, we conform blindly to the precepts of Suwaroff, and count above all on the bayonet-charge.' The article contains many other words of warning, which were apparently without effect. Writing in the same journal after the event, General Zeddeler says that it is necessary 'to change generally our ideas of fighting, to place in the first rank fire tactics and not those of the bayonet; to seek and employ all the means of giving all possible development to fire, having recourse to the bayonet only when fire and other measures, among which flank attacks hold the first place, are insufficient to reduce the enemy.'

was not reduced to system, and which appears to have been rather the result of a partially correct instinct. With all their want of preparation in other respects, the Turks had armed their Infantry with good weapons, and had provided an enormous supply of ammunition, which they seem to have been very successful in transporting. While in other armies rigid systems of fire discipline had been organised, the Turks appear to have conceived the idea that, with a long range and quick firing rifle, it was best to begin to shoot as soon as the enemy came within the extreme limit of range, and to shoot as fast as possible. Kouropatkin states that, on the 9th September, the Turks who attacked the Russian trenches advanced to within short range and lay down to fire. 'After they had been repulsed, as many as 120 empty cartridge cases' were found round the bodies of dead Turkish soldiers. He estimates that individual Turks, in the 3rd battle of Plevna, fired from 400 to 500 rounds upon Skobelev's troops. Todleben states that in the trenches 'every Turk had 100 rounds on him, and a box of 500 cartridges by his side.' Lieut. Chermiside, R.E., states that the Turks were bad shots except at very short ranges, but that they fire very rapidly—according to some accounts from 10 to 15 shots per minute. Kouropatkin says that the Russian losses began at ranges over 2,000 paces, and that 'the greatest losses are experienced between 2,000 and 600 paces. After this distance the less courageous men cease firing, and the greater part of the rest pull the trigger without exposing themselves outside their trenches; the bullets fly in a mass well over the heads of the enemy.' This does not seem, however, to have been invariably the case; in the Centre Attack at Plevna, and on several other occasions, the greatest loss appears to have occurred at ranges under 600 paces. At Plevna, moreover, as will be seen hereafter, the Turks were very successful in bringing two and three lines of fire to bear on the more important parts of their front. Todleben states that 'the fire of the Turkish Infantry was shattering and devastating to a degree never hitherto attained by any European army;' and seldom has an attacking force undergone a severer trial than that which fell to the lot of the Russian Infantry at Plevna. The great results obtained by the Turkish Infantry fire will to some extent modify the fire tactics of every European army, and they constitute an important factor in any estimate of the causes of the Russian defeat. The plan of hurried indiscriminate fire is, however, obviously liable to grave abuse, and that it was very considerably abused by its inventors there can be no doubt.

One of the most striking features of the 3rd battle of Plevna is

the extremely small effect produced by the immense expenditure of Artillery ammunition. In the previous battles the Artillery preparation had lasted only for a few hours, and there is no doubt that great results were expected from the four days' bombardment, aided by the 24 siege guns.

No idea of the actual loss caused to the Turks during the Artillery attacks can be formed, but all accounts agree in stating that it was extremely small. The Turkish Infantry either turned out of the redoubts, or sought shelter in their blindages, from which they could emerge and man the parapets in ample time to repulse the attacks. This great Artillery failure is due partly to the weakness of the guns. The light gun (4-pounder), with which half the field batteries were armed, is certainly below the standard of modern field Artillery,* and is stated to be of little use at ranges above 1,600 yards: the 9-pounder, though throwing a heavy shell, has a muzzle velocity of only 1,060 feet per second. Moreover, the fuzes were faulty and the practice does not seem to have been very good, while something like one quarter of the total number of guns present, including those absent with the Cavalry, were not brought into action at all.

More might probably have been got out of the guns by better handling. The idea of a species of bombardment, borrowed from fortress warfare, was not a good one, since there is no very close parallel between permanent and provisional works in their relation to the Artillery of attack. In shelling the former the object is to disable the defender's guns, and further, to break down his material defences. But in provisional works the material obstacles are relatively slight, and usually such as a night's labour can perfectly restore. Walls and houses can, of course, be demolished, but well-constructed earth redoubts and well-disposed Infantry trenches cannot be greatly damaged. By concentrating the fire of many guns on one work—which the Russians, at this period, seem to have only partially succeeded in doing—the enemy's Artillery can usually be silenced and his Infantry driven away from their parapets, but the works themselves can rarely, or never, be so far injured that they will not afford ample cover for Infantry against Infantry.†

* The Russian Field Artillery has been entirely re-armed since the war.

† There is little doubt that Field Artillery has relatively suffered in the general development of fire-arms. In range, accuracy, and rapidity of fire, the Infantry weapon has improved in a higher ratio than the field-gun, and this is admitted by the author of the R.A. Institution Prize Essay for 1879, Lieut. Goold Adams, R.A. The latter states, however: 'As far as we can see at present a limit has been reached in the case of the Martini-Henry; witness the great complaints made on its introduction into the service of the severity of the recoil.' This seems open to question. It is by no means certain that a heavy recoil is essential to a rifle of the

The experiences of the war will certainly lead to a great development of field and provisional fortification; but bombardments such as that of Plevna are not likely to be tried again, and field Artillery will be employed against men and guns rather than against earth.*

The Russians at Plevna employed direct fire only, except in the case of the guns posted by Skobelev on the East of the Tutschenitza ravine, and the direction of their attack, combined with the extent of the position, rendered this course practically inevitable. Again, the orders for the assault prescribed a general cessation of fire at the moment when the Infantry attack was to begin. The Turks, therefore, had warning to man their parapets, and in a very short time a few outpost sentries and guards swelled into a mass of men able to pour a crushing fire into the dense Russian columns of attack. Nor does it appear in most cases that the Russian Artillery supported the attack up to the last available moment. By a bolder handling of the guns more result might perhaps have been obtained; and though a battery will perhaps find it difficult to maintain itself in the open at a less range than 1,200 yards from modern Infantry well entrenched, skilful handling will in many cases render it possible for guns to accompany the attack to much closer quarters. Von Trotha states that 'a battery which has maintained a destructive fire for 5 minutes, for 1 minute even, and then is lost, has done more for the general good than 10 batteries, which from well chosen positions in rear have kept up a well-directed but after all ineffective fire.' This is an extreme proposition and one not by any means likely to command assent, but the experience of the war certainly points to the fact that a bold handling of the field Artillery is necessary if it is to produce an effect proportionate to the transport it entails.†

power of the Martini; and, if it were, the objection, to a still heavier recoil even, could be removed by the employment of some form of elastic heel-plate. Moreover, breech-actions, in some respects superior to that of the Martini, already exist; while it seems highly probable that a magazine rifle of some kind will before long obtain general adoption, and will add greatly to the power of defence. On the other hand, Lieut. Gould Adams is of opinion that 'Artillery appears only in its infancy;' and if, as he is sanguine is the case, the power of the rifled gun and the man-killing effect of shrapnel can be increased without a loss of mobility, we may fairly hope to see the balance between the two arms fully restored.

* An increase in the proportion of shrapnel carried by the field batteries has already taken place in the Russian service. Shrapnel, with a good time fuze, seems likely in future to replace common shell almost entirely. It is interesting to note that according to the *Archiv für die Artillerie und Ingenieur-Offiziere* (vol. 83), the proportion of shrapnel at present carried is, in France, $\frac{1}{3}$; in England, $\frac{2}{3}$; and in the remaining countries, $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$.

† If bullet-proof shields can be carried with field batteries, as proposed in March, 1878, by a writer in the *Times*, and, in July of the same year, by Colonel C. B. Brackenbury, R.A., in the *Nineteenth Century*, this arm will have gained a much extended sphere of action; guns so protected would be able to accompany Infantry to comparatively close range, as soon as the enemy's Artillery had been silenced.

It is noticeable that on the Left Wing Skobelev made a successful use of his guns, bringing a flank fire to bear on the Turks across the Tutschenitz ravine, pushing a battery almost into the advanced line when the latter was checked, and finally bringing up a half battery into the westerly redoubt, which proved of great service. And in the attack of the 1st Brigade, 5th Division, on the Grivitza redoubt two batteries are stated to have accompanied the attack, an interval being kept between the two Regiments to give them a field of fire. It is not an unfair inference that the somewhat bolder handling of the Artillery contributed to the success of these two attacks.

The Russian field Artillery was numerous,—6 batteries to the Division, 4 guns to the battalion, or over 5 guns per 1,000 men,—and yet the results obtained by this arm were, on the whole, very small. This fact, which has given rise to much discussion and some diversity of opinion, may doubtless be accounted for, to a great extent, by the weakness of the guns themselves and by tactical errors in their handling. This is not the whole explanation, however, of the Artillery failure before Plevna, and something must be ascribed to the efficiency of the protection afforded by the Turkish works.

Captain Kouropatkin appears to have formed a very just estimate of some of the causes of the Russian defeats at Plevna, and his observations are well worthy of reproduction.*

‘In the first battles before Plevna, we had suffered from Infantry fire, even at a range of 2,000 paces. These battles were against us, and we began to look for the causes of failure in the superior efficiency of the Turkish rifles and not in our own errors, which were unconnected with the rifle. We can account for our own want of success by the following important reasons; viz. the insufficient numbers of our troops, the scattering of them in small bodies, disconnected attacks not properly directed, the want of perception of the advantages that the numerical superiority of our Artillery and Cavalry gave us, the too hasty employment of the reserves, and the unsystematic character of our advance to the attack—not taking advantage of the ground and without firing a shot. Any one of these causes is alone sufficient to account for the failures. But it was simpler to look for the reasons in the inferiority of our rifles and guns, than to admit that we had failed to understand the use of the means which we possessed, and which are quite sufficient in the hands of Russian soldiers to secure victory not only against the Turks, but against the most worthy enemy.

‘The opinion of the officers as to the superiority of the Turkish

* Translated from the *Mittheilungen über Gegenstände des Artillerie und Genie-Wesens*, by Capt. J. W. Savage, R.E.

arms spread rapidly to the soldiers, and bred a certain amount of distrust in their own weapon. The result was a disinclination to take trouble with it and to clean it properly. The real defects of the Krenka rifle are that it is only sighted up to 600 paces and that the extractor is faulty. No complaint can be made of its accuracy.

‘Undoubtedly it is difficult to advance against an enemy who can shoot with effect up to 2,000 paces, while over a zone of 1,200 paces his fire cannot be returned. But we must remember that the rifle companies can fire up to 1,200 paces and the rifle battalions even up to 1,500 paces. Further, we must recollect that even when we had arrived within 600 paces of the enemy we made but little use of our rifles, and attempted to advance without firing a shot, without taking advantage of the natural cover which the ground afforded. We mixed up the advance and the charge, and even began the latter at 2,000 paces. Not content with that, we often deemed it possible to make the charge at this distance in a single rush. When heavy losses, physical exhaustion, and moral deterioration had brought the attacking troops to a standstill before they had reached their goal, they did not then hold the best ground when natural cover existed, but remained where they stood, so that they frequently found themselves in the open at 40 to 100 paces from the enemy when there was actually excellent cover before or behind them. What, then, was the use of their training with the rifle up to 600 paces?’

Another great question, which cannot here be fully discussed, is opened up by the want of entrenching tools. Each Russian company was provided with 10 spades, 24 hatchets, 3 pickaxes, and 3 mallets,* and 1 crowbar; these constitute the pioneers' equipment, and are usually carried in the company waggons. Each Sapper company had 104 steel shovels, 72 light hatchets, 20 picks, carried by the men; with 40 shovels, 24 light hatchets, 16 axes, 5 picks, and 4 10-lb crowbars carried in the waggons.† As a result of this small provision, it was necessary at Lovtcha and Plevna to borrow the tools of several Regiments in order to carry out the requisite trench work. Confusion, delay, and the loss of tools naturally followed. Only one battalion of Sappers appears to have been present at Plevna at the period of the third battle, and only a total of some 3,000 Sappers crossed the Danube with the original army. Roughly speaking, about 2,000 tools, of which some 1,600 were small spades, and the rest half picks and half

* Some accounts state ‘10 shovels, 16 axes, 6 picks and spades, and 1 crowbar.’

† *The Organisation of the Imperial Russian Engineers*, translated from the German, by Captain T. Gore Booth, R.E. Appendix to *R.E. Professional Papers*, 1878. Other accounts give slightly different numbers.

large spades, were issued from the Engineer Park, and employed in the trench work and battery construction in the centre. This must have been nearly the whole supply present, since none were issued to Skobelev, and his force only possessed the pioneers' tools, some of which had been lost at Lovtcha, and the tools of the 30 or 40 Sappers attached. The result of this miserable provision was seen during the night of the 11th September, when the troops, in sheer despair, were driven to use their hands, their canteen covers, and their bayonets. The position of the force on the morning of the 12th would have been very different had a night's labour with a proper supply of tools been achieved. This instance of the dire want of tools was not by any means isolated; and the whole experience of the war points to the absolute necessity of providing Infantry with a liberal supply of entrenching tools for executing hasty trenchwork, and these tools must on occasion, even if not always, be carried by the soldier.* This provision is as necessary in the attack as in the defence, and the aphorism that in the present day troops must 'dig or die,' is no mere figure of speech.

The Roumanians, who in this respect seem to have been in advance of the Russians, were provided with 35 Linneman spades per company (about 170 bayonets) as personal equipment.

During the period of investment large numbers of tools were forwarded from Russia, and the men of Skobelev's Division carried these tools—chiefly heavy shovels weighing over 5 lbs.—from Plevna to Constantinople, while at the end of the campaign the Linneman spade, weighing under $1\frac{3}{4}$ lb., was generally issued. The latter is now carried by the Germans in the proportion of 200 to the battalion, and by every second man of the Austrian Infantry. By an order dated 23rd November, 1878, each Russian Infantry company is to be furnished with 80 Linneman spades and 20 light axes, which are to be carried by the men on the belt. The Infantry pioneer tools are to be retained and carried as before in the company waggons.

The principal causes which led to the third defeat of the Russians before Plevna have been considered at some length, because there can be little doubt that the resistance at Plevna, and the great losses it entailed on the attacking force, will lead to numerous imitations in future wars. The weaker, or the least prepared of two belligerents,

* Colonel Rice, of the United States army, has invented an entrenching tool which can also be used as an axe or saw, and makes a formidable weapon when attached to the rifle. Colonel Rice, when exhibiting his invention to the Grand Duke at Bogot, is stated to have obtained cover from Infantry fire in three minutes; but instruments intended to serve a variety of purposes are rarely satisfactory, and the value of this tool has probably been exaggerated.

has in modern Infantry fire a new power conferred upon him; but no number of Plevnas will alter the issue of a campaign, if the power to assume the offensive at the right moment does not exist. Such positions will, however, doubtless have to be attacked; for the strain of modern war will not stand a five months' siege of every strategically well placed village which can be garrisoned and provisioned, and a study of the lessons afforded by the Russian mistakes shows clearly how disasters similar to that above described are to be avoided.

CHAPTER VII.

THE ALLIED CAVALRY WEST OF PLEVNA, FROM 7TH SEPTEMBER
TO 7TH OCTOBER.

THE Cavalry operations West of the Vid, under General Loschkareff from 7th to 19th September, and under General Kriloff from 19th September to 7th October, had no real influence on the great attack on Plevna, nor do they belong to the period of the investment proper; they are therefore treated as a distinct episode.

The Plevna
communications.

Up to the time of the third attack on Plevna the Russians had made no attempt to cut Osman's line of retreat, and Plevna had remained in undisturbed communication with Rahova, Viddin, and Sofia. In the orders for the second attack (p. 44) the Cavalry of the Right Wing was directed to cross the Vid in case the Turks retreated; but the result of the fighting did not call for this movement, and up to the 7th September no Russian force, beyond, possibly, small reconnoitring parties, had operated on the West side of Plevna.

The country West of the Vid is much less accentuated than that on the East. 'Seen from the heights of Medeven, it appears to be a vast plain;' but it is rarely level, and is characterised by long gradual slopes rising to about 150 feet above the Vid, and is cut up by the valleys formed by streams running into the latter river. These valleys vary from 60 to 100 feet in depth and from 200 to 1,000 yards in breadth. Telische and Gorny-Dubnik lie in the same valley—that of the Dubnik brook—and are about $6\frac{1}{2}$ miles apart. Telische is on the *chaussée*, and Gorny-Dubnik a little less than a mile to the North of it. From Gorny-Dubnik the brook runs to the North-East, and then, bending to the East through Gorny-Netropol and Dolny-Netropol, it flows into the Vid about 3 miles North of the Plevna bridge. Dolny-Dubnik, about 6 miles from Gorny-Dubnik, lies in the valley of another small stream, also running into the Vid. The *chaussée* is a broad, well-made road, running in very straight lines till near Gorny-Dubnik, after which it begins to wind and there are some steep gradients.

The Turkish War Council seems to have early decided to retain Osman Pasha at Plevna,* and to have recognised to some extent that

* Mehemet Ali, however, while Commander-in-Chief on the Lom, was desirous, after the loss of Lovtcha, that Osman should retire from Plevna and fall back to some position nearer Orchanie.

an effort must be made to provide reinforcements and stores of all kinds for the Plevna army and to defend the Plevna-Sofia route.

Reinforce-
ment of
Osman
Pasha.

The distance from Plevna to Sofia is about 112 miles; and Orchanie, 44 miles from Sofia and a good 5 days' march from Plevna, was selected as an intermediate depôt. A reserve force, composed mainly of Redifs, had been collected at Sofia soon after the beginning of hostilities, a portion of which had moved on Plevna about the time of Osman's march from Viddin, and further detachments had doubtless been sent to Osman subsequently. Early in September fresh troops were forwarded from Constantinople and Adrianople to Sofia, while Chefket Pasha, who had been recalled from the army in Asia, was despatched on the 11th September from Schumla to Jamboli with about 13 battalions for Orchanie. Chefket preceded his detachment, and, arriving at Orchanie, began at once to organise a train of provisions and ammunition for Plevna. A train of about 1,200 country carts was organised under escort of a Division of 20 battalions, 1 Cavalry Regiment, and 2 field batteries (altogether about 10,000 men) under Achmet Hifsi Pasha. The train succeeded in entering Plevna on the night of the 22nd September, after some slight skirmishes with General Kriloff's Cavalry, Osman Pasha despatching a Division from Plevna, which joined Hifsi near Dolny-Dubnik. To support the escort Chefket had pushed forward a further force under Huzli Pasha beyond Jablonitza; but the Russian Cavalry offered little opposition, as will be seen in the following pages, and the operation was carried out without any great difficulty. A portion of the escort remained in Plevna to reinforce Osman's army; the rest returned to Orchanie, where Chefket set to work to prepare a second transport train.

First Trans-
port train.

Second
Transport
train.

Early in October a great convoy of about 2,000 carts, escorted by some 5,000 troops, left Orchanie for Plevna. On the 6th October the advanced guard of the escort was engaged with the Russian Cavalry near Radomirze, and on the 9th it joined hands near Telische with a Turkish force from Plevna. By the 11th the whole train had safely entered Plevna, and Chefket personally conferred with Osman as to future measures, subsequently returning to Orchanie with a part of his force.

It will be interesting now to study the handling of the Russo-Roumanian Cavalry which permitted the Turks to carry out these very important operations with so little difficulty.

RUSSO-ROUMANIAN CAVALRY UNDER GENERAL LOSCHKAREFF FROM
7TH TO 19TH SEPTEMBER.

On the 7th September General Loschkareff with the 9th Cavalry Division posted on the Plevna-Bulgareni *chaussée*, East of Grivitza village, was ordered to move to Rybina, to pass the night there, and to draw to his command two Regiments of Roumanian regular Cavalry (Roschioris) and the 5th and 6th irregular Roumanian Regiments (Kalarashes) with a Roumanian H. A. battery. The whole force on the following morning was to cross the Vid, to advance on Dolny-Dubnik, to cut the Turkish line of communication with Sofia, and to effect contact with Leontieff's Cavalry on the Russian extreme left flank.

General
Loschkareff's
operations.

The total force was as follows:—

Loschkareff's
force.

Russians ...	{	8th Dragoons (Astrachan).
		9th Dragoons (Kazan).
		9th Lancers (Bug).
		9th Don Cossacks.
		16th H. A. battery.
Roumanians	{	2nd Don Cossack battery.
		2 regular Regiments.
		2 irregular Regiments.
		1 H. A. battery.
Total ...	34 Squadrons and 3 H. A. batteries.	

This force was concentrated by 9 P.M. on the 7th September on the right bank of a stream flowing into the Vid at Rybina.

On the 8th at 6 A.M. the troops crossed the river, and at 11.30 P.M. they arrived at Smaret-Trestenik, about $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles West of Rybina and North-East of the bridge over the Vid at Plevna. Changing front to the South-East the Corps moved towards Plevna—the Roumanian regular Brigade with its battery on Dolny-Netropol with orders to observe the Rahova road, the main body, through Gorny-Netropol, on Dolny-Dubnik, where it bivouacked soon after 4 P.M. Meanwhile, the Cossacks of the advanced guard captured a small herd of cattle, escorted by a few armed men who retreated to Plevna, but no further signs of the enemy were seen.

8th September,
movement on
Dolny-
Dubnik.

The outpost line of the Roumanians at Dolny-Netropol, facing to the East, touched the Vid on the left nearly opposite Bivolar (Susurlu) and extended South-West to the Plevna-Orchanie *chaussée*. Here it touched the Russian outposts, furnished by 2 Lancer squadrons and 1 Cossack sotnia, which formed a cordon extending South to the high ground between the *chaussée* and the Vid, thence bending to the West across the *chaussée* half-way between Dolny-Dubnik* and Gorny-Dubnik,

*Dolny-Dubnik is about $6\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Dolny-Netropol; the former is $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles, the latter $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles, from the bridge over the Vid at Plevna.

fronting towards the latter. The length of the whole outpost line was about $12\frac{1}{2}$ miles, and in rear a special post was established to observe the Rahova road.

Turkish
movement
from Plevna
on Dolny-
Dubnik.

About 4 P.M. information was received from the outposts that a force of 1,000 to 1,500 Cavalry, followed by 3 Infantry battalions, was moving from Plevna on Dolny-Dubnik. At the same time the Roumanians reported that 4 Infantry battalions with some Cavalry were advancing on Dolny-Netropol,* while the works North-West of Plevna opened fire as if to cover the movement.

The Roumanians were ordered to maintain themselves as long as possible at Dolny-Netropol, while the rest of the 9th Lancers (1st and 2nd squadrons), with 1 Don Cossack sotnia and 4 Cossack guns, were ordered up to support the Russian outposts. The main body was held in readiness for action at Dolny-Dubnik.

The Turkish Infantry remained under cover of the guns of their works, and the Cavalry advanced against the Russian outposts, who slowly fell back on their supports. Half of the 1st squadron of Lancers, with a portion of the 3rd and 4th squadrons, charged the Turks, while the other half of the 1st squadron attacked their left, and a section of the 2nd squadron their right flank. After a short hand-to-hand fight the Turkish Cavalry retired on their Infantry, leaving, it is stated, 70 killed. The Russian outposts resumed their positions, and about 6 P.M. the Turks made a second advance, but were received at about 1,500 yards by shrapnel fire from 4 Cossack guns by the side of the *chaussée*, and soon retired again. The Turkish detachment which advanced against the Roumanian position did not offer to attack, and retired after a brief Artillery fire.

Losses of 8th
September.

The Russian losses during this day are given as:—

	Men	Horses
Killed	3	8
Wounded	9	22
Totals	12	30

The Roumanians had no casualties.

9th Septem-
ber.

On the morning of the 9th September patrols were despatched West towards the Isker, South-West along the *chaussée*, and South up the left bank of the Vid. At 2 P.M. information arrived that Circassians had shown themselves West of Gorny-Dubnik, on which 2 sotnias of the 9th Don Cossacks were sent in this direction.

At 3.30 P.M. the outposts sent word of the movement of a strong body of the enemy against the Dolny-Netropol position occupied by

* This force probably crossed the river by fording below the bridge; but it is not stated.

the Roumanians, and also that troops appeared to be assembling near the Vid bridge, on which the whole force prepared for action.

About 4.30 p.m. the Turks showed themselves in front of Dolny-Netropol—a thick chain of skirmishers with Cavalry on the flanks, followed by Infantry and Artillery, in all about 6 battalions, 1 Cavalry regiment and 4 guns. The Turkish attack under cover of the fire from the Opanetz works was vigorously carried out, and the Roumanian regular Brigade was forced to evacuate Dolny-Netropol. Loschkareff ordered the Roumanians to move to the high ground near Gorny-Netropol in order to draw the Turks as far as possible from their entrenchments; the Roumanians were then to attack them in front while the main body operated against their left flank.

Two squadrons of the 8th Dragoons, which Regiment was on outpost service South of Dolny-Netropol, were ordered to dismount, and, taking advantage of the inequality of the ground and the high-standing crops of maize, they advanced against the left flank of the Turks who were moving against the Roumanians. These two dismounted squadrons were supported on the left by 2 squadrons of the 9th Dragoons and 2 guns of the 16th H. A. Battery, while their right flank was covered by 2 squadrons of Lancers and the 4 remaining guns of the battery, so posted as to show front to the Turks advancing from the Vid bridge. Two Cossack sotnias were sent towards Gorny-Dubnik, and 2 squadrons of the 8th Dragoons with 1 Cossack sotnia were widely extended to form an outpost chain fronting to the South-West. There remained in reserve, 2 squadrons each of the 9th Dragoons and 9th Lancers, 3 Cossack sotnias, the Cossack battery, and possibly the 2 Roumanian irregular Regiments, whose precise position at the time is not stated. The attack simultaneously directed on their front and flank caused the Turks to retire to their entrenchments at about 6 p.m., the troops assembled near the Vid bridge also withdrawing towards Plevna.

While the fighting was going on the Cossack detachment, ordered towards Gorny-Dubnik, sent information that they had come across Circassians, and that they had discovered an Infantry camp of about 10,000 men covered behind some woods lying West of Gorny-Dubnik.

Loschkareff ordered his troops to take up their outpost line again, and moved with the bulk of his force on Dolny-Netropol. The 9th Cossacks was ordered to remain at Dolny-Dubnik and to light a large number of camp fires, in order to deceive the Turks at Gorny-Dubnik as to the strength of the force at Dolny-Dubnik, and also that it might appear to the Turks in Plevna that reinforcements had arrived that evening from Rybina.

Losses of 9th
September.

The losses of the force on the 9th September are given as follows:—

	Men	Horses
Killed	1	11
Wounded	1	—
Missing	25	31
Totals	27	42

Early on the morning of the 10th September Loschkareff's force took up the following positions:—

Roumanian regular Brigade between Gorny and Dolny-Netropol, fronting towards Plevna; the 4 Russian Regiments, with their 2 batteries, and the 5th Roumanian irregulars at Dolny-Dubnik, fronting South, the right flank resting on the *chaussée*; the 6th Roumanian irregulars South of Gorny-Netropol to maintain contact between the Roumanian regular Brigade and the main body.

The Roumanian regulars were able to make out the Turks working hard at the western defences of Plevna, and mounting guns there as if a serious attack from this side were expected.

Small patrols were despatched in various directions to reconnoitre the country on both sides of the *chaussée* between the Vid and the Isker, and beyond the latter, while two stronger parties were detached under orders to attempt to effect contact with Leontieff's Cavalry on the extreme Left Wing of the army before Plevna, and, if necessary, to cross the Vid above Plevna. The large Turkish force seen near Gorny-Dubnik was Chefket's first transport train under Hifsi Pasha, which appears to have remained quietly waiting for an opportunity to enter Plevna. It is not stated whether Loschkareff took any further measures for observing this force.

The 4th squadron, 9th Lancers, crossed the Vid at Medeven (6¼ miles above the bridge) and reconnoitred the country as far as Kubel (2 miles South-East of Medeven) without meeting with the enemy. A sotnia of Cossacks, attempting to cross at Dessevitza (4 miles above the bridge), found this village occupied by Infantry and Cavalry, and was obliged to beat a retreat. The other patrols sent back information that they had come across small parties of Circassians all over the country between the Vid and the Isker, but that there were stronger bodies of the enemy on the further side of the latter river.

Reconnaissance to-
wards Ra-
hova.

On the 11th September, a squadron of Roumanian regulars was ordered to cross the Isker near Mahaleta, and to push patrols as far as possible in the directions of Rahova and Viddin. A squadron of the

9th Lancers was also sent to communicate with Leontieff's Cavalry. This squadron succeeded in accomplishing its task, and returned the following day. On the 11th also, a squadron of the 4th Dragoons arrived from Leontieff. During the night of the 11th September small bodies of Circassians and Bashi-Bazouks, breaking out of Plevna towards the South and West, endeavoured to make their way through the line of outposts, losing a few men killed or taken prisoners. Bulgarians, with empty carts, were also reported to be leaving Plevna.

Contact with
Loschkareff's
Cavalry.

On the 12th September, the Turks began the construction of a new battery on the *chaussée* commanding the approach to the bridge, while at Opanetz an epaulment for 4 guns was thrown up, fronting the Roumanian battery established at Dolny-Netropol.

12th September.

On the 13th September, the Roumanian squadron ordered to Mahaleta sent back word that the neighbouring villages swarmed with Circassians and Bashi-Bazouks. These reconnaissances only cost the Roumanians one man wounded. A detachment of two squadrons, 9th Lancers, moved on Telische along the *chaussée*, and small patrols were detached on the right up to the Isker and on the left to Rakita and Radomirze. Circassians and Bashi-Bazouks were reported, who fled at the approach of the Russian Lancers.

13th September.

On the 14th and 15th similar information was sent in by the patrols. On the latter day 7 sotnias of the Don Cossack Brigade, with the 15th Don Cossack battery, arrived at Dolny-Dubnik, bringing orders for the 9th Cossacks to move to Bogot, South of Plevna.

14th and 15th
September.

On the 16th the patrols reported the presence of Circassians and Bashi-Bazouks: the Roumanians on this day lost 1 man and 1 horse killed at Mahaleta.

16th September.

In the course of the night of the 16th an attack was made from Plevna on the outposts of the 5th Roumanian Irregulars near the Vid, and repulsed without loss.

Patrols despatched towards the South on the 17th and 18th September only met with small detachments of the enemy. On the evening of the latter day an attack was made on the outposts of the 9th Dragoons, North of the *chaussée*, and was repulsed with the loss of one man wounded, the Turks leaving two men killed. On the evening of the 18th also, the 1st Brigade, 4th Cavalry Division (4th Dragoons and 4th Lancers), arrived at Dolny-Dubnik. On the 19th September, at 10 A.M., General Loschkareff, with the rest of his Division (9th Dragoons and 9th Lancers), moved on Bogot, where the 9th Cossacks had already arrived: the 9th Hussars was still on the East side of Plevna. Loschkareff's operations West of the Vid were now ended, and he took over the duty of covering the left flank of the allied army.

Arriva of
4th Cavalry
Division.

GENERAL KRIOFF'S OPERATIONS FROM 19TH SEPTEMBER TO
7TH OCTOBER.

Arrival of
Krioff.

General Krioff, commander of the IVth Corps in the third battle before Plevna, arrived on the 19th September at Dolny-Dubnik and took over from General Loschkareff the command of the allied Cavalry force on the left bank of the Vid. His command was constituted as follows :—

Strength of
combined
Cavalry
Corps.

Russians . .	4th Cavalry Division . .	{ 4th Dragoons.
		{ 4th Lancers.
	8th Cavalry Division . .	{ 4th Hussars.
		{ 2 H. A. batteries.
	Don Cossack Brigade . .	{ 8th Dragoons.*
		{ 21st Don Cossacks.
	(Col. Tchernosuboff.)	
	Caucasian Cossack Brigade	{ Kouban Regiment.
		{ Vladi-Kaukas Regiment.
	(Col. Tutolmin.)	
		2 Don Cossack batteries.
Roumanians	Roschiov Brigade . . .	{ 2 Hussar Regiments.
		(Col. Kretiano.)
	Kalarasch Brigade . . .	{ 5th Regiment.
		{ 6th " "
	(Col. Formak.)	
		1 H. A. battery.
Total . . 56 squadrons, 30 guns.		

In all, a force of about 6,000 sabres. A portion of the new troops preceded Krioff to Dolny-Dubnik, while part arrived with him.

This combined Cavalry Corps was charged with the duty of preventing the provisioning of Plevna and of destroying munitions accumulated along the Plevna-Orchanie route. It was, moreover, to engage the Turkish convoys as far as possible from Plevna, so as to prevent the co-operation of the Turkish Plevna Army, and, finally, to break up the bands of Circassians and Bashi-Bazouks.

Rumours, current at the time of Krioff's arrival, of the advance of the enemy from Mahaleta proved to be false; but Krioff found himself compelled to observe the neighbourhood of Mahaleta and the West bank of the Isker, with particular care. The Turks were anxious at this time to draw off the allied force to the North in order to clear the Orchanie-Plevna route.

On the 20th September, Colonel Stakelberg, with 2 squadrons of Roumanian irregulars and 2 guns, was ordered to reconnoitre

* This appears to have been the only one of the Russian regular Regiments belonging to Loschkareff's force which remained on the left bank of the Vid.

20th Sep-
tember.
Reconnais-
sance on
Telische.

Telische and further South to the hills near Rakita. He discovered a strong Turkish force near Telische, and retreated after a short engagement, losing 18 men.

On the 21st September, Colonel Tutolmin with the Caucasian Brigade, 2 squadrons of regular Cavalry, and the 8th Don Cossack battery, was ordered on Telische to ascertain the strength and position of the enemy. Tutolmin attacked the Turks and caused them to develop their strength, which was estimated at 10,000 to 12,000, with 2 Cavalry Regiments and 6 guns, partially entrenched. During the engagement a sketch of the position was made by a staff officer. Tutolmin appears to have returned the same day to Dolny-Dubnik, leaving outposts to observe Gorny-Dubnik.

21st September.

On the 22nd September the outposts sent word of the advance of a considerable Turkish force from Gorny-Dubnik on Dolny-Dubnik. Kriloff at first determined to remain on the defensive at Dolny-Dubnik; but learning that Loschkareff, from the right bank of the Vid, was moving on Telische, he decided to attack the Turks in front, while Loschkareff would take them in rear.

22nd September.

Kriloff began his attack by Artillery fire, and at about 3 P.M. the guns of Loschkareff's force were also heard, not in rear of the enemy but in prolongation of his own Left Wing. At the same time the outposts on the East of Dolny-Dubnik sent information of the movement of a strong Infantry force from the Vid bridge on Dolny-Dubnik. Under these circumstances Kriloff withdrew his main body in the direction of Smaret-Trestenik, and left a strong force, consisting of the Caucasian and Roumanian irregular Brigades, at Netropol.* The Turks from Plevna retired across the bridge towards evening.

Retreat to Trestenik.

On the morning of the 23rd September the commander of the force at Netropol* sent word that the Turks from Gorny-Dubnik had moved into Plevna during the night and had been fired at by the 15th Don Cossack battery. This was, in fact, Chefket Pasha's first transport train under Hifsi Pasha, which had thus entered Plevna without difficulty.

23rd September.

From the 19th to the 23rd September, therefore, the combined Cavalry Corps had only been able to delay a force of about 10,000 Turks for two days, and the main body had now practically abandoned the Orchanie-Plevna *chaussée*, retiring on Trestenik as a point 'about equally distant from the *chaussée* and from Dolny-Dubnik,' while the force left at Netropol remained watching the Vid bridge.

* Kriloff, in his report says 'Netropol' simply, and it is not quite clear whether Gorny, or Dolny-Netropol is meant. The two villages appear to be less than 3 miles apart and the force probably occupied both.

24th September.

On the 24th September, Kriloff received orders from the Commander-in-Chief of the Army of the West to cover the right flank of the army occupying the heights of Brest (about half-way between the Lower Isker and Lower Vid), retiring, if obliged, on Rybina. At the same time information arrived from the West that bands of Circassians were conveying provisions towards Plevna.

25th September.
Movement on Rahova.

On the 25th, Kriloff moved on Rahova with the Caucasian Brigade, the Roumanian regular Brigade, the 1st Brigade, 4th Division, the 8th Dragoons, and 3 batteries, while a flanking detachment marched on Bjeloslatina. The Circassians were driven out of several neighbouring villages, and the Viddin-Plevna telegraph line was cut.

26th September.
Bombardment of Rahova redoubts.

On the 26th September, the three redoubts which defended Rahova were shelled by 2 batteries, and 2 Turkish guns were dismounted. Kriloff made, however, no attempt to take Rahova, nor is it at all likely that he could have succeeded. He states, moreover, that he was unwilling to bombard the town, as it was inhabited mainly by Bulgarians.

28th September.

On the 28th, Kriloff's force moved back to Rybina to replenish ammunition and Commissariat stores. On the 30th the force returned to Smaret-Trestenik. Meanwhile, during the absence of the main body, the detachment at Netropol had captured two small transport trains of 20 and 100 waggons respectively, loaded with meal and barley.

30th September.
Colonel Lewis's movement on Radomirze.

On the 30th September, Colonel Lewis, with 4 sotnias of the Vladi-Kaukas Regiment, 2 squadrons 4th Lancers, 2 squadrons 4th Hussars, and an H.A. battery, moved from Telische on Tchervenibreg, Rubzy, and Radomirze, apparently striking the Isker near Tschumakovitze, and afterwards advancing up the valley of this river and of a small branch stream running into it from the South-West. On the 1st October, Lewis sent word that he had met with Bashi-Bazouks, whom he had driven back as far as Lukovitzza, and that he had captured 1,000 head of cattle, 80 horses, and a convoy of salt and quinine. The bridge at Radomirze, carrying the *chaussée* over the branch of the Isker, was partially broken down* by the detachment, and the telegraph line, previously cut, but since restored by the Turks, was destroyed as far as Lukovitzza. The detachment apparently returned to Tschumakovitze on the same day, and *en route* is stated to have 'burned' the bridge over the branch of the Isker, near Tchervenibreg. Meanwhile, patrols had been despatched from the force to

* The demolition does not appear to have been very complete, and the bridge was subsequently repaired by Chefket's force in one day.

reconnoitre the country between the Isker and the heights near Rakita, and are stated to have penetrated as far as Tchirikovo on the Vid, where they communicated with Loschkareff's Cavalry posted on the right bank of the latter river.

On the 1st October also, General Tchernat, commanding the Roumanian army, arrived at Kriloff's Head-Quarters to inform the latter that an important reconnaissance from the North of the Opanetz position by a Roumanian detachment had been ordered for the next day, and to request the co-operation of the combined Cavalry Corps by means of a demonstration. To support the proposed movement Kriloff ordered the Netropol detachment* to make a demonstration on the left bank of the Vid towards Opanetz. A little later, however, information arrived that a considerable Turkish force of all arms was crossing the Plevna bridge and moving on Dolny-Netropol, and Kriloff ordered all the troops at Smaret-Trestenik to move towards Plevna. The Roumanian regular Brigade and its battery, with the Caucasian Cossacks and the 8th Cossack battery, were ordered forward at a trot towards Dolny-Netropol, Kriloff following with the rest of the force.

On Kriloff's arrival near Dolny-Netropol, he found the 15th Cossack battery already in action against the Turkish Infantry and Artillery, which had occupied the village. The Roumanian and the 8th Cossack batteries immediately came into action on the right of the battery engaged. One of the Turkish guns was dismounted, and an ammunition waggon blown up, while the village of Dolny-Netropol was reduced to ashes. Meanwhile the Turkish skirmishers were advancing against the 15th Cossack battery, and 2 squadrons, 4th Dragoons, were ordered to dismount, and opened fire on the Turks, who fell back, covered by some Circassian Cavalry. Two sotnias of Kouban Cossacks were sent against the latter, and drove them back.

At about 1.30 P.M. the Roumanian Colonel, Tcherkatz, sent word to General Kriloff that the reconnaissance on Opanetz was counter-ordered; and as there was now no object in continuing the engagement,† Kriloff ordered the retreat of his force at about 3 P.M. The Turks made an attempt to attack the left flank of the Russian detachment, but were repulsed by the Kouban Cossacks.

* Now apparently consisting of the Roumanian irregular Brigade and the 15th Cossack battery.

† This account is derived from the reports of the Russian General, and there is little independent evidence on the subject. There is, of course, a probability that the Russian detachment was more hardly pressed than the account indicates, and the losses are not stated. The retirement may possibly, however, be due to extreme caution, of which the whole operations show abundant signs.

1st October.
Projected
reconnaissance
North
of Plevna.

The detachment under Colonel Lewis, at Tschumakovitze, was reinforced on the 2nd October by the 4th Dragoons and 2 guns, bringing its total strength up to 12 squadrons and 8 guns. On the 2nd October this detachment set out from Tschumakovitze in two columns. The right column—4 sotnias, 1 squadron, and 2 guns—took the route Gornik-Resseletz; the left column, under Colonel Mazilevich—7 squadrons, 6 guns—moved by way of Tchervenybreg-Rubzy-Radomirze, and, after executing a reconnaissance on Rakita, arrived in the evening at Lukovitza, without having met with the enemy. The right column, commanded by Lewis in person, found a body of Circassians occupying Gornik, and 2 sotnias were sent round to the rear of the village, while the remaining 2 sotnias, supported by the Dragoons dismounted, attacked in front. The Circassians retreated, leaving 6 killed. In front of the village of Reseletz the advanced guard of the column met with a further force of Circassians, who retreated without offering resistance. Further on, the column encountered a force of 300 Circassians occupying a position in front of Lukovitza. One Cossack sotnia galloped round to the flank* and, dismounting, opened fire on the enemy from behind some stone heaps, while another sotnia charged in front. The Circassians fell back behind the village, but a portion of them held the cemetery for some little time, finally retiring towards Petreven with a loss of 20 killed. The bridge at Lukovitza was destroyed.

On the 4th and 5th October Colonel Lewis was at Radomirze with his main body, and patrols were despatched in all directions.

6th October.

On the 6th October, the detachment was attacked by a force estimated at 4,000 to 5,000 Infantry with 5 guns and 2,000 to 3,000 Circassians advancing from Lukovitza. Lewis is stated to have held his own for about 2 hours, when a force, which had moved out of Plevna that morning, threatened his rear, and he retired on Tschumakovitze *via* Tchervenybreg, covering his retreat by Artillery fire and that of the Dragoons. The Turkish force coming from Lukovitza was the escort of Chefket's second transport train, which, like the first, succeeded in entering Plevna with very little difficulty.

7th October.
Retreat of
Lewis.

On the 7th, Lewis moved on Mahaleta, sending a small detachment towards Telische, by which it was ascertained that Gorny-Dubnik and Dolny-Dubnik were occupied by the Turks.

The attempted Cavalry investment of the West side of Plevna had now come to an end and had failed, while the Turks at once set to work to fortify Lukovitza, Telische, Gorny-Dubnik, and Dolny-Dubnik, converting them into *etappen* stations for the Orchanie-

* Kriloff's report does not state which flank.

Plevna line of communications. The combined Cavalry Corps had reconnoitred the country between the Vid and the Isker more or less completely; it had cut the telegraph lines between Plevna-Viddin and Plevna-Sofia, partially destroyed a few bridges, dispersed some roving bands of Circassians, and captured some small convoys, *et præterea nihil*.

GENERAL REMARKS.

The operations above described did not effect any result at all proportionate to the force employed, nor to the expectations probably formed at the Russian Head-Quarters, and it will be interesting to note the causes which produced the apparent failure.

General
Remarks

The task of preventing the provisioning of Plevna could only be accomplished in two ways—either by taking up a defensive position on the Plevna-Orchanie line, and waiting to be attacked; or by rapid movements and vigorous offensive tactics. The latter course was evidently the most natural rôle for a Cavalry force. The country was favourable to the employment of this Arm; the distance from Orchanie to Plevna was considerable, and, except the *chaussée*, few, if any, lateral routes appear to have existed by which heavy transport was practicable, while a long train, extending over more than 7 miles of road, was not very easy to defend against a strong Cavalry and Horse Artillery force. The Russians, however, seemed to have followed neither course, and such attempts to take the offensive as were made appear to have been weak and desultory. The whole operations above described may be divided into two periods: the first from the 7th to the 23rd September, during which Hîfsi Pasha's convoy succeeded in entering Plevna; the second, ending on the 7th October, and embracing Kriloff's movement on Rahova, from the 25th to the 28th September, and Lewis's advance on Lukovitza, from the 30th September to the 7th October.

When Loschkareff first crossed the Vid, with about 4,000 sabres, the Artillery attack on Plevna was in progress; and the object was rather a demonstration on Plevna from the West, with the ulterior view of cutting the Turkish line of retreat in case of defeat, than an attempt to bar the Orchanie-Plevna route against the approach of reinforcements and provision trains. The appearance of Loschkareff's force before Plevna seems, however, to have exerted little or no influence on the great attack on Plevna, and, the latter having completely failed, there was no opportunity for the intended co-operation of the Cavalry. Towards evening on the 9th September, Loschkareff became aware that a strong Turkish force from the West had arrived near Gorny-Dubnik, and on the 10th he took up a defensive position

near Dolny-Dubnik. Here he appears to have been liable to be attacked in front from Gorny-Dubnik, and, in rear, from Plevna, at the same time. He was not attacked, however, as Osman Pasha was fully occupied in defending Plevna, while Hifsi Pasha was content with waiting for a favourable opportunity to move forward. It will be noticed that, though this large Turkish force was known to be in the neighbourhood of Gorny-Dubnik, nearly the whole of the Russian Cavalry West of the Vid was relieved on the 19th September, and nothing definite seems to have been ascertained by the Russians about Hifsi Pasha's proceedings till the 20th, when this Turkish force appears to have been re-discovered by Col. Stakelberg.

After the defeat of the 11th before Plevna, the idea of a Cavalry investment on the West side gained prominence, and Kriloff was despatched to the left bank of the Vid with reinforcements, which raised the strength of the combined force to about 6,000 sabres. Kriloff's orders were to prevent the reinforcement and reprovisioning of Plevna; but he nevertheless remained close to the Vid till Hifsi Pasha's arrival with a large train at Telische, and then retired without offering any serious resistance, allowing the entire convoy to enter Plevna.

Kriloff's excessive caution is excused in his report by a passage in his instructions, which enjoined him to 'spare his force as much as possible.' If this expression were used, it was not a very fortunate one. It could scarcely be necessary to remind a General that it was desirable to spare his men unnecessary risks, but success in an operation of this kind against an enemy such as the Turks had proved themselves to be was quite impossible without both running risks and incurring sacrifices. On the other hand, the phrase was well calculated to prove a counsel of inaction to a commander naturally lacking vigour and dash. In any case, a long train of stores, with a considerable reinforcement of troops, passed into Plevna about the 22nd without any difficulty, in the presence of a large and efficient Cavalry force. Kriloff, in his report, takes credit for having retarded this convoy for two days; though under the circumstances, and seeing that nothing was occurring at the time before Plevna, this delay was no disadvantage whatever to the Turks. The retreat from Dolny-Dubnik to Smaret-Trestenik, on the 22nd September, is justified as follows: 'This point (Trestenik), nearly at an equal distance from the *chaussée* and from Dolny-Dubnik, lies closer to the line of retreat of the Corps (Rybina):* the detachment at Netropol permitted all that entered, or left Plevna to be observed.'

* Dolny-Dubnik is itself on the *chaussée*, and this statement seems somewhat remarkable. It is taken from the French translation of Kriloff's report. *Revue Militaire de l'Etranger*, August 17, 1878.

To secure the latter object was hardly a performance proportionate to the potentiality of a force of 6,000 sabres, with 30 guns. Kriloff was in fact handling his Cavalry as if they were Infantry, and was evidently over-anxious about his line of retreat, which could in such a country be cut only by Cavalry. In this Arm the Turks were always weak, and West of Plevna they seem to have possessed little more than the Circassian irregulars, a force utterly incompetent to meet the Russians on equal terms.

The movement of Colonel Lewis's detachment was the first sign of an attempt to intercept the Turkish convoys at a distance from Plevna, but it was undertaken only by a force of 12 squadrons and 8 guns; while the mass of Kriloff's Corps seems to have been doing nothing, and under its eyes a force issuing from Plevna was able to threaten Lewis in rear.

It is difficult to account for the orders to the Cavalry Corps to move on the 24th September to Brest. The position is not far from the Danube, and lies North of the Rahova-Plevna and Rahova-Rybina routes. Rahova, with a small Turkish garrison, was in communication with Viddin, Vratza, and Sofia, but the movement was not in the least in keeping with the plan of barring the Sofia-Plevna line. Possibly this plan was now temporarily abandoned.

In conclusion, of the two tasks allotted to General Kriloff—the cutting of the Plevna communications and the sparing of his troops—he had only succeeded in fulfilling the latter. After the great losses of the 11th and 12th September it was natural for the Russians to wish to avoid further sacrifices; but, fully admitting this, and also the difficulties of Cavalry operations against modern Infantry, it seems, nevertheless, that a grand opportunity for a brilliant and dashing Cavalry General existed, and that it was lost. The great importance of preventing the sending of provisions and ammunition into Plevna was so obvious that vigorous action, even at the risk of sacrifices, seems to have been the policy which the situation called for. Gourko was at that time, however, *en route* from Russia with the 2nd Cavalry Division of the Guard, and Kriloff does not appear to have been a happy selection for the command of a great Cavalry Corps. It is to be regretted that fuller tactical details as to the minor handling of the Cavalry in their various small engagements are not available.

The following passage, bearing on the employment of Cavalry, by Captain von Widdern, is worth transcribing:—

‘In future wars armies will often find themselves in front of fortresses, which, on account of the extent of their works, cannot be completely invested. This observation applies especially to France as

Remarks by
Captain von
Widdern.

a theatre of war, where an invading army will find itself opposed by numerous fortified places, generally of great size, which it must surround if the invasion is to succeed.

‘Probably the invading army would not completely invest and besiege more than one such place, or, at all events, a very small number of them. It will place before others forces relatively weak, which can only contain them on one side. The task of observing the rest of their fronts, and of intercepting their communications, will be entrusted to the mobile Arm *par excellence*—the Cavalry.

‘From this point of view, serious difficulties would arise before Paris—a great *Place d’Armes*, whose forts have an extent of 104 miles, the investment over half, or nearly half, of which distance must be left to the care of the Cavalry alone. Before a place like Paris Cavalry can execute its mission only in a single way; it must intercept permanently all the telegraph and railway lines in the region not invested, so as to prevent all communication between the place and the outside world; it must, moreover, extend its sphere of devastation by marches and countermarches executed by whole Divisions, carry away all means of transport (horses and vehicles), and make great requisitions. Unaided, the Cavalry Divisions will not be able definitely to prevent the ingress and egress of considerable bodies of the enemy’s Cavalry, but they will be able to contain them long enough for Infantry to come into line.

‘The example of Plevna shows what is the proper *rôle* of Cavalry before places which cannot be completely invested by reason of their extent. Let us suppose an army arrived on a theatre of war, where it must take account of fortified places as numerous and considerable as those of France, and it is clearly seen that operations cannot be carried on without a very large Cavalry force.

‘The complete failure of the Russian Cavalry before Plevna will serve to show Cavalry commanders that they must seek the accomplishment of defensive missions in the offensive way, in mobility and in frequent changes of position, which disconcert and dismay the enemy.’

It is not alone to permanently fortified positions, such as those of France, that the above remarks apply. The experiences of Plevna, and the large quantity of entrenching tools now carried by all Continental armies, point to a great future development of provisional fortifications. Strong fortified positions, which will have to be dealt with, will spring up in a fortnight, and the duties of Cavalry in the future will, therefore, be by no means confined to mere reconnaissance.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE COMPLETION OF THE INVESTMENT.

AFTER the failure of the great attack on Plevna, considerable depression prevailed in the Russian Army. Not only had the losses been very heavy, and the humiliation great, but the end of the campaign seemed to be indefinitely postponed and winter operations had become inevitable.

The situation after the 3rd battle of Plevna.

The military situation was, however, far more favourable to the invaders than it had been after their second defeat at Plevna. Large reinforcements were now close at hand; Ersatz troops were constantly arriving to fill up the ranks, and, moreover, after September 21st, there was no great cause for apprehension in the other portion of the theatre of war. If the attack on the Russian Tchairkeui-Verboka position, on that day, had succeeded, some small hope of the Turkish cause might perhaps have remained. A Turkish victory here, followed up by a rapid advance of the whole of Mehemet Ali's Army on Biela, or Tirnova, supported by the greater portion of the Schipka force, which might easily have crossed the Balkans by the Slivno pass to Osman Bazaar (and possibly by one of the two passes leading to Elena), and combined with a vigorous offensive of the whole Plevna Army, would doubtless have caused the Russians considerable difficulties. But it must be admitted that this plan was not very likely to succeed, if, indeed, it had not become altogether impossible. The Russians had to some extent fortified Biela and Tirnova, particularly the former; the 26th Division had already arrived; the 3rd Division of the Imperial Guard and the 24th Division of the Line were close at hand. Suleiman had terribly weakened his army in the two front attacks on the Russian Schipka position, from August 21st to the 26th and on September 16th and 17th, and the *morale* of this force must have been much shaken; and finally Osman Pasha's army, though completely victorious on September 11th and 12th, had suffered considerable loss, and was now, probably, far less fit for offensive operations than it had been after July 30th, while the Russo-Roumanian earthworks on the East of Plevna would have rendered any offensive movement on this side almost impossible. It would seem, therefore, that the strategic value to the

Turks of their third victory at Plevna was far less than that of the second. The time for the offensive on the side of the Turks was past; and although, in Bulgaria, previous to the arrival of the Russian Guards, they still possessed a numerical superiority, a considerable portion of their nominally great force was not in a condition to move. This numerical superiority was, moreover, very soon lost, and the Russian Commander-in-Chief was afterwards able to dispose of a force which rendered future mistakes of less serious importance, while, in point of quality, there was no comparison between the Russian reinforcements and the later levies of the Turks.

The Plevna position had, in fact, played its part, and was now doomed. Such positions, if defended with the tenacity of the Turks, will perhaps play an important part in the wars of the future, but their strategic value has its limitations. If attacked, they will always entail heavy sacrifices on the attacking force; if invested, they will detain a large number of the enemy's troops in their front, thus winning valuable time for the side of their defenders—time which may be of vital importance to the issue of a campaign. But if the power to assume the offensive at the right moment does not exist, and if subsequently—as in the Russo-Turkish campaign—the invader is able to develop strength at a greater rate than the invaded, the fate of such positions, and of the campaign in which they play a part, is sealed.

But though the possible influence of Plevna on the *ultimate fate* of the campaign was now greatly diminished, if not altogether lost, Osman Pasha's defence still continued for a time to arrest the wave of invasion; and the previously unknown Bulgarian town, defended by a single blockhouse at the beginning of July, remained for three months the focus of the Russian operations and the centre of eager interest throughout Europe. If Osman had been crushed on September 11th, a rapid advance on Adrianople would probably have followed. The prolonged defence of Plevna entailed on the Russians the losses and the vast expense of a winter campaign, and delayed their entry into Adrianople till January 27th.

Considering that after the arrival of the Russian reinforcements and the retreat of Mehemet Ali, the fall of Plevna was merely a matter of time, and that the occupation of Adrianople followed its capture in less than 7 weeks, it would seem that it would have been wiser for Osman Pasha to have abandoned his lines while the Sofia route was still open, and to have fallen back towards Orhanie, covering his communications, and ultimately employing his tried troops for the defence of the Balkans. Between Plevna and Orhanie several good natural positions seem to exist. Radomirze, about 45 miles from

Plevna, is particularly stated to have been well adapted for defence. It is not certain, however, that this view could have appeared equally clear at the time. The approach of the Russian reinforcements and their strength must have been perfectly well known at Constantinople; but hope was doubtless still placed in the Army of the Quadrilateral, which had hitherto effected nothing proportionate to its strength, and something was probably expected of the half-organised force which was being collected at Sofia, while trust was unquestionably placed in the system of fortified *etappen* stations as a means of defending the Plevna communications.* Moreover, a feeling of national pride had grown up in the successes of the Plevna army, which would have resented a retreat from the scene of so many victories. The probable moral effect of the withdrawal of Osman's force, on the country and on the Army, was not without influence. Osman himself seems to have believed that his own honour and that of his troops was bound up with the defence of Plevna; he subsequently stated, moreover, that he expected the Russians to renew their attacks; and, doubtless despising their tactics, he felt confident of victory.

However this may be, Osman Pasha, most probably acting under distinct orders from the War Council, at once set about a great extension and development of the Plevna defences. The work proceeded without intermission, and by the end of October the defences had nearly attained the development shown in *Pl. III.*, and comprised about 36 considerable works spread over a circumference of nearly $22\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

Meanwhile, throughout September and part of October, Chefket Pasha was actively engaged in collecting and forwarding provisions, ammunition, and reinforcements into Plevna, and after the failure of Kriloff's Cavalry Corps, in forming fortified *etappen* stations on the Plevna-Orchanie line.

The policy decided upon at the Russian Councils of War, held on the 13th and 14th, seems to have been to give up for the present all idea of further assaults, to strengthen the position of the Allied Army in front of Plevna against counter attacks, to remain on the defensive at all parts of the theatre of war, excepting only in the case of Kriloff's mission, and—perhaps the most important decision of all—to send for Todleben.†

Russian
plan.

* Until the arrival of the latter, and of the Imperial Guard, a species

* General Baker states that the War Council was completely misled by Chefket Pasha's report of the situation created by his system of fortified posts.

† That Todleben was not at first employed has excited some natural wonder. But there is little reason to doubt that in the higher commands of the army a system of personal influence and favouritism prevailed to a great extent. The Russians had not grasped the elementary principle that merit constitutes the sole claim to military com-

of partial deadlock appears to have occurred. The Allied troops occupied the line Verbitza-Tutschenitza on the East side of Plevna, and entrenched themselves as far as possible. The Roumanians, who seem to have shown somewhat greater energy, at once commenced an attack by systematic approach on the 2nd Grivitza redoubt.

Arrival of
Totleben.

On 28th September, Totleben arrived at Gorny-Studen, and accompanied the Grand Duke Nicolas on a visit to the position in front of Plevna on the 30th. By an order of 4th October, he was appointed as Assistant* to Prince Charles, with Lieut.-General Prince Imeretinski as Chief of the Staff. Hereafter, Totleben appears to have assumed the complete direction of the siege.

Changes in
the Russian
command.

Many other changes in the higher commands took place at the same time. Zotoff returned to the command of the IVth Corps; Skobelev received that of the 16th Division; Gourko was appointed Commander of the whole Allied Cavalry before Plevna, with Major-General Magloffski as Chief of the Staff; Kriloff returned to Russia as Inspector of Cavalry remounts, and some changes took place in the Staff of the Commander-in-Chief: Colonels Tutolmin and Tchernosuboff were promoted to be Major-Generals; and Major-Generals Arnoldi and Leonoff were appointed to Divisions of Cavalry. Changes were made also in the commands of the Russian Army of the East. Finally, in order to create a stimulus in the lower ranks, changes were made in the regulations for promotion to the grade of officer, and from the rank of subaltern to that of captain.

Position of
Allies in
front of
Plevna.

By the beginning of October, the Roumanian works near Tchalisovat (*Pl. II.*) and Verbitza, and redoubt Alexander (South of Verbitza, *Pl. II. and III.*), were nearly completed, while the Roumanian approaches on the 2nd Grivitza redoubt were within 70 yards of the counter-scarp. The Russian batteries between Grivitza and the Radichevo ridge were finished and armed with 9-pounders. The 24 siege guns were distributed in 3 batteries, one of which was placed close to and South of the Grivitza brook (*Pl. III.*), the other two on the Radichevo ridge. These batteries commanded nearly the whole length of the Turkish position running West from the Grivitza redoubt, and also all the works of the central group. Altogether there are stated to have been about 250 guns in position at this period. But little

mand; but the frequent changes in the higher ranks tend to show that their mistake was felt. The contrast in the conduct of affairs before and after the arrival of Totleben will be a source of pride to all military engineers.

* It is difficult to render the precise title given to Totleben's office. It seems that the position was something more than Chief of the Staff to Prince Charles; and it is significant that Totleben's report on the siege is addressed to the Grand Duke direct, while the whole tenor of this report indicates independence of action. In one passage only it is stated: 'With his (Prince Charles's) approval I issued the following orders.'

firing took place, and this only with shrapnel when the Turkish working parties could be seen. The Turks were thus obliged to work mainly by night on their eastern front; but near Krischin, between Krischin and the Vid, along the right bank of the latter, and near Opanetz, they were completely unmolested, and their works grew daily. Between Grivitza and Bukova, also, it appears that the Russian guns were not able effectually to hinder the working parties. In the central group, the redoubts were connected by trenches serving as covered ways of communication, and supplementary trenches were added in many places.

After Kriloff's failure, Chefket Pasha, acting probably in accordance with arrangements made at his conference with Osman, on the 11th October, set to work to form a series of fortified *etappen* stations on the Orchanie-Plevna line. Already, on the 21st September, Telische appears to have been slightly fortified; but now Dolny-Dubnik and Gorny-Dubnik were taken in hand, and Telische was greatly strengthened.

Formation of fortified *etappen* stations by the Turks.

Dolny-Dubnik was defended by 6 small redoubts—2 North, 1 North-West, and 3 South of the village.

Gorny-Dubnik (*Pl. VII.*) lies in a valley which forks a little above the village itself, running South and South-West. The high ground South of Gorny-Dubnik slopes gently to the North-West towards Dolny-Dubnik. Towards the South-East the ground rises slightly, but is much covered with thick, low brushwood. South of the village, and North of the Orchanie-Plevna *chaussée*, on the high ground, was a tumulus, which was formed into a species of cavalier by the Turks, and armed with 4 guns. Round this cavalier a polygonal redoubt was formed,* the largest diameter of which is stated to have been about 300 yards. South-East of, and about 400 yards from, the main work, and South of the *chaussée*, was an outwork of lunette form, with 3 faces and a front of about 50 yards.† On the *chaussée* stood a small stone building. On the North and West of the position the ground descends abruptly to a valley about 450 yards broad. About 800 yards from the smaller work there was a broad clearing in the brushwood on ground slightly higher than the works. In this clearing there were a few rifle pits for the Turkish outposts: on the North and North-West of the main redoubt some lodgments, or shelter trenches, had been thrown up.

Defences of Gorny-Dubnik, *Pl. VII.*

* It is much to be regretted that fuller details of this redoubt have not come to hand. There are considerable discrepancies on the subject. One account states that it was provided with 'a slight parapet' only '4 feet high and 6 feet thick;' another speaks of the work as 'very strong' and 'built very high.' Gourko's report, and the defence subsequently made, indicate that it was of some strength.

† The Russian reports invariably speak of this work as a 'redoubt,' but it appears to have been open on the side of the main work.

Defences of
Telische.

At Telische an irregular line of trench* had been thrown up à cheval of the *chaussée* and North-East of the village, with some shelter trenches in front. South-West of the village was a large redoubt. Other trenches, or lodgments, seem also to have existed South of the position.

These works were completed before the 24th October, and a force of 20 battalions (under 12,000 men) with about 15 guns and some Circassian Cavalry were distributed among them. The Commandant of the 3 posts was Achmet Hifsi† Pasha. In rear of these 3 posts there was a further Turkish force at Radomirze, Lukovitza, Jablonitza Pravtza, echeloned on the Telische-Orchanie section of the *chaussée*, and a larger force at Orchanie, which was formed into a *depôt*. These places were all more or less entrenched. At Sofia a Reserve Army was being brought together for the relief of Plevna, but was in a very imperfect state of organisation. Teteven and Etropol were also occupied by the Turks, and also Vratza, where another considerable *depôt* was formed. A cordon of Cavalry is stated to have been formed, furnishing posts at distances varying from 3 to 6 miles, to watch the line of the *chaussée*. It was thus hoped to keep the Plevna communications open: and if the Russians had not been able before the end of October to dispose of a large additional Infantry force, the plan would doubtless have proved successful. It had been arranged between Osman and Chefket Pashas that the latter should send a train into Plevna every fortnight. Of the number and size of the trains which succeeded in making the passage, no precise information is available; but besides the two large convoys mentioned in Chapter VII., other smaller ones no doubt reached Plevna, and some were captured by the Russian Cavalry. The extension of the defence of Plevna till December 10th, nearly 7 weeks after all communication had been cut off, affords the best measure of Chefket's success.

Arrival of
Russian
reinforce-
ments.

About the middle of September further Russian reinforcements began to arrive. The Rifle Brigade of the Guard reached Gorny-Studen on the 16th, the 2nd Cavalry Division of the Guard reached Dolny-Lipnitza (South of Gorny-Studen) on the 29th, followed closely by the 1st Infantry Division of the Guard. The 2nd and 3rd Infantry Division of the Guard had arrived by the 4th October, and also the 24th Line Division.‡ The latter was forwarded to reinforce the VIIIth Corps in the Schipka position. The 26th Division had already

* This work is spoken of in Gourko's report as a redoubt cut in two by the *chaussée*; but it seems probable that it was open to the rear, or was, as stated above, a line of trench thrown across the road, with, possibly, returns at the flanks.

† Spelt 'Chiffi' in some accounts.

‡ The following is a detail of the Guard Corps employed in Bulgaria:—

arrived, and a portion of it was engaged at the battle of Tcherkovna on the 21st September. In October this Division was attached to the XIXth Corps, and the 32nd Division (originally belonging to the XIth Corps) to the Czarevitch's command. The 2nd and 3rd Grenadier Divisions arrived in Bulgaria at the end of October and beginning of November, followed shortly afterwards by the 14th Cavalry Division. The 5 Divisions of Guards and Grenadiers were all eventually attached to the Plevna Army.

The Guards and Grenadiers together gave a disposable reinforcement of over 65,000 men, with a full complement of Cavalry and Artillery. It appears that a portion of the Commander-in-Chief's Staff now proposed to leave the original Plevna force, which, before the end of October, was too strongly entrenched to be attacked, and committing the Guards, Grenadiers, 24th Division, and the VIIIth Corps, to force the Turkish Schipka position, and cross the Balkans to Adrianople with about 100,000 men. On the 23rd September an order was issued for the Czarevitch to take the command of the Guard Corps, apparently with a view to his commanding the general advance. This plan was rejected, however, probably on the advice of Todleben, and on the 6th October the order was cancelled. Considering the past experiences of the invading Army, this decision must certainly be considered to be a wise one. It would, of course, be rash to assert the impossibility of the success of the proposed enterprise, if ably conducted. But it was unquestionably better policy to leave nothing to chance, to run no risk of further disasters, and to follow out a scheme of operation, which, though slower, was at all events certain, and far better suited to the capacity of the Russian generalship as judged by past events.

Proposed
advance on
Adrianople.

In any case the reduction of Plevna by investment and starvation

Preparations
for winter
campaign.

Cavalry of the Guard—2nd Division	{	1st Brigade	{	Mounted Grenadiers.
		2nd "	{	Lancers.
			{	Dragoons.
	3rd "	{	Imperial Hussars.	
		{	Grodno Hussars.	
	{	{	Imperial Lancers.	
Infantry of the Guard	{	1st Division	{	Preobrachenski Regiment.
			{	Semenoff "
		2nd "	{	Ismailoff "
			{	Rifle "
		3rd "	{	Moscow "
			{	Grenadier "
	{	1st Division	{	Pauloff "
			{	Finland "
		2nd "	{	Lithuania "
			{	Kexholme "
		3rd "	{	St. Petersburg "
			{	Volhynia "
Rifle Brigade.				

Railways.

was now finally determined upon, and preparations for a winter campaign were taken in hand. Huts were ordered for the troops and to replace the field hospitals. Large depôts of provisions and forage were formed, particularly at Jassy, Bucharest, Braila, Galatz, Fratesti, and Slatina, while 400,000 suits of warm clothing were ordered in Russia. The execution of the railway from Bender to Galatz was hastened, but the line was not finished till December. It was now proposed, moreover, to construct two more lines—one from Fratesti to Simnitza, and the other from Sistova to Tirnova, *via* Gorny-Studen, with a branch to Plevna. The former line was completed about the end of the year, and a certain amount of traffic passed over it.* The Sistova-Tirnova line was begun, and the work was carried on for some time, but after the fall of Rustchuk the main stream of communication with Bulgaria took the route through the latter place, and the line was abandoned.

Weather and roads.

During the latter part of September and beginning of October very heavy rain fell, which rendered the roads almost impassable. It was very cold, and sickness prevailed, but not to any very great extent. Later, fine and warm weather occurred. At the beginning of October a change took place in the directorate of the communications. Lieut.-General Katalei, who had hitherto been in charge of this department, was placed in command of the 3rd Infantry Division of the Guard, and replaced by General Drenteln, who received the title of 'Chief of the Military Communications of the Army of the South,' and was placed in command of all troops in rear of the field armies. In road repair and maintenance generally, the Russians appear to have been somewhat helpless. Colonel Ott, in his report, states: 'We sought to form an idea of what had been done on the Russian side to improve the road communications, and found that the total results were extremely slight, and did not correspond to the requirements.'†

Roumanian attack on 2nd Grivitza redoubt.

On the 19th October the Roumanians, in apparent opposition to Todleben's wishes, made an attack on the 2nd Grivitza redoubt. Their most advanced parallel (*Pl. XIII.*) was by this time within about 30 yards of the counterscarp, and at about 12 noon on this day, 4 Roumanian battalions, partly from their trenches of attack, and partly from the captured redoubt, made a general rush at the

* The Fratesti-Simnitza line was contracted for at a little under £7,000 per mile. It was formed of light steel rails, bought in Norway, Belgium, and France. The bridging of the Vede was apparently badly carried out, and the line was subject to constant interruption and damage from water. It does not appear to have been of very much use. A somewhat grandiose project for a large bridge over the Danube was also taken into consideration at about this time, but was never carried out.

† An exception, perhaps, existed in the case of some of the mountain roads.

work. They were received by a heavy fire from the garrison, and also from a Turkish force which immediately issued from the trenches and covered ways West of the redoubt attacked. The attack was repulsed, and was renewed at about 6 p.m. by 3 battalions. This time the attacking troops succeeded in occupying the ditch, but were unable to climb into the redoubt, as the Turks mounted the parapet and bayoneted or shot them down. As soon as the attacking force fell back into the ditch, the Roumanian Infantry and Artillery fire from No. 1 redoubt, and the trenches of the attack, drove the Turks into their work. The attacking party then made a new attempt, and in this way a confused hand-to-hand struggle was kept up for some little time. As darkness fell, the Roumanians retreated with a loss of 22 officers and 907 men killed and wounded. This attack is only remarkable as the last attempt to storm any of the redoubts round Plevna. It serves also to exhibit the tenacity of Osman's troops in the close defence. Hereafter, the Roumanians limited their operations against the 2nd Grivitza redoubt to mining.

GOURKO'S OPERATIONS WEST OF THE VID.

Totleben, in his letter to Brialmont, says: 'After having made the necessary reconnaissances, I found that the Turkish positions could not be taken by storm, but that if I were in the defenders' place I should be anxious about the Gorge of Plevna and its communications.' The task which Totleben set himself to accomplish is stated to be:—

Commence-
ment of
operations
west of
Plevna.

'1st. To prevent Osman Pasha from getting out, and to oblige him and all his garrison to surrender.

'2nd. To take care of, preserve, and reinforce our Plevna Army, so as to be able, after the fall of the place, to make use of it to support the other armies who had no reserves, and, taking advantage of our success, to assume the offensive with vigour.'

The coming operations may be divided into two parts, of which the success of the second was dependent on that of the first.

1. The capture of the fortified positions on the Plevna-Orchanie line of communications, afterwards followed by the exploration of Western Bulgaria, and eventually by the capture of Orchanie and the advance into the Balkans.

2. The tactical dispositions for the close investment of Plevna and the creation of lines to render a breaking out of Osman's force impossible.

Gourko (previously appointed Commander of the allied Cavalry

before Plevna) was ordered to clear the Plevna-Orchanie route. The task was somewhat different to that in which Kriloff had failed. The latter was to destroy and intercept the Turkish convoys and to interrupt communication as far as possible. But the fortification of the etappen stations was now complete; the operation would have to be carried out mainly by Infantry, and after the experiences of Plevna a strong resistance was to be expected. Gourko, supported by Todleben, demanded a great numerical superiority in Infantry to his enemy, but it is stated that the Head-Quarter Staff needed some convincing on the point. It had apparently been intended to send the 2nd Infantry Division of the Guard to the Czarevitch's command, but this force was now placed at Gourko's disposal. The 1st Division of the Guard and the Rifle Brigade of the Guard had been posted near the Vid since about the 10th October, and were also rendered available. About the middle of October the 4th Cavalry Division (Lieut.-General Arnoldi), the Don Cossack Brigade (Major-General Tchernosuboff), the Caucasian Cossack Brigade (Colonel Tscherevin), and the Roumanian Roschiori and Kalarash Brigades, were near Trestenik and Rybina, on the left bank of the Vid. All the above troops, with the addition of 7 battalions of Roumanian Infantry, despatched across the Vid at Rybina to join Arnoldi's command, were placed under Gourko's orders. His total force was made up as follows:—

Detail of
force at
Gourko's
disposal.

Infantry		Battalions	Field Guns
Imperial Guards	1st Division	16	48
	2nd „	16	48
	Rifle Brigade	4	—
	Sapper battalion	1	—
	3rd Roumanian Division, 1st Brigade . .	7	6
Totals		44	102
Cavalry.		Squadrons	H.A. Guns
2nd Division Guards (6 Regiments)		24	18
Imperial Escort		4	—
4th Cavalry Division		18	12
Don Cossack Brigade		12	6
Caucasian Cossack Brigade		12	6
Roumanian Roschiori Brigade		8	6
„ Kalarash „		8	—
Totals		86	48

With the exception, perhaps, of the Roumanians, the battalions were

all presumably up to full strength, and the total force would be about 35,000 Infantry, 9,500 Cavalry, and 150 Guns.*

The plan of operations arranged between Todleben and Gourko was that the latter, massing the greater part of his command near the Vid, South of Plevna, within a short march of Gorny-Dubnik, should attack this place, and afterwards Telische and Dolny-Dubnik successively. Gorny-Dubnik, having been captured, was to be at once fortified, and for this purpose the Sappers of the Guard were available.† Gorny-Dubnik was expected to make a considerable resistance, while the Russians during the operation had to be prepared against Turkish movements on the North-East from Plevna, and on the South-West from Telische. A mask of troops was therefore to be placed between the latter places and Gorny-Dubnik, and the whole operation was to be supported by a strong demonstration from the North. The attack was fixed for the 24th October, and the allied batteries were to shell the Plevna works on this day, while a demonstration was to be made on the South in the directions of Krischin and Blasigas.

Plan of operations.

The 2nd Cavalry Division of the Guard, under Major-General Leonoff I., reached Biejanovo (about 17 miles South-West of Plevna) on the 20th October, and threw out posts to the Vid. On the 22nd, each of the 6 Regiments sent a troop across the Vid to reconnoitre the ground. The reconnaissances were well carried out and pressed up to the Turkish works; they included the country from Torotz on the Vid to Telische *vid* Radomirze. On the same day also, Gourko, accompanied by the Superior Officers of the Guard Cavalry Division, and escorted by 2 squadrons of the Imperial Escort and 1 sotnia, 4th Don Cossacks, reconnoitred towards Telische. Subsequently, Gourko, accompanied only by a few officers, rode along the *chaussée* towards Gorny-Dubnik, reconnoitred the Turkish works there, and, returning to the right bank of the Vid, made the following dispositions:—

Preliminary reconnoissances.

1. To attack Gorny-Dubnik on three sides, North-East, South-East, and South-West—

Dispositions for attack.

* Considering the strength of the Turks on the Plevna-Orchanie line, this force would appear to be somewhat disproportionate; but the maxim that 'an attacking force is never too strong' has received a new meaning when applied to earthworks defended by breechloaders, and the experiences of Plevna had already begun to produce an effect.

† Though in the attack on the stronger position of Lovtcha on the 3rd September, a force of only 30-40 Sappers were employed, it was now thought advisable to use a whole battalion at Gorny-Dubnik.

Guards	2nd Infantry Division	15 battalions.
	Rifle Brigade	4 „
	Sapper battalion	1 battalion.
	Imperial Escort	2 squadrons.
	4th Don Cossacks	4 sotnias.
	6 Field batteries of Guard	48 guns.

Total— 20 battalions, 6 squadrons, 48 guns.

2. To advance from Abaskioi and cut off retreat of defenders of Gorny-Dubnik on the West side—

Caucasian Cossack Brigade	12 sotnias.
„ „ battery	6 guns.

3. To cover the attack on the Plevna side, to make a demonstration against Dolny-Dubnik, and to serve as a General Reserve—

1st Division (Guards)	12 battalions.
4 Field batteries	32 guns.
Imperial Escort	2 squadrons.
3rd Brigade, 2nd Cavalry Division (Guards)	8 „
2 H.A. batteries of Guard	12 guns.
4th Don Cossacks	1 sotnia.

Total—12 battalions, 11 squadrons, 44 guns.

4. To cover the attack on the Orchaie side, and to demonstrate against Telische—

Rifle Regiment, 1st Division (Guards)	4 battalions.
1 Field battery	8 guns.
1st and 2nd Brigades, 2nd Cavalry Division (Guards)	16 squadrons.
2 H.A. batteries	12 guns.
4th Don Cossacks	1 sotnia.

Total—4 battalions, 17 squadrons, 20 guns.

5. To remain at Medeven and guard the ford there—

2nd Division (Guards)	1 battalion.
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6. To move from Magaleta, partly on the right bank of the Isker in the direction of Tchervenybreg, partly on the left bank in the direction of Tchumakovitz, and to cover the right flank of the Telische detachment—

Roumanian Kalarash Brigade	8 squadrons.
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7. To make a demonstration on Dolny-Dubnik from the North, under Lieut.-General Arnoldi—

1st Brigade, 3rd Roumanian Division	2 battalions.
4th Cavalry Division (less 4th Cossacks, 1 squadron) . .	11 squadrons.
" " " 2 H.A. batteries (less 2 guns)	10 guns.
Roumanian Roschiori Brigade	8 squadrons.
" 1 H.A. battery	6 guns.

Total—2 battalions, 19 squadrons, 16 guns.

8. The 9th Cavalry Division, South of Plevna, to send a detachment from Medeven towards Dolny-Dubnik, to keep up communication with Arnoldi's force.

9. To remain in position near Gorny-Netropol and to observe Plevna, under Major-General Tchernosuboff—

Roumanian Infantry	5 battalions.
1 Roumanian field battery	6 guns.
Don Cossack Brigade (less 5 sotnias)	7 sotnias.
1 Don Cossack battery	6 guns.

Total—5 battalions, 7 sotnias, 12 guns.

On the 23rd, the troops detailed to operate from the South were massed near the Vid, about 6 miles above Medeven and opposite Tchirikovo, where there are stated to be three 'knee-deep' fords. Movements
South of
Plevna.

On the 24th, Skobelev, with the 16th Division, the 1st Brigade, 30th Division, and the 3rd Rifle Brigade, moved from Tutschenitza to the Plevna-Lovtcha road and occupied the heights in front of Brestovatz. At the same time the 3rd Infantry Division of the Guard occupied the heights above Medeven, and moved forward to within range of the Turkish works lately constructed between Krischin and the Vid. The Guards then extended towards the right, and touched Skobelev's force extending to the left. These movements were carried out without any difficulty.

The troops detailed for the direct attack on Gorny-Dubnik forded the Vid in 3 columns during the night of the 23rd, and took post as stated below—

RIGHT COLUMN (Major-General Ellis I.)	Rifle Brigade (Guards)	4 battalions.	Detail of columns for direct attack.
	Imperial Escort	2 squadrons.	
	2 Field batteries (Guards)	16 guns.	
	4th Don Cossacks	1 sotnia.	

On Tchirikovo-Kursivitz* route, $1\frac{1}{4}$ mile from the former village.

CENTRE COLUMN (Major-General Baron Zeddele)	1st Brigade, 2nd Division (Guards)	7 battalions.
	Sapper Brigade (Guards)	1 battalion.
	2 Field batteries (Guards)	16 guns.
	4th Don Cossacks	1 sotnia.

* 'Kruchewats' in Gourko's report.

On Tchirikovo-Tchumakovitze route, $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile from former place.

LEFT COLUMN (Major-General Rosenback)	} 2nd Brigade, 2nd Division (Guards)	8 battalions.
		2 Field batteries (Guards) . . . 16 guns.

In valley of Svinar, about $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile West of the Vid.

Colonel Tcherevin's force was assembled during the night at Abaskioi.

The right and left columns started at about 6.30 A.M. on the 24th; the centre column, which had somewhat less distance to traverse, set out about 7 A.M. Both the flank columns were delayed on the march, and arrived in front of Gorny-Dubnik about half an hour after the centre column.

ATTACK ON GORNY-DUBNIK.

Centre
column of
of attack.

At about 8.30 the batteries of the centre column reached the clearing South-West of the Gorny-Dubnik position, and opened fire on the Turkish works at about 1,700 yards range. The column was formed for attack; the Moscow Regiment on the right of the batteries, the Grenadiers on the left: both Regiments, with their 4th battalions in 1st Line, the 2nd and 3rd battalions as supports, the 1st battalion of Grenadiers and the Sapper battalion in reserve.

Soon afterwards the advance began. The Grenadiers lost their direction in the thick brushwood, and swerved to the left: Colonel Loubovitski, commanding the Regiment, led the troops back a part of the distance and gave them a fresh direction. Meanwhile, to fill up the gap which had been formed between the Infantry and the batteries, the 1st battalion was ordered up from the reserve. Eventually the Regiment reached the verge of the wood nearly South-East of the small advanced work.

By about 9 A.M. the two flank columns had arrived on the North-East and South-West of the position, and their Artillery opened fire on the Turkish works. A little later Colonel Tscherevin's detachment arrived on the North-West of the position, and the Horse Artillery battery with this force also opened fire. By about 9.30 the Artillery had thus surrounded the position, and the Turkish works were being shelled by 54 guns.*

At about 11 A.M. the Grenadiers advanced under a heavy fire to assault the Turkish outwork. The latter was carried, but the Russians,

* Sixty guns on the arrival of the H.A. battery of the Guard at the Artillery position of the left column.

attempting to follow the Turks into the main redoubt, were obliged to fall back, and gained shelter behind the outwork, in the small house close to the *chaussée*, and in the ditches on both sides of the latter. The Moscow Regiment, which appears for some inscrutable reason to have been held back a little, advanced 'to support the attack of the Grenadiers,' and at the same time the batteries of the centre column moved up to within 900 yards of the main redoubt. At this range, however, the loss in men and horses was very severe, and the battery soon returned to its original position. The Moscow Regiment was unable to reach the redoubt, and occupied the ditches of the *chaussée* on the right of the Grenadiers, or obtained cover on the ground East of the captured outwork. Major-General Zeddeler and Colonels Scalon and Loubovitski were wounded in this first assault.

The right column of attack had struck the *chaussée* not far from Dolny-Dubnik, and the 2 squadrons of the Imperial Escort, who preceded the column, drove back some Circassian Cavalry outposts, and cut the telegraph line. When the Infantry began to defile along the *chaussée* they were fired at by Artillery from the Dolny-Dubnik works. Leaving the 2nd battalion in front of the Dolny-Dubnik position, the remaining 3 battalions, with the Artillery, advanced along the *chaussée* towards Gorny-Dubnik. The batteries were brought into action by the side of the *chaussée*, at a range of about 1,900 yards from the main redoubt, and the Infantry was formed for the attack, 2 battalions in first line and one as support. A portion of the 2 battalions in first line occupied some abandoned Turkish trenches, or lodgments, North-East of, and at a distance of 750 to 900 yards from, the main redoubt. The Artillery of the right column—which, it is stated, had been obliged to cease fire for fear of injuring the advanced troops—advanced nearly into line with the position occupied by the Rifles, and opened again at about 1,000 yards. Up to this time only 2 battalions of the right column had been engaged; but the 1st Division of the Guard had meanwhile reached the *chaussée* between Gorny and Dolny-Dubnik, and the 2nd Rifle battalion, which had remained near the latter place, moved up to join the Brigade. At about noon, Gourko personally visited the advanced position of the Rifles, and about the same time he received information of the repulse of Tchelitcheff's column before Telische, and that Generals Rosenbach and Zeddeler were wounded. Gourko states: 'At the right of the position where I was, a narrow and deep ravine descends to the valley in which Gorny-Dubnik lies. Three battalions* of Rifles, which passed to the right of the batteries, and

Right
column of
attack.

* Apparently the two battalions which had not been engaged, and the right battalion in the original formation of attack.

On Tehirikovo-Tchumakovitze route, $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile from former place.

LEFT COLUMN (Major-General Rosenback)	} 2nd Brigade, 2nd Division (Guards)	8 battalions.
		2 Field batteries (Guards) . . . 16 guns.

In valley of Svinar, about $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile West of the Vid.

Colonel Tcherevin's force was assembled during the night at Abaskioi.

The right and left columns started at about 6.30 A.M. on the 24th; the centre column, which had somewhat less distance to traverse, set out about 7 A.M. Both the flank columns were delayed on the march, and arrived in front of Gorny-Dubnik about half an hour after the centre column.

ATTACK ON GORNY-DUBNIK.

Centre
column of
of attack.

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Soon afterwards the advance began. The Grenadiers lost their direction in the thick brushwood, and swerved to the left: Colonel Loubovitski, commanding the Regiment, led the troops back a part of the distance and gave them a fresh direction. Meanwhile, to fill up the gap which had been formed between the Infantry and the batteries, the 1st battalion was ordered up from the reserve. Eventually the Regiment reached the verge of the wood nearly South-East of the small advanced work.

By about 9 A.M. the two flank columns had arrived on the North-East and South-West of the position, and their Artillery opened fire on the Turkish works. A little later Colonel Tcherevin's detachment arrived on the North-West of the position, and the Horse Artillery battery with this force also opened fire. By about 9.30 the Artillery had thus surrounded the position, and the Turkish works were being shelled by 54 guns.*

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* Sixty guns on the arrival of the H.A. battery of the Guard at the Artillery position of the left column.

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Right
column of
attack.

* Apparently the two battalions which had not been engaged, and the right battalion in the original formation of attack.

sought to maintain themselves against the rain of bullets coming from the Turks, turned to the right, passed down this ravine, and, descending into the valley, moved to attack the western side of the great redoubt. It was necessary to fill up the gap formed between these battalions and the batteries, and Gourko ordered up the Ismailoff Regiment of the 2nd Brigade, 1st Division of the Guard. Two battalions of this Regiment took post on the right of the batteries, and the remaining 2 battalions were sent to reinforce the centre and left columns, which had suffered heavy loss.

Left column
of attack.

The left column moved from the valley of Svinar at about 6.30 A.M., but it was delayed on the march, having to cross a narrow but deep watercourse soon after starting. Striking the *chaussée* between Telische and Gorny-Dubnik, this column moved on the latter place from the South-West, and arrived in front of the Turkish position at about 9 A.M. The two batteries opened on the Turkish works at about 2,000 yards, and subsequently moved to within 1,700. The Finland Regiment was formed for attack on the left of the *chaussée*, the Pauloff Regiment on the right; the former Regiment had some thick scrub in its front, the latter open ground, while a valley lay between their positions and the Turkish works. A Horse Artillery battery of the 2nd Cavalry Division of the Guard soon afterwards arrived, and came into action on the right of the field batteries of the left column. The two Regiments soon advanced to the attack, crossed the valley, and began to climb the slopes South-West of the redoubt. The fire became very severe, and the Regiments fell back and sought cover; the Finland in some undefended ground at the bottom of the valley, the Pauloff in a fold of the latter to the left rear of the position of the Grenadiers.

By noon, therefore, the Turkish outwork had been carried, but the three columns of attack had been severally repulsed by the fire of the main work: the redoubt was almost completely surrounded by the Russians at various distances, and the troops of the centre column remained within from 100 to 400 yards of the work. The Artillery—with the exception, apparently, of the field batteries of the right column—occupied nearly the positions first taken up. Desultory Infantry fire was carried on, but the free action of the Artillery was much impeded by the fear of injuring the advanced Infantry.

Second
attack.

At about 2 P.M. Gourko quitted the position of the Rifles, and rode to that of the batteries of the centre column. Receiving further information that the Telische detachment was in full retreat, and fearing that Turkish reinforcements from this quarter might arrive on the scene, Gourko determined upon a general attack from all sides at

3 P.M., giving verbal directions to Major-General Brock, who had assumed command of the centre column, and sending written orders to Major-General Ellis. The plan was, that, as soon as the Brigadiers had completed their dispositions, salvoes were to be fired in succession by the batteries of the centre, right, and left columns. After the third salvo the general assault was to take place. Having given these orders to the right and centre columns, Gourko rode to the position of the left column to give verbal directions to General Count Schouvaloff. Before this column was ready for action 'the three last salvoes of the right column' * sounded, and the troops of the right column began the assault. The prescribed signal had therefore failed, and Gourko states: 'Instead of a simultaneous attack on all sides of the redoubt, isolated assaults and partial efforts were about to occur, and under such conditions success became doubtful. In order to make the best of things, to regain a hold over matters, and to support the column which had moved to the assault, I sent orderlies in all directions, with orders for the troops not to wait for any signal, but to attack at once. As might be expected, successive assaults were delivered. The scattered fractions of troops, received by a terrible fire, were checked, and none succeeded in reaching the redoubt. With the exception of the Finland Regiment, none retired, and they lay down, covered as much as possible by the ground, some even at 40 paces from the redoubt. The Finland Regiment, finding no cover, fell back into the undefended space at the foot of the slopes.'

The attacks were all over by about 3 P.M., and the batteries were unable to fire from fear of injuring the Infantry. Gourko rightly judged, however, that to recall the troops would have been disastrous: 'To draw back the troops in order to recommence Artillery fire was a perfectly impossible operation; it would have exposed them to enormous losses, and such a movement in retreat would have produced a disastrous moral effect.'

It was decided, therefore, to leave the Infantry in position, and to make a fresh attack at nightfall.

'Towards the end of the day, some parties succeeded in approaching still nearer to the redoubt; thus 2 battalions of the Ismailoff Regiment, with their Colonel, Major-General Ellis II., at their head, advanced about 150 yards by crawling, and lodged themselves at less than 50 paces from the redoubt.' Finally a general rush was made from all sides, and the redoubt was carried.

Achmet Hifsi Pasha, with 53 officers and 2,235 men, unwounded, surrendered, while 4 Krupp guns, 'an enormous quantity of rifles,' with

Capture of
the redoubt.

* Gourko's report. *Revue Militaire de l'Étranger*, November 2nd, 1878.

a great store of small arm cartridges, and other munitions of war were taken.

Russian
losses.

The Russian losses were—

	Killed		Wounded	
	Officers	Men	Officers	Men
Staff	—	—	5	1
Imperial Escort	—	1	2	4
Ismailoff Regiment	1	57	6	219
Moscow "	3	95	13	421
Grenadiers	3	310	26	594
Pauloff Regiment	6	164	13	500
Finland "	3	106	14	323
Rifle Brigade	1	56	13	214
Sapper battalion	—	5	1	58
Artillery	1	7	3	49
Totals	18	801	96	2,383

Deducting the loss of the Staff, Escort, Sappers, and Artillery, there remains a total of 102 officers, 3,059 men killed and wounded.

The 5 Regiments of the Guard had each 4 battalions, except the Moscow Regiment, one battalion of which was not present.

Allowing 20 officers and 800 men per battalion, the percentages of loss are—

Officers, 26·8; men, 20·2.

On the same estimate the percentage losses of the Grenadier Regiment appear to be—

Officers, 36·2; men, 28·2.

General
remarks.

The defence of Gorny-Dubnik is very interesting, and helps to some extent to explain that of Plevna. The latter is a memorable example of the defence of a great position, and the former is equally remarkable as an instance of the defence of an isolated post. That a tolerably roughly constructed redoubt, garrisoned only by some 4,000 men, with 4 guns, withstood for about 10 hours the repeated assaults of nearly 20,000 of the best troops of Russia, with 60 guns, is a very significant fact, and gives rise to many reflections. It is unfortunate that Gourko's report—almost the sole source of information on the subject—is much wanting in tactical details; and criticism, without a personal knowledge of the minor details of the attack and of the ground, becomes a delicate matter. Some points, however, stand out in strong relief.

The attack seems to have been strategically well planned, and the dispositions, though complicated, show much foresight and skill. The Turks, in the three positions of Dolny-Dubnik, Gorny-Dubnik, and Telische, were at most 12,000 strong, and were very weak in

Artillery.* The Russians certainly expected attempts to relieve Gorny-Dubnik from Telische and Plevna; but the operations at the former place were strongly masked, and everything appeared to promise success. The great force employed in the attack seems to indicate that the events at Plevna had gone far to shake the original over-confidence of the Russians; or, perhaps, there was a desire to shield the newly-arrived Guard Corps from the possibility of a defeat, which might shake its *morale*.

It is difficult to believe that there were not grave tactical errors in the conduct of the attack; and there are indications in Gourko's report, which point to such errors as the cause of the repulse and the heavy losses. Thus the three attacking columns, on their arrival, seem to have carried out independent assaults, which were successively repulsed. This must have been due to the want of a prearranged plan of common action, or to a careless execution of orders. Whether there was a sufficient attempt to take advantage of the ground cannot perhaps be fairly stated without fuller knowledge. The Rifle Brigade, in the right column, appears to have availed itself of the ground, but in the first attack by the centre and left columns it is not equally clear that this was the case. Indeed, it seems that the centre column, after its second attempt, was able to remain near to the redoubt. The cover which the ground seems thus to have afforded might, apparently, have been utilised in the first attack, preparatory to the final rush. The impression is rather that—as so frequently occurred at Plevna—there was an effort to get over the whole distance at one stride. As to the formation adopted for the attack, Gourko's report says very little, but it was probably one of those described on p. 132. The heavy loss points to dense ranking. It does not seem that much use was made of the captured outwork to prepare the attack on the main work. Although this work was apparently open to the fire of the main redoubt, something might, perhaps, have been done by the help of the Sapper battalion. The latter appears to have been handled as ordinary Infantry, and to have been merely kept in reserve. Nor was there any attempt to bring up guns to the position of this outwork, as Skobelev succeeded in doing to the works captured on September 11th.

The attempt to make a second general attack by a preconcerted signal after the failure of the first, completely broke down, and it might, perhaps, have been better to have given a stated time sufficiently far in advance to allow of all necessary preparations. In the noise and general confusion the salvo signal was somewhat liable to be misunder-

* The number of guns at Dolny-Dubnik cannot be stated with certainty, but was probably not more than 4.

stood. This incident will remain one of the unexplained blunders of war.

The Artillery preparation seems to have been very short and very inefficient, while after the failure of the first attack the fire was much impeded, and was evidently desultory. After the experiences of the Russian Artillery before Plevna, it is not certain, however, that much result would have been obtained by a longer preparatory fire.

But while it seems probable that tactical errors of the kind above enumerated were committed, the failure must, to some extent, be attributed to the greatly enhanced power which the defence gains by the employment of earthworks, breech-loading rifles, and an unlimited supply of ammunition. It is easy to conceive that a concentric attack by successive swarms of skirmishers on such a position as that of Gorny-Dubnik should be irresistible, as no doubt it is in theory. But in actual warfare, against defenders as stubborn as the Turks and far better shots, such an attack will present many difficulties. The natural differences in the lie of the ground, in the distances to be traversed, in the moral qualities of the attacking troops, in the tactical skill of the company officers, the difficulty under all the disturbing conditions of battle of arranging for a common start, the varying degrees of the intensity of fire on different sectors of attack, are some of the many considerations which offer themselves.

It is much to be regretted that nothing can be stated as to the composition of the garrison of Gorny-Dubnik. It would be interesting to know whether any of the Turkish regular troops of the line were present, or if, as is most likely, the defenders were Redifs, or, as is possible, partly irregular levies.

In conclusion, it may be noticed that at Gorny-Dubnik, as elsewhere, the Russians benefited greatly by the entirely passive nature of the Turkish defence, which gave them breathing time before taking fresh action. Not only was no sortie made from the redoubt at a time when the disorder in the Russian troops would have rendered it very inconvenient to the attacking force; but, after the complete repulse of the detachment interposed between Gorny-Dubnik and Telische, no attempt was made from the latter place to come to the assistance of the defenders of the former.*

* It seems impossible to omit an account furnished by the *Daily News* correspondent, which attributes the initiative in the final attack to the Russian soldiers themselves. No correspondents were allowed at the time with Gourko's force, and the account does not therefore come first hand. It is not directly confirmed by Gourko's report, but it is not inconsistent with the latter. It bears the stamp of probability, and it appears to be just the kind of information which a General's report might not contain.

'As the day went on, a few bold fellows stole out from the captured earthwork,

ATTACK ON TELISCHE (24TH OCTOBER).

The detachment (No. 4, p. 170) under Colonel Tchelitcheff (less the 1st Brigade of the 2nd Cavalry Division and 1 H. A. battery) crossed the Vid during the night of the 23rd, and took post in the valley of Svinar, with orders to cover the operation at Gorny-Dubnik, on the side of Telische. Leaving Svinar at about 6.30, the Dragoon Regiment, with 2 H. A. guns, moved to the heights of Rakita to cover the left flank of the column, and to observe in the direction of Radomirze. The Hussar Regiment and 4 H. A. guns at first marched in front of the Rifles, but subsequently the Hussars moved off to the left to advance against Telische from the South. At about 9.30 the Rifles came in sight of the works of Telische; and Colonel Tchelitcheff, with an escort of a few Hussars, reconnoitred the position and decided to attack on the East side. The 4 H. A. guns, and shortly afterwards the field battery, came into action about 1,100 yards from the Turkish work. The Rifles were formed for attack—the 3rd and 4th battalions in first line, the 1st and 2nd as supports. The advance began over very open ground, the fire from the Turkish works soon causing sensible losses. At about 10 A.M. the 1st line drove the Turks out of some shallow lodgments in front of the easterly work, but were unable to find shelter there, and suffered considerably from the fire,

Attack on
Telische.

dodged behind first one and then another natural bit of cover, crept along the ditch of the *chaussée*, and got into a little house which stood on the West side of the *chaussée*. A strawstack near by afforded shelter for one or two other soldiers who had followed the example of the first. Now it became the smart thing to do, in full sight of all, to jump from the little redoubt into the ditch, then rush into the little house, or behind the strawstack. One soldier dared the other; the enterprising spirit of the first one spread like a contagion among the rest, and in an hour or two the little house was so full that those who came last, all out of breath, could find no cover there, and were obliged to go further, and did go on, and threw themselves into the very ditch of the great redoubt—those who reached there.

.... 'As late as five in the afternoon a hurrah was made, and a general attempt to carry the great redoubt failed again, because no man would face long the fire of the Turks. The few who got into the ditch found it the only place where there was perfect shelter, much to their surprise, and beckoned and called others to follow them, which they did as opportunity offered, until there was quite a force under the very noses of the enemy. The Turks could not fire on them, because to hit them they were obliged to stand up on the parapet, and this was certain death. Beams and stones were thrown over into the ditch, and the Russians responded playfully with lumps of earth and pebbles; but all the time they were not idle, for they diligently dug in the steep bank steps by which they could mount the parapet. The number of men increased rapidly as night approached, and at last they with one accord clambered up the bank, sprang upon the parapet, and bayoneted the defenders of the redoubt with resistless energy.' It is hardly necessary to remark that this gradual occupation of the ditch would not have been possible if the latter had been flanked.

which was becoming more and more severe. It was impossible to remain long under such a fire, and the 2 battalions advanced on the works. Apparently without orders, the 2 battalions forming the supports rushed forward, and became partially involved with the troops of the first line; but the force did not succeed in getting nearer than 100 yards from the work, and the men lay down, sheltering themselves as much as possible. The Turks attempted to make a counter attack, but were repulsed by volleys. Colonel Tchelitcheff receiving information from the Dragoons at Rakita that a force of Turkish Infantry with Artillery was moving on Telische, and realising somewhat too late that the attack was hopeless, ordered a retreat. Meanwhile the Hussar Regiment attacked from the South, and dismounted detachments succeeded, it is stated, in carrying some advanced trenches, and in repulsing a Turkish counter attack by the fire of dismounted troopers and of the H. A. battery; the Regiment was soon afterwards ordered to cover the retreat of the Rifles. The Dragoons near Rakita had some slight skirmishes with Circassians in the direction of Radomirze, and reported the appearance in this direction of a Turkish force, which, however, did not offer to advance further. The Dragoon Regiment joined the Hussars in covering the retreat, and furnished a detachment which, with a squadron of Hussars, was employed in carrying off the wounded under fire.

Russian
losses.

The losses of the Rifle Regiment of the Guard were—

26 officers and 907 men killed and wounded.

Those of the 2nd Cavalry Brigade were—

2 officers and 16 men killed and wounded.

The 1st Cavalry Brigade of the Guard set out from the Vid at about 7 A.M., and struck the *chaussée* between Telische and Gorny-Dubnik at 10 A.M. Here contact was effected with the detachment moving on Telische, and also with the Caucasian Cossack Brigade moving on Gorny-Dubnik from the West. The H. A. battery of the Guard with the Brigade was sent to reinforce the Artillery of the left column of attack before Gorny-Dubnik. At about 12 noon information arrived that the attack on Telische was repulsed, and the Mounted Grenadiers were ordered to assist in covering the retreating troops. No pursuit took place, however, and their services were not needed. During the night of the 24th the Brigade remained in position between Telische and Gorny-Dubnik.

General
remarks.

Gourko states with regard to this affair: 'Although it had not been able to take Telische, the detachment had nevertheless fulfilled its mission. During the whole affair of Gorny-Dubnik, the Turks did not stir from Telische, and made no attempt to come to the rescue

of the defenders of the former post.' That no such movement took place can hardly, however, have been due to the Rifle Regiment, as the latter, with a loss of more than 28 per cent., was probably not in a condition to offer much resistance after 12 noon, and there remained only a Cavalry screen between the two posts. In recounting his disposition for the whole operation, Gourko says nothing of an intention to attack Telische on the 24th October; but in describing the events at the latter place, he states that, in addition to containing the enemy on this side, the force was to take Telische, if it appeared possible. It could scarcely have been intended, however, to involve the detachment in an assault on an entrenched post held by a greatly superior force. Telische was probably as strong as Gorny-Dubnik, and an error must have been committed by the detachment commander. Gourko's report seems to imply that the battalions detailed as supports got completely out of hand and joined in the attack without orders. Similar occurrences took place on other occasions, notably in the case of the 5th Regiment before Plevna on the 8th September. It is also noteworthy that Cavalry appear to have been employed in an attack on earthworks, as was the case also at Vratza on the 9th November.

DEMONSTRATION AGAINST DOLNY-DUBNIK (24TH OCTOBER).

The detachment under General Arnoldi (No. 7, p. 171) advanced from Trestenik on the morning of the 24th at about 7 A.M., and, arriving about $1\frac{3}{4}$ mile north of Dolny-Dubnik, it was received by Artillery fire from 2 redoubts North of the village. The force moved off in a South-westerly direction, leaving the 4th Dragoons opposite the redoubts. Before striking the *chaussée*, the detachment discovered a third redoubt, on which the Roumanian and 1 Russian H. A. battery opened fire, while the 4th Lancers, with 4 H. A. guns, moved at a trot along the *chaussée* towards Gorny-Dubnik, where about this time the right column of attack had arrived. Nothing of importance occurred. The batteries subsequently moved to a height which commanded the redoubts, and the firing was kept up on both sides with little result till evening. The 2 Roumanian Infantry battalions entrenched themselves on the left flank of the Artillery position. The Russian Cavalry, attempting to close in on the Turkish works, were repulsed by Infantry fire. The Turkish strength in Dolny-Dubnik was estimated to be 6 battalions, with 4 guns.

Meanwhile, General Loschkareff, commanding 9th Cavalry Division, ordered 6 squadrons (9th Hussars and 2 squadrons, 9th Dragoons)

Demon-
stration on
Dolny-
Dubnik.

with one H. A. battery to cross the Vid near Medeven. This force effected contact and kept up communication with Arnoldi's detachment and the 1st Division of the Guard.

Tchernosuboff's detachment.

Tchernosuboff, with his detachment (No. 9, p. 171), took up a position and entrenched himself between Dolny-Netropol and Gorny-Netropol, on the night of the 23rd. On the 24th, an ineffective fire was opened on the Turkish works near the Vid bridge. The losses experienced on the 24th by the above forces are not given, but must have been extremely slight.

CAPTURE OF TELISCHE (28TH OCTOBER).

Capture of Telische.

After the fall of Gorny-Dubnik, the 1st Infantry Division of the Guard took front towards Dolny-Dubnik with the Rifle Brigade on the left, touching the Roumanians, North-West of Dolny-Dubnik. Thus well protected on the Plevna side, the Sapper battalion and a Brigade of the 2nd Infantry Division of the Guard set to work to fortify Gorny-Dubnik. Dolny-Dubnik was watched on the North and West by Arnoldi's detachment, and the bridge over the Vid by that of Tchernosuboff. The 1st Brigade, 2nd Cavalry Division, of the Guard, near Rakita, observed Telische on the South; the 2nd Brigade was posted in the valley of Svinar, and observed Telische on the East side; the 3rd Brigade was near Gorny-Dubnik; while the Caucasian Cossack Brigade watched Telische on the North and West. The other Brigade of the 2nd Infantry Division of the Guard was posted between Gorny-Dubnik and Telische. Finally the 1st Brigade, 3rd Division of the Guard, was ordered up from Medeven, to the East of Telische.

A post-house on the *chaussée*, about 3 miles South of Telische, had been occupied by the Turks and surrounded by trenches, and Radomirze was held by a strong detachment. A Turkish force of 20 battalions with 10 guns, and about 1,000 cavalry, under Chefket, is stated to have advanced from Orhanie to the support of the etappen stations; but after hearing of the fall of Gorny-Dubnik, Chefket appears to have halted and turned back, or contented himself with leaving detachments at the post-house and at Radomirze.

The Cavalry Brigade near Rakita was constantly engaged in skirmishes with the enemy, and the outpost duties were very severe.*

On October 28th, Gourko moved to attack Telische, and surrounded the position with 16 battalions of the Guards and the

* Major Khrapovitski's journal (partly published by the *Revue Militaire de l'Étranger*, October 12th, 1878) contains an interesting account of the services performed by the 2nd Cavalry Division at this period.

3rd Cavalry Brigade; 6 field and 2 H. A. batteries of the Guard, and the Caucasian Cossack battery (66 guns), opened a convergent fire at about 11 A.M., which was kept up till 2 P.M. Gourko now sent in a prisoner with a summons to surrender, under a threat to attack at once on all sides, if an answer were not returned in half an hour. Ismail Hakki Pasha gave himself up, with about 100 officers, 3,000 men, and 4 guns, besides a very large quantity of small arms ammunition intended for Plevna. Small parties of the garrison had previously made their escape to the South, and a few stragglers were cut down or made prisoners by the Cavalry of the Guard.

The contrast in the resistance offered by Gorny-Dubnik and Telische is very remarkable, and was probably due to difference of calibre of their respective commanders. Instances of the effects of such difference are not infrequent; and Von Trotha's opinion that Gorny-Dubnik, if summoned to surrender after an Artillery attack, would have done so, and that Telische, if assaulted, would have offered a strong resistance, seems a somewhat rash surmise.

There is no information as to the losses of the Turks from the 24th to the 28th. The garrisons of Gorny-Dubnik and Telische probably did not exceed 8,000 men; and since about 5,500 men were taken prisoners by the Russians, and a few parties appear to have escaped from Telische, their total losses were apparently about 2,000.

Turkish loss.

After the fall of Telische, the 1st Division of the Guard, the Rifle Brigade, and the Roumanians remained in position on the South-West, West, and North-West of Dolny-Dubnik, while there was a large Cavalry force and some Roumanian battalions near Gorny-Netropol. Gourko appears to have intended to wait for the arrival of a portion of the Grenadier Corps on the North side before attacking Dolny-Dubnik. The 2nd Brigade, 3rd Division, Grenadier Corps, arrived near Dolny-Netropol on the afternoon of October 31st, and orders were issued for an attack on November 2nd. During the night of the 31st, however, the garrison of Dolny-Dubnik retreated into Plevna, and the post was occupied by the Russians on November 1st.

The Plevna communications had been practically cut on October 24th, and the Russians now closed in on the left bank of the Vid. The work of creating investing lines on the West side of Plevna was begun at once and carried on without intermission, and from November 1st Osman Pasha was completely isolated.

Grenadier Corps .	{ 2nd Division . . .	16 battalions..
	{ 3rd " . . .	16 "
IVth Corps . . .	{ 16th " . . .	12 "
	{ 30th " . . .	12 "
IXth Corps . . .	{ 5th " . . .	12 "
	{ 31st " . . .	12 "
Unattached . . .	{ 2nd " . . .	12 "
	{ 3rd Rifle Brigade . . .	4 "
	{ 3rd Sapper battalion . . .	1 battalion.
Roumanians . . .	3 Divisions . . .	42 battalions.

Total . . . 192 ..

The Field Artillery consisted of—

Russians . . .	10 Brigades . . .	480 guns.
Roumanians . . .	16 batteries . . .	96* ..

Total . . . 576 ..

Strength of
allies.

By the 15th November the losses (except probably those of the Guard Corps) had all been made good, and the total strength of the Russian Infantry—estimated at 800 to the battalion, and allowing for the losses of the Guards—would be about 116,000 men. The strength of the Roumanian Infantry is stated by Todleben to have been 22,000. This gives a total available Infantry force of 138,000 men. These figures suggest many reflections, and serve to illustrate the illusive character of the Russian expectations, and also to show how completely the difficulties of the task undertaken had been under-estimated. The total Russian strength in Bulgaria at the end of July was under 115,000. The Russians began the campaign with 10 Infantry Divisions; they attacked Plevna on the 20th July with 3 Regiments; and now, by the beginning of November, there were 13½ Divisions (including the Roumanians) grouped round this place alone.

The total available Cavalry force was the same as that detailed on p. 91, with the addition of the 24 squadrons of the 2nd Guard Cavalry Division, bringing the total of squadrons up to 120.

This force was evidently considerably greater than was needed for the investment of Plevna; and it was determined to send Gourko with a strong force to take Orhanie and to gain a foothold in the passes of the Etropol Balkans, forestalling the advance of a relief corps from Sofia.

After the loss of Gorny-Dubnik and Telische, Chefket Pasha had been recalled by orders from Constantinople; and Chakir Pasha, who had served under Suleiman at Schipka, was appointed to command the troops occupying Orhanie and the various detachments distributed over the smaller posts still held by the Turks North of the western Balkans. Later, Mehemet Ali had been ordered to Sofia to organise

* This figure is taken from Todleben's own statement. At the period of the 3rd battle of Plevna the Roumanian Artillery is stated to have numbered 108 guns. The number appears now to have been somewhat reduced. It is possible that the 12 guns absent were employed in the subsequent attack on Rahova by the Roumanians.

an army of relief intended for Plevna, but the undertaking was begun too late. The force assembled was weak; and, even in December, the whole strength available for the defence of the western passes only amounted to about 41 battalions—some 20,000 men—of very inferior quality, being composed mainly of Moustahfiz, who deserted in great numbers.* By the middle of November, however, the weakness of the so-called ‘army of relief’ was probably not fully known to the Russians, and something was expected of it. This relief force might move on Plevna, *viâ* Orchanie, or *viâ* Berkovatz. The former route was the best and shortest, so long as Chakir Pasha could hold the northern outlet of the Babakonak (or Arabakonak) Pass against Gourko. The latter was more circuitous, and would dangerously expose the communications of the force with Sofia.†

The force detailed to Gourko for the advance on Orchanie consisted of—

Gourko's detachment.

Imperial Guards .	{	1st Division	16 battalions.
		2nd „	16 „
		Rifle Brigade	4 „
		1st and 2nd Artillery Brigades.	96 guns.
		2nd Cavalry Division	24 squadrons.
Caucasian Cossack Brigade .	{	2 H.A. batteries	12 guns.
		1 Cossack battery	12 sotnias.
		1 Cossack battery	6 guns.
Total—36 battalions, 36 squadrons, 114 guns.			

Gourko was subsequently joined by the 2nd Brigade, 3rd Division (10th and 12th Regiments), moving from Teteven.

Orders for the advance were issued on the 16th November, and the movement began on the same day.

On the 19th November a Roumanian detachment, which had crossed the Danube above Nicopolis, took Rahova and subsequently moved on Lom-Palanka, which fell after six days' bombardment. The whole line of the Danube, from Lom-Palanka nearly to Rustchuk, was now in the hands of the invaders. Viddin was still held by 20 battalions of good Turkish troops, and was too strong to be attacked by the Roumanians.

Fall of
Rahova and
Lom-
Palanka.

The general situation about the 20th November may be briefly summed up as follows:—

Situation on
November 20.

Plevna, closely invested by 10½ Russian and 3 Roumanian Divisions; the remaining Russian forces formed in a wide circle round the position to protect the operations of the investing army.

* General Baker reached Sofia about the 1st December, and proceeded at once to the Kamarli position—the Turkish main line of defence. He was present during the greater part of the operations involved in the attempted defence of the Balkans, and his work (*War in Bulgaria*, vol. ii.) gives, from the Turkish side, an interesting account of this portion of the campaign.

† It is perhaps worth noticing that General Baker subsequently proposed to Chakir Pasha to utilise the Berkovatz route, and, concentrating a force at this place, to threaten the Russians holding the northern outlet of the Babakonak Pass.

In the East, the XIth, XIIth, and XIIIth Corps, together with the 26th Division, disposed from Pyrgos to Slataritza, fronting the Turkish Army of the Quadrilateral under Suleiman Pasha.

In the South, the VIIIth Corps, 24th Division and 3rd Rifle Brigade, holding the line of the Balkans from Slataritza to Trojan and fronting Raouf Pasha and the Turkish Schipka army. To the right rear of this force, the 3rd Infantry Division occupying Selvi, Lovtcha, Trojan, and Teteven.

To the South-West, Gourko, with two Divisions and the Rifle Brigade of the Guard, near Jablonitza, preparing to operate against Orchanie. Vratza, held by two Cavalry Regiments; Rahova, by the Roumanians preparing to attack Lom-Palanka; while the whole of Western Bulgaria up to the line Vratza-Rahova had been more or less cleared by the Russian Cavalry.

On the Turkish side Pravtza was occupied, and a fortified position had been formed near it which defended the *chaussée*. Near Etropol a position, held by 10 battalions of Moustahfiz, had been formed defending the track leading from Pravtza. Orchanie, at the entrance of the Babakonak Pass, was extensively defended; the village of Lutikova, North-West of Orchanie, was occupied by 5 battalions; and a fortified post had been formed about 5 miles from Orchanie, defending the mountain path Orchanie-Lutikova. A further Turkish detachment held Novatschin on the Orchanie-Vratza road. In rear of Orchanie a second position had been made near the village of Vraches,* guarding the mouth of the pass, and, as a third position, a strong line of defence had been thrown up on the Kamarli heights at the summit of the Babakonak Pass. Berkovatz was occupied by 6 battalions, and the whole Turkish force, under Chakir Pasha, at Pravtza, Orchanie, and the Kamarli position, was little over 20,000 men. All interest was concentrated on Plevna and its prospects of relief. Hope still existed that either Suleiman might succeed in breaking through the Czarevitch's force, or that Mehemet Ali would be able to collect an army sufficient to defeat Gourko and move on Plevna. The former, however, did not move till too late; the latter had an impossible task.

MOVEMENT ON ORCHANIE.

Gourko's
operations
against
Orchanie.

Moving from Telische, Gourko's force reached Jablonitza on the 18th November; and, after Cavalry reconnaissances extending up to the 21st, the operations began in earnest. The proposed movements in-

* *Vracesi*, Sofia sheet of Austrian map.

cluded a weak demonstration from Vratza on Lutikova—a demonstration against the front of the Pravtza position, combined with strong turning movement against its left flank and rear; finally, a strong demonstration against Etropol to be turned into an attack if possible.

The movements proved successful. Pravtza was occupied on the 23rd, the Turks retreating on Orchanie. Etropol was captured on the 24th, the Turks partly retreating to Slatitza and partly over the Strigli Pass to the right flank of the main Kamarli position. The Cavalry demonstration, however, from Vratza was nearly cut off and suffered considerably. Orchanie and Novatchin were abandoned on the 26th, and the Turks fell back on the Vraches position, neglecting, however, to destroy the large stores accumulated at Orchanie, so that a large stock of ammunition, more than two million rations, and a quantity of warm clothing fell into the hands of the Russians. The Vraches position was threatened to be turned on the 28th November by two Russian Regiments advancing over the mountains from Etropol, and on the night of this day it was evacuated by the Turks. The latter were now concentrated for the defence of the Kamarli works, and Gourko took up a position on both sides of the pass fronting them, which he held till the fall of Plevna. The weather was bad, and it was decided not to attempt to advance further till a sufficient force was available, in order to be able after crossing the Balkans to push to the South without delay. Meanwhile, however, a road was constructed towards Tchuriak on the right flank of the Russian position.

The total losses of the Russians in the above operations are stated to have been under 500 men.

The above is a very slight sketch of an operation, which, though it involved comparatively little fighting, called for very great labour and endurance on the part of the troops. The whole of the Russian operations in the Balkans well deserve to be independently studied, and they will form a valuable addition to the history of mountain warfare.

With the capture of Pravtza and Orchanie all hope of relieving Plevna from the West was obviously at an end, and Mehemet Ali was reduced to the defensive. Meanwhile, in the East, Suleiman, so rashly impetuous at Schipka, had been practically inactive till the 18th November. On the 26th his right wing was defeated by the Czarevitch's force, and on the 4th and 5th December the Russians were defeated near Elena and at Slataritza. These Turkish victories were not followed up in any way, however, and no hope of relief from the East remained for the defenders of Plevna.

THE CLOSE INVESTMENT OF PLEVNA.

It is impossible, with the data available, to give anything approaching to a diary of the trenchwork executed on either side from the 1st November to the 9th December. The Russians and Turks both employed the spade up to the last, and the works of both gradually increased in strength. The period of close investment was not, however, marked by any important incidents, and an account of Skobelev's trench operations on the Green Hill will perhaps suffice.

Arrange-
ments for the
investment.

Immediately on his arrival, Todleben took in hand all the details of the investment, and vigorously set to work to inspire method and unity of action into the operations. The position of the investing force was everywhere strengthened by trenches, supported by lunettes and redoubts at the more important points. The distances of the investing lines from the Turkish works at the date of the fall of the place vary considerably—from 120 yards in Skobelev's attack, to 1,100 yards in the Vth Section. West of the Vid the gradually sloping ground was favourable to the action of the Turkish Artillery, and the Russian trenches were placed at distances of about 3,700 yards from the Turkish redoubts on the right bank. The Russian guns were established in batteries at ranges of from 1,200 to 3,700 yards, except in the IVth Section where a few 4-pounders were employed at much shorter ranges. Many other matters required attention. Roads were made to facilitate communication round the line of investment, and sign-posts were provided. Many new bridges were built, and existing bridges repaired and strengthened. A field telegraph line was carried round the position. Todleben states that on his arrival he found that the batteries had limited their field of fire too much; this was now increased to from 100° to 120°, and by the aid of the telegraph it was possible to concentrate the fire of 60 guns on any named work. The Russian batteries fired with more or less vigour throughout the period of the investment, and their suddenly concentrated fire appeared at first to produce a considerable moral effect. This subsequently seemed to diminish, and the Turkish guns were withdrawn, or frequently changed in position, while the garrisons of the redoubts were covered in folds of the ground in rear, or withdrawn out of range. The losses of the Turks from the Russian Artillery fire were estimated at from 50 to 60 men per day, but were probably much less. The Russian Artillery was able to stop the Turkish working parties during daylight, but it effected nothing else. The Turkish guns fired more rarely, as they

latterly began to run short of ammunition. Though possessing a range of nearly three miles, they occasioned very trifling loss to the investing troops, since their shells rarely burst.

An attempt was made to induce Osman Pasha to capitulate, which gave rise to the following characteristic correspondence:—

Correspondence between the Grand Duke and Osman Pasha.

‘HEAD-QUARTERS, PORADIM,
19th (31st)* October.

‘MONSIEUR LE MARÉCHAL,

‘After the vigorous resistance which I have met with from the army placed under your command, I have made the dispositions necessary to surround Plevna completely and to render it impossible for you to be relieved. To this end the Imperial Guard under General Gourko has taken by assault the position of Gorny-Dubnik; three days later, Telische and the garrison defending it were forced to surrender. Dolny-Dubnik has been evacuated by your troops, and my forces have successively occupied Teteven, Orsikova, and Vratza.

‘As under these circumstances all further resistance on your part could only lead to a useless shedding of blood, I believe it to be my duty, from the point of view of humanity, to communicate to your Excellency this information and these considerations.

‘I trust, Monsieur le Maréchal, that you will appreciate the motives which have dictated my present action, and I feel pleasure in assuring you that I shall always know how to honour in your person, and in the *personnel* of the brave troops under your command, warriors worthy of esteem and consideration.

‘(Signed)

‘The Grand Duke, Commanding-in-Chief,

‘NICOLAS.’

The above letter was sent into Plevna on the 12th November, and on the next day Osman replied as follows:—

‘HIGHNESS,

‘I have received the letter dated the 31st October, in which you announce to me that, after the vigorous resistance which you have met with at the hands of the army under my command, you have had to make the dispositions necessary to surround Plevna and to render it impossible to relieve the place.

‘Fully sharing the sentiments of humanity, which your Highness has well desired to express, and thanking you for the step which you have been willing to take with the object of preventing a useless shedding of blood, I could not for a moment entertain the idea of ordering my gallant soldiers to lay down their arms, whatever may be the dispositions which have been taken to invest Plevna.

‘If the Imperial Guard under General Gourko has taken Gorny-Dubnik and Telische, and if the General charged with the defence of the latter place has surrendered, it does not follow that I must judge, like your Highness, that the situation of Plevna is critical. In any case, I could not fail in the duty which my command imposes upon me, and we are ready, my brave army and I, to fight to the last drop of blood for the honour of our country and the defence of its rights.

‘(Signed)

‘The Commander-in-Chief,

‘OSMAN.’

It was therefore clear that nothing of the nature of a capitulation was to be got out of Osman, and that the investing army would have to

* This and the following letter have been translated from Colonel Lecomte’s *Guerre d’Orient en 1876-77*. It will be noticed that the letter is dated 31st October, though it speaks of the occupation of Vratza which did not take place till the 9th November, as a *fait accompli*. It appears as if the letter had been begun earlier, but was not completed till just before it was despatched on the 12th November. It is stated, moreover, that the occupation of Telische took place three days after that of Gorny-Dubnik instead of four.

remain in position as long as the provisions in Plevna should hold out. It remained to strengthen the investing lines as far as possible, so as to render it impossible for Osman to break through them, and to make the capture of his whole force a certainty; and further, to protect the Russian troops from the effects of bad weather, that they might be perfectly fit for further operations immediately after the fall of the place. As to the probable duration of the supplies in Plevna very different estimates had been formed; but Todleben had received information on which he relied, that the Turks could not hold out beyond the middle of December. Whether Osman really expected to be relieved at the period at which he wrote, the letter given above is uncertain. It is more probable, however, that he expected a fresh general assault, and counted on being able to defeat it. This expectation was nearly correct.

Force employed in the investment.

The total force of the Allies available before Plevna, after deducting the detachment under Gourko, consisted of 8 Russian Infantry Divisions (3rd Guards, 2nd and 3rd Grenadiers, 2nd, 5th, 16th, 30th, and 31st Line), with the 3rd Rifle Brigade, 2 Sapper battalions, and 8 Brigades of Field Artillery, together with 3 Roumanian Divisions (2nd, 3rd, and 4th) and 16 field batteries. The Cavalry force consisted of the 4th and 9th Russian Cavalry Divisions and 2 Roumanian Brigades, with 5 Horse Artillery batteries.

According to Todleben* the strength of the force at his disposal was—

Russians	{	Infantry (including Sappers)	85,000 men.
		Cavalry	5,000 sabres.
		Field Artillery	384 guns.
Roumanians	{	Infantry	22,000 men.
		Field Artillery	96 guns.
		† Horse	30 „
		Siege	40 „

Total—107,000 Infantry, 5,000 Cavalry, 550 guns.

The whole extent of the line of investment—about 46 miles—was divided into 6 Sections, each of which formed a separate command. The following is a detail of the troops allotted to these Sections :—

1st Section
(General Tchernat).

Extent—From Bivolar, on the Vid, to the Grivitza redoubt.

Troops†—3rd and 4th Roumanian Divisions.
12 Field batteries.

Total—26 battalions; 72 guns.

* *Letter to Brialmont.*

† Five batteries—four Russian and one Roumanian, probably—but it is not stated. Todleben does not include in his statement the 36 squadrons of Roumanian Cavalry, who were possibly employed on detached service between Dolny-Netropol and the Danube, nor the 40 siege guns, which latter he mentions, however, in another portion of the same letter.

‡ The 4th Division occupied the line in front of Grivitza; the 3rd Division that opposite Bukova and Opanetz.

IIrd Section (Lieut.-General Krudener).	<i>Extent</i> —From the Grivitz redoubt to the Galiz redoubt. <i>Troops</i> —2nd Brigade, 5th Division. 4 Field batteries. 31st Infantry Division. 6 Field batteries. <i>Total</i> —18 battalions; 80 guns.
IIIrd Section (Lieut.-General Zotoff).	<i>Extent</i> —From the Galiz redoubt to the Tutschenitza ravine. <i>Troops</i> —2nd Infantry Division. 6 Field batteries. 12th Rifle battalion. <i>Total</i> —13 battalions; 48 guns.
IVth Section (Lieut.-General Skobeleff).	<i>Extent</i> —From the Tutschenitza to the Kartuschaven ravine. <i>Troops</i> —16th Infantry Division. 6 Field batteries. 30th Infantry Division. 6 Field batteries. 9th, 10th, and 11th Rifle battalions. 9th Don Cossacks. <i>Total</i> —27 battalions; 6 sotnias; 96 guns.
Vth Section (Lieut.-General Katalei).	<i>Extent</i> —From the Kartuschaven ravine to the Vid at Tyrenen. <i>Troops</i> —3rd Infantry Division of the Guard. 6 Field batteries " " 2 Squadrons Cavalry " " 1 Don Cossack battery. <i>Total</i> —16 battalions; 2 squadrons; 54 guns.
VIth Section (Lieut.-General Ganetski).	<i>Extent</i> —From left bank of the Vid opposite Tyrenen to the left bank opposite Bivolar. <i>Troops</i> *—2nd Grenadier Division. 6 Field batteries. 3rd Grenadier Division. 6 Field batteries. 1st Brigade 5th Infantry Division. 2 Field batteries. 2nd Roumanian Division. 4 Field batteries. 9th Dragoons. 9th Lancers. 9th Hussars. 1 H.A. battery. 4th Don Cossack. 1 Don Cossack battery. 1 Kalarash Regiment. <i>Total</i> —54 battalions; 22 squadrons; 148 guns.
<i>Grand Total</i> †—154 battalions; 30 squadrons; 498 guns.	

* The Roumanians held the left of the line from the Vid to Dolny-Netropol; the 2nd Grenadier Division was in the centre, the 3rd Division on the right.

† The detail of troops for the several Sections of the investment does not mention two of the five Horse Artillery batteries stated by Todleben to have been present. Moreover, it does not include three of the Regiments of the 4th Cavalry Division, which were probably detached and employed in maintaining communication with Gourko's force.

In the detail given on the preceding page, the IVth and VIth are apparently the strongest Sections, the former including the Plevna-Lovtcha road, the latter the routes to Orchanie and Viddin.

Not nearly the full number of guns present were placed in battery, and very few of the 4-prs., which constituted half of the Russian Field Artillery, seem to have been employed. As to the total number of guns which were used during the period of investment, considerable disagreement occurs in the various accounts. Todleben speaks of '300 guns, including 40 siege guns.' The number of Russian 9-prs. present was apparently 192; adding the 40 siege guns and 96 Roumanian field guns, a total of 328 is obtained, which does not differ greatly from Todleben's obviously 'rounded' number. The Russian 9-prs. were probably not all employed, and a few 4-prs. were certainly brought into action in Skobelev's Section. Of the 40 siege guns* 8 were apparently in the IInd Section and 12 in the IIIrd Section, retaining nearly the positions stated on p. 162: the positions of the remaining 20 are not stated, but they were probably nearly all in the VIth Section. In addition to their field guns, the Roumanians employed 4 9·84-in. mortars.

Clear directions, providing for all probable contingencies, were issued to the Commander of each Section of investment, so that no delay of any kind need occur in effecting a concentration at any point threatened by an attempt on the part of the Turks to break out.

SKOBELEFF'S TRENCH ATTACK ON THE GREEN HILLS.

Trench
attack on the
Green Hills.

Skobelev's operations on the Green Hills form the only interesting episode of the investment; and, with the exception of the mining work to which the Roumanians resorted after the failure of their assault on the 19th October, they constitute the only offensive operations on the part of the Allies. Skobelev was well supplied with entrenching tools by the beginning of November—the 16th Division is stated to have had 5,000 shovels and 'a proportionate quantity of axes, mallets, &c.' Moreover, the 3rd Sapper battalion, which was considerably below strength, was attached to the IVth Section, as well as two Colonels of Engineers, Laskovski and Melnitzki. The former was subsequently detached to other duties; but the latter, with Colonel Sasski commanding the Sapper battalion, assumed the technical direction of all the work executed in this Section up to the fall of Plevna.

On the 24th October, simultaneously with the movement of the

* 6-in. bronze breech-loaders (p. 5).

Guard on Gorny-Dubnik, Skobelev had carried out a demonstration from the South towards the Red Hill. The latter position was not, however, permanently occupied at this time.

Of the three positions, viz. the Red Hill, the 'Brestovatz heights,'* and the 1st Knoll of the Green Hills, the latter only was held by the Turks. The ground was well known by reason of the fighting of the 11th and 12th September, and the Brestovatz heights and the Red Hill were occupied by the Russians, and entrenched on the night of the 4th November, without any preliminary reconnaissance. On the 8th November, Skobelev determined to occupy and entrench the 1st Knoll of the Green Hills.

The troops detailed for the operation next day were as follows :—

9th Rifle battalion.

61st Vladimir Regiment.

2 batteries, 16th Artillery Brigade.

2 mitrailleuses.

2 sotnias, 9th Don Cossacks.

To form the General Reserve :—

1st Brigade, 30th Infantry Division { 117th Shuja Regiment.
118th Jaroslaff „

The left flank of the advance was covered by the position on the Brestovatz heights, which was held by the 63rd Uglicz Regiment; the right flank rested on the Tutschenitsa ravine, and was covered by two companies of the 118th Regiment.

There was a thick fog on the 9th; and by 5 P.M., the time fixed for the attack, with the object of securing sufficient daylight to trace the works, it was nearly dark. The troops paraded South of the Red Hill at about 4 P.M., and were ordered to observe the strictest silence, and only to fire by word of command. The preparations lasted about an hour, after which the force moved over the hill and descended into the valley between the latter and the 1st Knoll. The fog covered the Russians completely, and the movement was unobserved by the Turks. In the valley the force was formed for attack in the following order :—

Russian
occupation
of the 1st
Knoll.

The Rifle battalion in front with one company extended, one company as support, and the two remaining companies following in rear as reserve. Behind the Rifle battalion followed the 61st Regiment in 'battalion column': 12 companies of the latter Regiment were told off as working party, each provided with 100 shovels, and the three Rifle companies formed the reserve. The Cossacks were placed on the right of the 61st Regiment, near the Tutschenitsa ravine. The two batteries were placed in positions previously prepared on the Red

* The hill North-West of Brestovatz.

Hill, and the mitrailleuses were taken down into the valley between the Red Hill and the 1st Knoll, before the attack began, where also the 117th Regiment was formed up.

Led by Skobelev in person, the fighting line and supports moved off in perfect silence, followed by the reserve at from 150 to 200 paces distance, the 1st battalion 61st Regiment moving further in rear. The advance continued in the fog for about 300 paces before a shot was fired; at last there came a single shot from the Turks, and soon a 'hail of bullets,' which caused some loss. The fighting line pressed on, and the Turks lining the southern brow of the 1st Knoll fell back firing, on their advanced trenches. The Russians moved on to about 120 paces beyond the brow, and were halted by Skobelev, who ordered the foremost Turkish trenches to be carried with the bayonet, without firing. This was done; and the Russians, covering themselves as much as possible in the captured trenches, opened a heavy fire on the retreating Turks. Skobelev returned to the crest of the hill, near which the reserves of the Rifle battalion were halted, obtaining good cover in the irrigation trenches, which were to be found all over the Green Hills.

The working party of the 61st Regiment was now ordered up to the position by successive companies, and began to entrench itself at once. The 1st battalion formed the right, the 3rd battalion the left-half of a long line of trench, and the work appears to have been commenced on the right. The digging was begun with great energy; 'the increasing fire of the enemy, the fog, the darkness, all tended to brace up the nerves and to quicken the work.' To strengthen the position of the Rifles holding the captured Turkish trenches, a detachment of the 61st Regiment with shovels was ordered up to the front. The work went on rapidly, and success seemed certain, when the Turks returned to the attack in considerable force. The Rifles holding the Turkish trenches were badly covered, and were driven back; the supports, also badly covered and under heavy fire, lost their commander, Captain Dombrowski, and retreated to the line of the Russian trenches in considerable disorder. After the front was cleared by the retreat of the Rifle battalion, the 61st Regiment, which was now fairly covered, received the Turkish advance with volleys. The Turks came on in force, covered by a dense chain of skirmishers, and directing their main effort against the Russian left. They advanced to within 100 paces of the trench, lay down, and commenced to fire volleys. The moment was critical for the Russians. It was not easy to bring up the reserves in the darkness under a storm of bullets, and they suffered considerably. 'All the disadvantages of a night engagement were felt.' A portion of the 61st Regiment abandoned the trench and retreated towards the Red Hill. By great personal exertion, however,

Turkish
counter-
attack.

the battalion commanders succeeded in keeping the greater part of the Regiment in hand, and shortly afterwards the 2nd Rifle company, under Captain Spolatboga, advanced from the reserve beyond the left flank of the trench and fired volleys into the Turks. The company suffered heavily, but the enemy was unable to withstand its fire, and retired.

Work was recommenced at once, and the companies which had retreated were ordered up again. Two company commanders were deprived of their commands on the spot, and the men were seriously reprimanded.

By 7 A.M. the trench afforded substantial cover; but daylight showed many defects which might well be expected in work executed in the darkness, under fire, and interrupted by a serious attack. The trench was widened a little, the parapet regulated, and then rest was given to the working party, while eight men per company were told off with loaded rifles to keep guard to the front. The two mitrailleuses were placed in position on the right flank of the trench, so as to be able to sweep the ground in front, and the trench itself in case of an emergency.

Towards noon the Turkish fire ceased, and the Russians were able to carry out their cooking. At about 3 P.M. the work recommenced, the trench was widened and deepened, and the rear slope cut down.

The reserves had hitherto been sheltered in the irrigation trenches, and working parties of the 63rd and 117th Regiments were now told off to entrench them and to make communications from the front trench to the rear. The reserves were covered by rows of parallel trenches, each to contain a company, and the trench sheltering the front company was provided with flanks protecting those in rear from enfilade fire.

The Turkish fire had begun again at about 2 P.M., and was continued with more or less violence all day; but the Russian losses were slight, and occurred chiefly among the working parties employed on the communications and reserve shelters in rear of the front trench.

Before the end of the first day's work, good cover had been made for four infantry battalions (three of the 61st Regiment and one Rifle battalion) and also for a half-battery of 4-pounder guns and four mitrailleuses. The total loss to the Russians during the above operation was about 300 killed and wounded.

The work now proceeded without much interruption; the front trench was provided with loopholes, latrines were made, and the communications extended. The trace of the Turkish work in front was studied, and the result communicated to the batteries on the Radichevo ridge and the Brestovatz heights. These batteries shelled the Turkish works incessantly. From the left flank of the front trench a portion of the

Turkish trenches could be enfiladed, and a party of the 3rd Rifle Brigade, together with a detachment provided with wall pieces, were told off to harass the Turks.

On the night of the 11th November a further advance was made on the left flank, and a trench to contain twenty men was thrown up by the enterprise of a non-commissioned officer of the 64th Kasan Regiment, at about 130 paces only from the Turkish lines. On the following night this trench was connected up with the main trench.

A little later, a species of caponier was made on both flanks of the main trench and protected with a wire entanglement in front. Two fougasses were placed in front of the main trench, and a redoubt of strong profile was thrown up about 100 yards in rear of the centre of the front trench, as a keep to the position. A battery for 4 guns was built to the left front of the redoubt and about 210 yards from the foremost Turkish trenches. The two remaining mitrailleuses were placed in position near the left flank of the trench, to sweep the ground in front. Meanwhile the communications were being extended, and the Green Hills position was connected up with that on the Brestovatz heights.

The Turkish trenches were very close—about 500 paces distant on the Russian right, and 120 paces on the left—and during these operations the Turks made many attacks, notably on the 11th, 15th, and 19th of November. These attacks, which took place mainly by night, were of small importance and were easily repulsed by the fire from the Russian trenches. The Turks advanced to from 100 to 150 paces from the Russian position, and, after lying down and pouring in a storm of bullets, they again retired. After the first attack above described, the position was never again in real danger, but the Turkish Infantry fire was kept up nearly all day, and even with some degree of accuracy by night.*

By the end of November the Russian lines on the 1st Knoll were very strong, and the garrisons of the front trenches could be reduced from 4 to 2 battalions. Each company in the trenches furnished 4 sentries by day and 8 by night, who kept a constant look-out to the front. In very thick fog, or when an attack was expected, the number was increased to 16. Moreover, at night, each company sent out 2 picquets of 3 or 4 men each, to the front, who occupied small rifle pits thrown up about 100 to 150 paces to the front on the right flank and 40 on

* The Turkish sentries laid their rifles on rests and regulated them for night firing. They had orders to fire at stated intervals during the night, which served the double purpose of securing the wakefulness of the sentries themselves and of harassing the enemy.

the left. The picquets had orders to send back one or two men to report any movement on the part of the enemy, but not to fire unless this were the only means of giving notice of an attack. On the alarm being given, the men in the trenches were ordered to stand to their arms, and they then mounted on to the banquettes and arranged their cartridges in front of them. Independent firing was forbidden, and volleys were fired by order from the battalion commander, or from General Skobelev himself. The latter, who for the first eight days had personally commanded in the front line of trenches, afterwards returned to his Head-Quarters, which had been established at Utschin Dol, in rear of Brestovatz (*Pl. II.*). The command of the whole position on the Green Hills devolved upon Major-General Grenkvist, and that of the front trench on the commander of the Regiment on duty for the day.

At first the troops in the trenches were relieved three times in the 24 hours; later, when the weather became worse, twice, and when the cold and snow set in, once only. The reliefs left the camp after breakfast and moved along the Tutschenitsa ravine towards the position; they were then formed up in rear of the 1st Knoll and marched in by one line of communication, while the old guard of the trenches marched out by another. The 4 guns, 4 mitrailleuses, and 30 wall pieces remained in the trenches, but the gun detachments and teams were relieved.

In the trenches, two huts per company were constructed to give some shelter to the men not required for immediate duty. Towards the end of November cold and rainy weather set in and the trenches were frequently flooded, causing the life there to be very wretched. At the Head-Quarter camp on the Lovtcha road, South of the Red Hill, good huts were made for the whole of the 16th Division, the two Artillery Brigades, and the Sapper battalion.

The vigorous measures adopted in the IVth Section were not imitated on any other part of the line of investment. Elsewhere the investing army limited itself to intermittent Artillery fire and occasional picquet firing. No positive advantage was gained by the operation above described beyond the shortening of the line of investment by about a mile and the harassing of the defenders of the Krischin position, who were compelled to be always on the alert. But, on the other hand, the labour and the very active life proved a valuable training for the troops, and the Green Hills formed an admirable school for the young soldiers who composed fully one-half of the 16th Division and 3rd Rifle Brigade. The results of the lessons there learned were amply shown, subsequently, in the fighting of the 8th and 9th January.

Kars was stormed on the night of the 17th November; and on the arrival of the news before Plevna, a strong party of the Grand Duke's

Proposal to
attack
Plevna a
fourth time.

Staff urged that Plevna should be attacked for the fourth time. 'This,' says Todleben, 'I opposed with all the energy inspired by my convictions.' Looking to the great Infantry force before Plevna, the much longer line of defence the Turks had now to hold—about $22\frac{1}{2}$ miles—and taking into consideration the fact that some of the lessons of the previous battles had certainly been learned by the Russians, it is highly probable that an assault, planned by Todleben, would have succeeded. But the latter relied on his information as to the resources of Plevna, and felt convinced that the end was near. In a general assault the Russians would doubtless have lost at least 10,000 men; and the oral effect of such a loss, apart from the material disadvantage, would have rendered the Russian Plevna Army less fit for immediate employment elsewhere. Todleben's influence unquestionably saved many lives which would have been sacrificed to small purpose.

Situation in
Plevna.

Meanwhile, in Plevna matters were becoming desperate. A considerable supply of food for the troops still remained, but forage was nearly all expended and Artillery ammunition was running short. Firewood was almost exhausted, shoes were worn out, and the troops were suffering greatly from the want of warm clothing. Surgeons and hospital necessaries of all kinds were not forthcoming for the large number of sick and wounded who were helplessly dying.

FALL OF PLEVNA.

Preparations
to break out.

On the 2nd December, Osman determined to make an effort to break through the Russian lines. It is not probable that he thought much of his chances of escape; but, acting in the spirit expressed in his letter to the Grand Duke, he was determined not to give up his army without striking a blow. The attempt was to be made on the West side, probably with the hope of reaching Viddin, and the force employed was about 30,000 men with 18 field and mountain guns,* and about 1,200 Cavalry. On the night of the 9th December the final preparations were made. Two bridges were thrown across the Vid† for the Cavalry and Infantry, while the transport train could use the permanent bridge. Ammunition and baggage were packed in about 1,000 carts drawn by teams of oxen, and rations for about six days were distributed to the troops. The 2nd Grivitzza redoubt, No. 10 redoubt, and the Krischin works were abandoned; but garrisons, amounting in all to about 6,000 men, were left in the Opanetz works and those fronting

* Some accounts give larger numbers.

† Some accounts state pontoon bridges; others that they were formed upon bullock waggons, which appears to be more probable.

the Vid. The bridges were built below the permanent bridge, and a certain number of guns were placed in position near them on the right bank of the Vid, while others were buried or thrown into the river.

The Russians seem to have been well informed of the state of affairs. The troops were on their guard, and a few days previously manoeuvres had been executed under Todleben's orders in the Vth and VIth Sections in order to ascertain the exact time required for a concentration. On the 9th December the Turkish Artillery fire was altogether silent. On the same evening deserters brought information of a concentration of the Turkish troops near the bridge, and that rations and foot-coverings had been distributed, and arms inspected. The building of bridges was also observed and reported, and it was well known on the night of the 9th that a sortie was imminent, and that it would probably take the direction of the VIth Section.

As to the dispositions taken on the evening of the 9th and the fighting on the morning of the 10th, little can be added to the account contained in Todleben's report to the Commander-in-Chief,* the greater part of which is reproduced below:—

‘ After laying a preliminary report of all the circumstances of the case before the Commander-in-Chief, His Highness the Prince of Roumania, and with his approval, I issued the following orders on the evening of December 9th:—

‘ (1) One Brigade of the 16th Infantry Division, with three batteries and a Brigade of the 3rd Division of Infantry of the Guard, under the general command of Lieut.-General Skobelev, to cross on December 10th, at daybreak, to the left bank of the Vid, and take up position as follows: the Brigade of the 16th Infantry Division, with three batteries, near Dolny-Dubnik, to be ready to support the force under General Ganetski; the Brigade of the 3rd Division of Infantry of the Guard to remain behind the two redoubts nearest to the river Vid, on its left bank, and to be ready to support, as circumstances might require, the Corps of General Ganetski or that under General Katalei.

‘ (2) The other Brigade of the 16th Infantry Division, with three batteries, to remain on its own ground in complete readiness for marching.

‘ (3) Three battalions of the 3rd Rifle Brigade, comprised in the command of the IVth Section, to move early in the morning of Decem-

* Independently translated by Lieut.-Colonel E. R. James, R.E., from the Italian, by Captain G. T. Plunket, R.E., from the Russian, and by the writer from the German. Captain Plunket's translation has been followed, with a few slight verbal alterations.

ber 10 to the village of Grivitza, in order to reinforce the troops of the IIInd Section under the orders of Lieut.-General Baron Krudener.

‘(4) The advanced position on the Plevna-Lovtcha road, from Redoubt Mirkovich to the Tutchenitscha ravine, to be occupied by a Brigade of the 30th Infantry Division; its other Brigade to remain in camp behind the “Red Hill,” in full readiness for marching. The command of the troops of the IVth Section to be entrusted to General Schnitnikoff.

‘(5) Four battalions of Roumanians, with three batteries, to move at daybreak on December 10th from Verbitsa on Demirkioi; and four more Roumanian battalions with two batteries, in Verbitsa itself, to be held ready for marching. This disposition of the forces, whilst supporting the Corps of Lieut.-General Ganetski, rendered it possible to strengthen the forces of the other Sections of the investment in case of an attack of the Turks in another direction with the object of drawing off our attention from the real point of the sortie.

‘On the night of December 9th a deserter reported to the commander of the Plevna-Lovtcha Corps that the Krischin redoubt was evacuated by the Turks.

‘General Skobelev immediately gave orders to send forward a party of volunteers to ascertain the truth of this information. The volunteers found the redoubt abandoned by the enemy, and consequently, towards morning on December 10th, the greater and lesser Krischin redoubts, as well as the trenches on the “Green Hills” were occupied by the 30th Infantry Division.

‘At the same time that information was received of the occupation of the Krischin redoubts by our troops, reports were made to me, about 9 A.M., of the abandonment of the Turkish redoubt No. 10, and of the occupation of the redoubt in front of Grivitza* by the Roumanian army. Hearing this, I ordered all the troops on the right bank of the river Vid to advance. The Brigades of the 16th Infantry Division, with 3 batteries, and also the 9th, 10th, and 11th Rifle battalions, who had not yet had time to reach the village of Grivitza, were directed to keep along the left bank of the river Vid, and also to hold themselves at the disposal of Lieut.-General Skobelev, supporting General Ganetski.

‘At midday, His Majesty the Emperor was pleased to arrive in the Imperial Redoubt, between the village of Radichevo and the Tutchenitscha ravine, where His Majesty was pleased to observe the advance of our army on the eastern side and the cannonade on the left bank of the Vid.

‘At early dawn fighting began between the army of Osman Pasha

* Doubtless No. 2 Grivitza Redoubt.

and the troops of General Ganetski. In the night of December 9th, the outlying pickets at the position occupied by the Grenadiers were furnished, in the 2nd Grenadier Division, by the 5th Kieff Regiment, and, in the 3rd Grenadier Division, by the 9th Siberian Regiment of Grenadiers.

'This force occupied all the lodgments of the line of defence. The nearest supports were the second Regiments of the Brigades; that is, the 6th Taurus Grenadiers and the 10th Grenadiers of Little Russia. All the 9-pounder guns of both Artillery Brigades were distributed among the earthwork batteries of the line of defence, whilst the 4-pounder batteries with the 2nd Brigades of their Divisions, constituting the Reserve, were stationed near Gorny-Netropol and Dolny-Dubnik.

'The lodgments and lunettes to the North of Gorny-Netropol and the village itself were occupied by the 17th Archangel Regiment of the 1st Brigade, 5th Infantry Division, with two Roumanian batteries; the 18th Vologda Regiment of this Brigade being posted in reserve with two batteries.

'Before night the Cavalry vedettes had reported the concentration of considerable Turkish forces on the river Vid; but with the approach of morning, about 7.30 A.M., the Turkish advance developed itself. As the line of our outposts fell back, Major-General Daniloff, commanding the 3rd Grenadier Division, ordered the second battery 3rd Grenadier Artillery Brigade, occupying Battery No. 3, to open fire, and the 10th Little Russian Grenadier Regiment to move to Kopano Mogila (cemetery); at the same time the 2nd Brigade of the Division, with the 4-pounder batteries, was ordered up from Gorny-Netropol.

'While these dispositions were being carried into effect it became light enough to see distinctly part of the forces opposed to us which had been concentrated during the night, and a train of vehicles of every kind accompanying them. The Turks opened fire from guns placed on heights near the bridge and below it commanding the river Vid, as they rapidly deployed their forces, taking advantage of the fog which had settled over the valley of the river, and covered by a long inequality in the ground in front of the bridge, permitting large masses of troops, which had been collected on the left bank even before dawn, to conceal themselves behind it.

'The enemy's advance directed against the lodgments of the 3rd Grenadier Division was effected with remarkable impetuosity; a continuous chain of skirmishers came first, followed immediately by supports in loose formation; behind these came the reserves. Artillery accompanied the chain of skirmishers and also advanced rapidly, halting only for one discharge and then overtaking the line.

‘Notwithstanding the repeated fire of our 9-pounder batteries and the fusillade of the Infantry occupying the lodgments, the Turks in three-quarters of an hour’s time crossed the space separating them from our position, and gained our line of defence occupied by the advanced parties of the 3rd Grenadier Division near Battery No. 3. The enemy having penetrated into the intervals between the entrenchments, and having destroyed by their fire almost all the defenders, encountered only feeble remnants, and these, not strong enough to resist any longer, began to retire.

‘When the trenches on the flank of work No. 3 were occupied by the enemy, and most of the artillerymen in Battery No. 2 cut down, the gunners had only succeeded in withdrawing two guns from the works and removing the breech blocks of the remaining six. About half-past eight A.M. the troops occupying the centre of the position—viz. the 2nd battalion and 2nd and 3rd Rifle companies of the 9th Grenadier Siberian Regiment—disorganised by their heavy losses in men and officers—began to retire towards Kopano Mogilo (cemetery) and the lunette on the left. The 3rd battery of the 3rd Grenadier Artillery Brigade, occupying the work No. 4, held their ground for some time longer, firing case; but, threatened by a flanking movement on their right, at length abandoned the position, carrying away with them only six guns, the horses of the remainder being killed.

‘While the Siberian Regiment was thus engaged with the enemy, the 10th Little Russian Grenadiers opportunely arrived and, formed in companies in two lines, moved up into the interval between lunette No. 4 and Kopano Mogilo. Receiving into its ranks the Siberians, the Little Russian Regiment stopped the advance of the enemy, experiencing in so doing considerable losses; in a space of a few minutes three battalion and half the company commanders were placed *hors de combat*.

‘The determined and desperate attack of the enemy became more and more serious for us.

‘The 1st Brigade of the 3rd Grenadier Division was too enfeebled by its efforts to hold the lunettes; 8 of our guns were in the hands of the enemy; the 2nd Brigade of the 3rd Grenadier Division had not yet arrived to the rescue.

‘About 10 A.M. the 2nd Brigade of the 3rd Grenadier Division began to draw near the scene of action, and at the same time news was received that the 8th Moscow and 7th Samogitian Grenadier Regiments of the 2nd Grenadier Division were already approaching to support the position of the 3rd Grenadier Division. The arrival of these reinforcements ensured to us the successful issue of the fight, and

finally deprived the enemy of the possibility of accomplishing his intended sortie. At 10.30 A.M. a loud "Hurrah" apprised us of an attack by the 2nd Brigade of the 3rd Grenadier Division on our lodgments occupied by the Turks. Driving the enemy out of both lunettes, the Astrachan and Phanogoria Regiments, supported by the Siberians and Little Russians, rapidly advanced, regardless of the losses inflicted on them by the infernal fire of the enemy, and drove the Turks out of the trenches with the bayonet. Our guns which had been left in the hands of the enemy were retaken, and, in addition to this, the Astrachan Regiment captured 7 Turkish guns and one standard during the fight. Two battalions of the 18th Vologda Regiment, having moved out still earlier to the lunette on the left flank and the lodgments adjoining the position of the Grenadiers, operated against the enemy in flank, in which they were supported by the fire of a Roumanian battery.

' Simultaneously with the attack of the 2nd Brigade of the 3rd Grenadier Division, at 10.45 A.M., the 7th Samogitian Grenadiers came into action, directed by Lieut.-General Svetchin, commanding the 2nd Grenadier Division, in the interval between Gorny-Netropol and Dolny-Netropol. The 3rd battalion of this Regiment found part of the lodgments of the 3rd Grenadier Division still occupied by the enemy. Charging with the bayonet, the Samogitians, without firing, drove the Turks out of the lodgments, and, having put to flight the remainder of the enemy's troops, captured three Turkish guns.

' Having reoccupied the advanced lodgments, our forces halted for a time. It was about 12 noon when the Turks began slowly to retire to the Vid, keeping up, however, a vigorous fire. The guns taken from the enemy not having been rendered unserviceable were directed against the Turks and were served by Infantry.

' At the same time all the batteries of the 3rd Grenadier Artillery Brigade were moved forward, and, taking up a position in line with the Infantry, poured case into the retiring Turks.

' The retreat of the enemy became more disorganised and precipitate. Dense crowds of Turks in disorder thronged the bridge and mingled with the train which covered the ground near the road in a dense mass.

' Seeing the complete rout of the Turkish forces and the enormous losses they had sustained, Osman Pasha could no longer think of renewing the sortie, more especially as our army had already assumed the offensive in other places.

' Moreover, the expected arrival of the 16th Infantry Division, and the support given by an approaching Brigade of the 3rd Infantry Division of the Guards, fully assured the final defeat of the enemy.

‘Very soon our forces took the offensive along the whole line. The Division of General Daniloſſ moved forward, supported on the left towards Gorny Netropol by the 1st Brigade of the 5th Infantry Division and on the right by the 2nd Brigade of the 2nd Grenadier Division.

‘The 1st Brigade of the 2nd Grenadier Division having moved out of the trenches began to envelope the left flank of the Turks. Moreover the 2nd battalion of the 5th Kieff Grenadiers and one battalion of the 6th Taurus Grenadier Regiment were directed to ford the Vid and occupy the heights on the right bank of the river. The Grenadiers, having crossed the Vid up to their belts in water, climbed the heights of Blasigas and rushed into the enemy’s redoubt, the garrison of which surrendered without firing a shot.

‘The Brigades of the 3rd Guard and 16th Infantry Division, despatched according to my order of December 9th to reinforce the detachment of General Ganetski, did not take part in the battle. According to Lieut.-General Katalei’s report he moved on December 10th, at 7 A.M., to the left bank of the Vid, by means of a pontoon bridge, with 6 battalions of the 3rd Infantry Division of the Guard, and two batteries, under the command of Major-General Kurloff. At 10 A.M. this detachment, at the orders of General Ganetski, set out for Dolny-Dubnik, where it received an order from the commander of the Grenadier Corps to advance along the Sofia road and bear down upon the left flank of the enemy. While this movement was being executed Lieut.-General Skobelev arrived, and, having taken the command of the detachment, ordered General Kurloff to halt his force, form it in columns of reserve, and await the arrival of the Brigade of the 16th Infantry Division. After remaining stationary about two hours without having received any further orders from General Skobelev, General Kurloff again led his men forward along the Sofia road, reaching the stone bridge across the Vid when the fight had already ceased.

‘At the time when the 2nd and 3rd Grenadier Divisions were heroically repulsing the attacks upon them of the whole Turkish army, the other detachments of the investing force under the command of Lieut.-Generals Zottoſſ, Baron Krudener, and Katalei—Lieut.-General Schnitnikoff and General Tchernat commanding the Roumanian Army—moved towards the enemy’s fortifications on the eastern and southern fronts. The greater part of these works were already evacuated by the Turks, and our troops, in the presence of your Imperial Highness, occupied the town of Plevna. Having occupied the town, the troops, by the personal command of your Imperial Highness, continued the advance to the river Vid, your Imperial Highness placing yourself at

their head, in rear of the enemy, and gradually concentrated on the heights to the West of Plevna, near the Sofia road. The Roumanians, with his Highness Prince Charles, who was present with them all the time, on approaching the Vid, encountered opposition from the Opanetz redoubts, which were still occupied by the enemy. After a short fight the garrisons of these works laid down their arms and the Roumanians captured 3 guns and 2,000 prisoners. General Katalei, with part of the 3rd Infantry Division of the Guard, which had remained on the right bank of the Vid, observing the retreat of the Turks towards the river, determined to take possession of the redoubts situated opposite the Volinsk Hill, in order to prevent the enemy from returning to his fortified camp.

'At 11.30 P.M. the "Red" redoubt was occupied without fighting, and after an insignificant resistance the redoubt "Mohammed Tabia" also surrendered. About 1 P.M., after a brief fusillade, the "Sugarloaf" and "Black" redoubts were occupied, as well as another redoubt situated behind the last-mentioned.

'In the enemy's works 1 Pasha, 120 staff and superior officers, 3,634 of inferior grades, and 4 guns, were captured by the Guards. The losses on our side comprised only 3 rank and file killed and 15 wounded.

'The Turks, pressed on all sides by superior forces, could not prolong the fight; they sent out a *parliamentaire*, and the Chief of the Staff of the Turkish Army rode out to meet General Ganetski, and announced that Osman Pasha was wounded and desired to know the conditions of capitulation. General Ganetski demanded the unconditional surrender of the whole army. On receiving Osman Pasha's consent, he personally set out to visit his brave, resolute, and wounded enemy.

'On the memorable 10th December, there surrendered as prisoners of war, 10 Pashas, 128 staff officers, 2,000 superior officers, and 40,000* of inferior grades of the Infantry and Artillery, besides 1,200 Cavalry; 77 guns, and a quantity of warlike stores were captured, especially rifle cartridges. The losses suffered by the enemy in the last fight amounted to 6,000 men.

'On our side, in the 2nd and 3rd Grenadier Divisions, the losses were as follows: killed—2 staff officers, 7 superior officers, and 409 of the lower ranks; wounded—1 general, 3 staff officers, 47 superior officers, and 1,263 of lower ranks.

'In the first Brigade, 5th Infantry Division: wounded—1 superior officer and 47 others.

'Thus the system of operations adopted at Plevna, consisting of a

* This number is apparently too great. The total number of effective troops surrendered was probably under 30,000.

persevering adherence to a complete blockade without having recourse to the extremely hazardous and always sanguinary attempts to storm the Turkish fortifications, resulted in the attainment of the desired end. The result comprised the capture of 40,000 of the best of the enemy's troops, and the occupation of an important strategical point closing the principal roads into Western Bulgaria. In the meantime our forces were not only kept up during the investment, but their numbers were supplemented and reorganised with renewed strength and spirit, and were ready to undertake fresh feats for the glory of the Russian arms.

'In conclusion, I deem it my duty to bring to the notice of your Imperial Highness the services of Lieut.-General Prince Imeretinski, Chief of the Staff, who was my invaluable assistant in this difficult affair, crowned with the splendid success of December 10th; to the late commanders of Sections of the investment; to Lieut.-Generals Ganetski (to whom, with the Grenadier Corps, belongs the honour of the last days of the investment of Plevna), Zotoff, Baron Krudener, Katalei, and Skobeleff; to General Tchernat, commanding the Roumanian Corps; to Major-General Moller, directing the line of Artillery engaged; to Major-General Reutlinger, acting as Commanding Engineer.

'Having been a witness during two months of all the operations of the army before Plevna—of their firmness, valour, and self-denial in enduring difficulties and privations of every kind—it is with feelings of deep regard towards the troops that I can testify to your Imperial Highness that the behaviour of all ranks in the army which invested Plevna, from general to soldier, was beyond all praise.

(Signed) 'Adjutant-General TODLEBEN.'

General
remarks.

It cannot be thought that Osman Pasha's attempt had any chance of success. A complete surprise of the Russians was, under the circumstances, almost impossible; and even had the Turks, by one of the lucky chances of war, succeeded in cutting their way through the investing army before the latter could close in on the point threatened, there remained a long stretch of country to be traversed before the escaping force could be secure. Viddin was about 124 miles distant; Orhanie and the southern section of the Plevna-Orhanie *chaussée* were barred by Gourko's force. The Turks were wanting in supplies of all kinds; they would have to cross a partially hostile and considerably drained country; their movements must necessarily have been slow, and the better equipped Russians could easily have followed and overwhelmed them with superior forces. In such a case as this, where no out-

side aid was to be had, the chances of an invested force are very small ; unless, indeed, it is able to inflict such a defeat on the investing army that the latter is so far morally and materially weakened as to be unable to pursue. But at Plevna the Turks could at best have only injured a small portion of the investing force, and the rest would have been ready for immediate pursuit. Moreover, the earthworks and breechloaders were this time on the side of the Russians. Owing to the strength of the Russian lines, an attack over a wide front would have been repulsed with ease. It was only by concentrating a temporarily superior force against a comparatively small section of the line of investment that any chance of breaking the latter existed. But the retaining power of the breechloader was all in favour of the Russians, and the attack, once brought to a check, was doomed. Two fresh Russian Brigades (about 10,000 men) were close at hand, and indeed should have been earlier on the spot, but the attack was completely defeated without their aid.* While, however, the hopelessness of the attempt must be admitted, no one but an ultra-humanitarian will blame Osman for his gallant effort.

The Turkish dispositions show much judgment and foresight, while the crossing of the Vid on the early morning of the 10th December, in the fog and darkness, was carried out with great skill. Before daylight a portion of the force was already deployed on the left bank of the river, so that the attack could begin at 7.30 A.M.†

The attack itself appears to have been well and gallantly carried out ; but as soon as the first rush was over and the advance was fairly checked, the fighting power of the Turks seems to have been exhausted. This is just what might have been expected from troops who had suffered from long privation, and who, probably, themselves despaired of success. The defence of the garrisons left in the redoubts on the right bank of the river seems to have been half-hearted. They were doubtless quite insufficient to have prevented the capture of the works, but they could probably have inflicted much heavier loss on the Allies.

It will be noticed that a hitch occurred in the Russian concentration, which was not, however, of the slightest importance. The Brigade of the 3rd Division of the Guard failed to arrive in time to be of service, but, according to Todleben's report, reached the bridge

* Moreover, the 1st Brigade, 2nd Grenadier Division, only began to envelope the left flank of the Turks' somewhat late in the fighting, and probably was not actually engaged.

† Several writers draw a contrast between this operation and those of Bazaine on the 26th and 31st August 1870. Even allowing for the far greater number of troops handled by Bazaine, the contrast is strikingly in favour of Osman Pasha.

'when the fight had already ceased.' The Guards crossed the Vid at 7 A.M., and had therefore ample time to afford direct support to the Section attacked. Ganetski, wishing apparently for the immediate support of this Brigade, ordered it to move independently on Dolny-Dubnik, and subsequently to advance along the *chaussée* to act against the left flank of the Turkish attack. Skobeleff, who was placed in command of the Brigades detached from the IVth and Vth Sections, wished to act with greater force, and halted the Guards to wait for the Brigade of the 16th Division. The latter never arrived; and, after a delay of two hours, the commander of the Guards' Brigade, receiving no further orders from General Skobeleff, advanced on his own responsibility. The movements of the Brigade of the 16th Division appear uncertain, but Todleben speaks of the arrival of this Brigade as 'expected.'

Again, the 2nd Brigade of the 3rd Grenadier Division seems to have been slow in coming up. This Brigade was at Gorny-Netropol, only about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the position threatened by the Turks; it must, in all probability, have received the order to advance by about 8 A.M., but it appears not to have arrived till a little before 10.30 A.M.

Importance
of Plevna.

In reviewing the importance of Plevna to the Turks, it is necessary to separate completely the strategic and the tactical sides of the question. The great tactical results obtained by the Plevna works have perhaps led to a somewhat exaggerated view of the strategic value of the position.

It must be noticed that the latter was due greatly to errors on the part of the Russians themselves; and, while imitations of Plevna may very probably play an important part in future wars, such an episode as that which has been described will rarely, if ever, recur. The Russian errors were of three kinds. First, the quite inadequate force with which an offensive campaign was begun—an error of military policy; second, the rash dispersion of this inadequate force after crossing the Danube—an error of strategy; third, the want of ordinary care in the carrying out of the reconnaissances on the right flank—an error of tactics, immediately followed up by further errors of the same class.

The insufficient force was due, possibly, to the common blunder of underrating the enemy. The numbers, armament, and the soldierly qualities of the Turkish troops must, however, have been well known, and the war was not begun in a hurry. The first mobilisation took place in November 1876; and between that date and the declaration of war on the 24th April 1877, there was full time for the mobilisation of an adequate force. Had such a force been rendered available,

Plevna might perhaps have remained almost unknown, and would in any case have played a far less important part in the campaign. On the other hand, the inadequate mobilisation may have been due to political motives. The military writer has perhaps nothing to do with questions of policy, but political considerations cannot be altogether ignored.

With regard to the second and third errors, there can be no doubt that Russia was badly served at the outset of the war by some of her Generals. It is sufficiently clear that personal interest and Court favouritism had worked their usual evil results; and this system, which may work with tolerable credit in times of peace, broke down under the rough test of war. The fault was to some extent rectified; and, after the advent of Todleben, the conduct of the campaign will, in most respects, challenge criticism.

Whether it was due to faults in the higher commands, or merely to incompetency on the part of Cavalry Commanders, the great error was committed of allowing a large Turkish force from the West to be massed at a short distance from Sistova, undetected till it was almost too late. Nor can this error be excused for want of time. The Danube was crossed on the night of the 26th June, and Osman did not reach Plevna till about the 18th July. Plevna is about 124 miles from Viddin and 35* from Sistova. Osman's Infantry covered the former distance while the Russian Cavalry were covering the latter.

This grievous blunder was immediately followed up by another on the part of Schilder-Schuldner, who approached Plevna on the 19th June in an entirely reckless manner, and attacked without knowing what was in front of him. Then followed the rapid massing of the force under Krudener; and Plevna was again attacked on the 30th July, with insufficient knowledge, inadequate force, and this time apparently in opposition to the opinion of the General on the spot, while a conflict of authority and many tactical errors in the attack itself combined to bring about a new defeat. Apparently, greater knowledge of the position and the concentration of a greater force—which was possible—might on this occasion have led to the capture of Plevna. But, on the other hand, even the minimum of delay necessary would have meant a considerable increase of the strength of the position.

Then followed the crisis of the war and the precarious position of the whole invading army; but this crisis was passed through in safety, mainly on account of the immobility of Osman's force and the want of concert on the part of the Turkish Commanders generally. The principal result of the second defeat at Plevna was the summoning of

* The distance by road through Gorny-Studen is 55 miles.

large reinforcements from Russia, and Osman's useless sortie of the 31st August did not take place till after these reinforcements had begun to arrive in Bulgaria. The long delay, however, had permitted a great growth of the Plevna defences. After the capture of Lovtcha on the 3rd September, Plevna was assaulted again on the 11th September, this time with a superiority of force which was, however, by no means too great. The attack was badly planned, directed on the strongest side, and on the whole badly carried out. Plevna still remained practically intact, and the Russians suffered terrible losses.

Then followed a new period of inaction—now much less serious to the Russians on account of their greatly increased force in Bulgaria and the further reinforcements immediately expected—and finally the arrival of Todleben and the commencement of the investment.

After it became a certainty that Osman Pasha's force could not move, the strategic importance of Plevna became at once diminished; and, if this immobility were foreseen, the whole strategic conception of the movement from Viddin would seem to lose a portion of its significance. But some strategic value would still have attached to the defence of Plevna, if the Turks had developed any real recuperative and reorganising power and had been able to take full advantage of the time which Osman Pasha secured for them. Thus, while the strategic importance of the position was primarily due to errors on the part of the Russians, this importance was lost on account of errors or inherent incapacity on the part of the Turks.

Supposing, as we needs must, that Osman Pasha was unable to take the offensive immediately after his very important victory on the 30th July, his proceedings up to the middle of October, with the exception of the apparently useless sortie of the 31st August, seem to have been above criticism.* With the arrival of the Russian Guard, however, an investment became inevitable and, under the circumstances, fatal. Judging *after* the event, it appears clear that Osman should have retired early in October along the Plevna-Orchanie line, thus covering his communications with Sofia and picking up the stores which were being accumulated along

* It may be questioned, however, whether it would not have been better for Osman to have held Lovtcha instead of Plevna. The former position is naturally stronger, and it is no further from the Sistova-Schipka line. Lovtcha, strongly held, would have afforded direct protection to the line of the Balkans, and it would have been more difficult to invest than Plevna. But Osman's movement from Viddin was, perhaps, primarily undertaken with the idea of *directly* defending Western Bulgaria, and to attain this end the occupation of Plevna was decidedly the most natural course.

the route, and which afterwards became so useful to the enemy. But Osman must not be blamed for the continued resistance of Plevna and the consequently inevitable loss of his army. General Baker distinctly states that he wished to retire, but that the Seraskierate, misled by Chefket's fallacious report of the situation, directed him to remain. After this determination had been taken the strategic importance of Plevna on the issue of the campaign may be said to have disappeared. It delayed the subsequent advance of the Russians but did nothing more; while this false step on the part of the War Council cost the Turks their best army and completely shattered the last prospect of a successful issue to the campaign. Suleiman's want of success on the Lom, his defeat on the 12th December, and Mehemet Ali's blameless failure to defend Orchanie and the passes of the Etropol Balkans, prove that a further protraction of the defence of Plevna would have been of no use whatever to the Turkish cause.

There is another view of the influence of Plevna on the campaign which is worth noticing. The defeat of the 30th July was the direct cause of the calling up of large Russian reinforcements. If the Plevna position had not existed and no early reverses had fallen upon the Russians, it is not quite clear that further reinforcements would have been sent for to expand the manifestly inadequate invading force. And it appears possible that a rapid advance might have been checked by another fortified position, such as Adrianople, far farther from Sistova—a defeat before which might have led to much more serious results for the invading army. This is, of course, a mere speculation, but one not without interest.

It is very doubtful that in future wars an open town will be allowed to grow into a formidable position under the very eyes of an invading army and close to its main line of communications. But the great tactical results obtained by the memorable defence of Plevna will certainly produce a great development of Field and Provisional Fortification; and it is not improbable that fortified positions are destined to play an important part in future campaigns, and possibly to have greater influence on their issue than Plevna had. The Russians lost before Plevna alone, more than 700 officers and 31,000 men; and although a portion of this heavy loss can be accounted for by tactical errors in the conduct of the attack, the fact remains that the Turks, recognising instinctively the strength of earthworks combined with the rapid fire of breechloaders, obtained results greatly exceeding expectation. And the Turkish system is capable of yielding even greater results in the hands of troops more highly disciplined, better officered, and possessing the advantages of a careful musketry training. The great

wonder is, that with such very random shooting the results were so great.

Some natural distaste may be felt for a new method of fighting, in which the use of the spade will take an extremely important place in the duties of Infantry. But every Continental army is now provided with a large proportion of entrenching tools as personal equipment. It is impossible to believe that these encumbrances will be carried for nothing, and it only remains to accept and recognise a new order of things. Unfortunately successive developments of the practice of warfare do not involve mere changes so much as additions to the many qualifications required from the soldier, and these qualifications are occasionally mutually antagonistic. It will be necessary for Infantry to carefully preserve all its mobility and offensive power unimpaired, while increasing to the utmost its means of gaining temporary and provisional protection.

The defence of Plevna was something much more than a mere construction and defence of earthworks. A considerable body of troops, composed of materials of different qualities, and possessing for the most part no previous common organisation, was moulded into a compact force. And this force was kept in good spirits, always on the alert, and always showing the greatest energy in increasing its defences, though it was altogether wanting in many of the essentials of an army, and latterly it must have undergone positive suffering from cold and privation. Todleben states: 'The Turks opposed an obstinate resistance to all enterprises and approaches; to every partial attack they immediately replied by a rolling fire of extreme violence. There was no sign of the least loss of heart among them. Deserters were few in number.' This is high praise, but it was fully deserved. Very different views of Osman's ability have been advanced; but it is sufficient to notice that it is at all events certain that the direction of the defence of Plevna was the work of some one mind of great energy and personal power.* The one fatal weakness of the defenders of Plevna—that they were unable to take the offensive at the right moment—was probably due to causes beyond their leader's control; and the final attack on the 10th December, the attacks on Skobelev on the 12th September, and the sortie of the 31st August prove that the troops themselves were quite capable of something more than mere defence.

* It seems probable that Osman's Chief of the Staff, Tewfik Bey, was the real guiding spirit of the defence of Plevna.

CHAPTER X.

THE PLEVNA TRENCH-WORK—TURKISH WORKS—RUSSIAN WORKS.

NAPOLEON in his Memoirs wrote: 'The principles of field fortification need improving; this branch of warfare is susceptible of great progress.' This prophecy is obtaining abundant fulfilment; and a comparison of the works thrown up by the Turks round Plevna with the field redoubts, the drawing of which formed portion of the Woolwich course some 14 years ago, affords a striking proof of progress made in a comparatively short time. The Turkish redoubts do not, it is true, show much that is absolutely new in design; but they exhibit a very remarkable degree of completeness, and of attention to all the small details which go to make a well-constructed work. If fitness for the purpose for which it is intended, is the test of a good design, that of most of the Plevna works will fearlessly challenge criticism. As instances of highly-finished field fortification they are probably unique.

Turkish
trench-work.

Moreover, Plevna affords an excellent example of a gradually developed defensive system. On the 20th July the ground may be said to have been a *very* slightly prepared field of battle, and by the middle of October the place had grown into a very formidable entrenched position. There appears to have been no check in the work, with the exception of the partial restrictions produced by the Russian Artillery fire after the 7th September, and the strengthening and improvement of the defences went on till the very last. Plevna is not an example of rapidly executed trench-work, except perhaps during the nine days from the 20th to the 29th July, but of a slow, careful development, in which the Turks seem to have gradually grasped and turned to account all the natural advantages of the ground.

With regard to the details of the Turkish entrenchments the available information is fairly full; but as to the tracing and carrying out of the work, there is very much that remains to be learned. Tewfik Bey,* Osman's Chief of the Staff, must be credited with the general superintendence of the work, assisted in the technical direction

* Spoken of as Tewfik 'Pasha' in some accounts.

by Tahir Bey, who is said to be an officer of Engineers. The former, in reply to Todleben's questions as to his mode of procedure, stated that 'experience was his only guide;' and the general impression conveyed by the growth of the position is that, starting, probably, with a rough general idea of the defence, the ground was occupied as it became understood, and as the direction of the Russian attacks demanded. Engineer officers are stated to have usually fixed the positions of the trenches and redoubts; but the initiative in the execution of the work appears to have been left to the regimental officers, and to the troops themselves. Though constructed according to a general type, this was by no means slavishly followed, and the redoubts show signs of individuality of engineering genius. The work is stated to have been laid out by pacing chiefly, and wooden profiles and similar aids to execution were probably not made use of. About 4,000 Bulgarians were employed in addition to the military labour, and townspeople were also made available for driving carts and bringing up *matériel*.

Turkey can hardly be said to possess an Engineer Service in the sense in which the term is usually applied, and it would be interesting to know the precise number of specially trained officers and men present in Plevna. They were doubtless, however, very few, and the excellent execution and admirable finish of the work was greatly due to the natural genius for fortification possessed by the Turks. It is worth noticing that some of the characteristics of the Plevna works had been adopted by the Turks at a very early date. Thus a participant in the siege of Kandia (1667-69) speaks of 'covered holes,' 'grottoes' and 'earth burrows' constructed in the reverse slopes of the trenches, which seem to have been something very similar to the celebrated earth huts of Plevna. And in the same siege the Turks made much use of wood in constructing caponiers* in which they covered themselves. The term 'Turkish Sap,' moreover, serves to show that the Turks have taught something to the science of military engineering in the past; and it is perhaps worth noticing that the Turkish soldier does not by any means show evidence of the demoralisation which is sometimes supposed to be inseparable from a fondness for the spade.

Kouropatkin bears testimony to the existence of a species of natural aptitude for trench-work on the part of the Turks. He states, 'as soon as the Turks occupy a position they immediately fortify it by means of shelter trenches to hold their skirmishers. If they remain undisturbed, the shelter trenches are deepened, epaulments are made

* 'Caphaneren,' *Novissima Praxis Militaris*, by Johann Bernhard Scheithern, Ingenieur und Major zu Fuss.

for guns, and finally open, or closed works, of considerable relief are constructed. When time permits, traverses (against reverse fire) are added, and the lines of shelter trenches are multiplied according to the conditions of the ground. Besides, the Turks never fail to extend their position by occupying neighbouring heights which command it. The entrenched camps established at Lovtcha and round Plevna, show that the construction of the earthworks was never interrupted. At Lovtcha, the position once completely fortified, the Turks constructed several excellent powder magazines, and they began, towards the end of the defence, to erect blindages for the troops.

'The comforts with which the Turkish soldiers are surrounded, are worthy of attention. The interior slopes are provided with holes in which water, and sometimes honey and biscuits, are placed for the use of the combatants. A portion of the cartridges are placed there; the rest of the ammunition remains in boxes at the bottom of the trenches.

'All the Turkish entrenchments which we captured at Schipka, Lovtcha, and Plevna, are not only imposing from their size, but they also present an excellent appearance.

'The choice of the positions fortified leaves nothing to be desired. The works at Lovtcha and Plevna were unquestionably directed by engineers full of talent and experience.

'Even after a success the Turks do not think of remaining idle. On the 13th September, the morning after the day on which General Skobelev was forced to abandon the redoubts which he had carried, the Turks were already stirring, repairing their damages, and destroying our shelter trenches. Moreover, our outpost chain, which was sufficiently near to the enemy, could see them distinctly laying out fresh lines of shelter trenches, and the working parties beginning their tasks with a will.'

This natural aptitude and predilection for trench-work, is in marked contrast to the ways and habits of the Russians at the outset of the campaign. Not only was the Russian army miserably provided with entrenching implements, but the Russian soldier himself seems to have despised his entrenching tool, deeming it an encumbrance to be got rid of on the first favourable opportunity. Skobelev states: 'A soldier of our army, when he advances to the attack over difficult ground, especially on a hot day, relieves himself first of all of the entrenching tool. . . . Thus, when the troops obtain a position which they ought to hold, they have no longer the means of covering themselves from the enemy's fire.' This, however, refers to the state of things *before* the 3rd battle of Plevna; and the troops, who during

the night of the 11th September, 'dug, or rather scratched the very hard ground with their hands, with bayonets, swords, or mess tins,' would probably retain a very different estimate of the value of the spade and pick. The effect of the severe lesson learned at Plevna, is well shown by the fact that the men of Skobelev's 16th Division carried spades weighing over 5 lbs. from Plevna to Constantinople. "They were slung over the back, the handle projecting above the left shoulder and the spade below the right hip, and were attached to the shoulder with a piece of string, a strap, a piece of old tent, or anything else that was available; . . . they were uncomfortable, they were in every way inconvenient, but each man had learned by hard experience, that his individual life depended upon his musket and his spade, and he took good care to lose neither the one nor the other." *

Todleben briefly sums up the advantages of the Plevna position as follows :—

Advantages
of Plevna
position.

'1. The extent of the Turkish position round Plevna was nearly 22½ miles.

'2. The configuration of the heights radiating from the town resembles a fan of which Plevna is the centre. The Reserves placed in the centre, at a distance of 2½ to 3¼ miles, could easily support all threatened points, whilst ravines intercepted the communications between the various parts of our position.

'3. The fortifications consisted of many rows of defensive lines practically adapted to the ground.

'4. The Reserves could be placed out of the range of our Artillery.

'5. The fire of the Turkish Infantry was shattering and devastating in a degree never hitherto attained by any European army.'

The Turkish defences consisted of a well-arranged combination of trenches, lodgments, and rifle pits, strengthened at intervals by redoubts, which served as flank defences to the trenches in line with them, and as strong keeps, or retrenchments to the works in their front. By this means three and four lines of Infantry fire were brought to bear on the ground to be traversed by an attack. To this multiplication of lines of Infantry fire the Turks rightly attached great importance, and the ground was in many places extremely favourable for the purpose. In order to render the redoubts really efficient as *points d'appui*, they were of strong profile and capable of offering very great individual resistance to an attack. Besides the lines of trenches employed for the purpose

* *Russian Army and its Campaigns* (p. 435). This was a practical illustration of the truth of the saying of Napoleon: 'There are five things from which a soldier should never separate—his cartridges, pack, provisions for four days, and the pioneers' tool.'

of direct defence, covered communications were made to the positions of the reserves in rear wherever the ground was much exposed, and these covered ways were traversed if necessary.

The very extensive employment of blindages more or less substantial, is certainly one of the most marked features of the Turkish trench-work. The Infantry trenches, as well as the redoubts, were liberally provided with covered shelters in which the garrisons were well protected from the weather, and could cook and sleep, while remaining close at hand and ready to line the parapets at short notice. These shelters were arranged so as to be invisible to the Russians and were protected from direct fire. The Artillery appears usually to have been placed in the redoubts, which were well provided with traverses and blindages. The interior traversing was carried to such an extent that some of the terrepleins were almost entirely occupied, and there was only the bare space necessary for taking guns in and out. The traverses were employed to protect the faces of the works from enfilade fire, to defilade the rear portions of the terreplein and to cover the blindages; the latter were sunk so low as to be secure from curved fire, and they seem to have afforded ample protection against the Russian Artillery, while serving, at the same time, as tolerably comfortable dwelling places for the garrisons.

The redoubts themselves were usually of simple quadrangular form;* but a few five-sided works were employed, and at least one of six faces.

It was provided that the more advanced works should be brought under the fire of those in rear, and adjacent works were able to afford each other good mutual defence.

A study of the general arrangement of the completed works of the defence (*Pl. III.*) does not leave the impression of a position taken in hand and fortified as a whole, but one in the defences of which the temporary exigencies produced by the Russian attacks had played an important directing part.

Thus, the strong line of trenches and entrenched camps, beginning South of Bukova and ending in the two Grivitza redoubts, took their first beginning just before Schilder-Schuldner's attack on the 20th July. They gradually increased in strength, and the Roumanian No. 1 Column was completely repulsed on the 11th September before their Eastern end. The strong works of the central group, begun just before the 20th July

* This apparent preference for the quadrangular form has given rise to some comment. It is possibly to be explained by the fact of its greater simplicity of construction, and it seems also probable that the Turks relied in some cases on the effects of the fire from lateral trenches up to a late stage of the attack, and trusted to the strong profile and deep ditches of their redoubts for the close defence.

Growth of
the position.

by a few shelter trenches, which were carried with great loss on that day by the 19th Regiment, had received a very great extension before Schackoffskoi's attack on the 30th July, against which they played a very important part; while the defences, of which redoubt No. 10 is the centre, were begun after this date, and caused the terrible losses of the unfortunate centre attack on the 11th September. Skobelev's energetic attack on the 30th July, West of the Tutschenitza, was the starting point of the Krischin defences, which, after having been temporarily broken by the same General on the 11th September, received a great subsequent development. The importance of the high rounded hill above Opanetz was recognised at an early date; it was probably slightly entrenched before the 30th July, and was certainly occupied by an entrenched camp by the 11th September, while, later, it received the very great development shown in *Pl. III*. The Turks appear to have been somewhat prodigal in the defences of this position. On the arc of defence from Krischin to the Vid bridge, the Turkish works were never seriously attacked. The extension of the defences from Krischin to the heights above Oltschages, was probably subsequent to the great attack of the 11th September. Except round redoubt No 22, not much subsidiary trench-work seems to have been executed here, and the defences consisted of the chain of redoubts at intervals of 1,000 to 1,400 yards. The position above Oltschages was also apparently recognised as important; but from thence to the bridge the defences were not very extensive, and the Turks seem to have relied mainly on the natural advantages of the ground. The defenders of Plevna were, however, not very easily surprised, and a threatened attack subsequent to the 11th September from the South between Krischin and the Vid, or from the West between Oltschages and the bridge, would no doubt have at once produced a rapid development of the existing defences. Moreover, the works on the eastern semicircle, from Bukova right round to Krischin, were very strong by the end of October, and the small importance of the loss of the Grivitza redoubt was by that time fully recognised, so that Osman Pasha would have felt secure in diverting a large force to the South-West and West.

In thus reviewing the fortifications of Plevna as a whole, their gradual growth due to patient, unwearied, and highly intelligent labour under fire and other discouraging conditions, is perhaps the most striking feature. Important tactical points, either recognised at once with military *coup d'œil*, or suggested by the course of the Russian attacks, were seized upon and strengthened. Around the small nucleus thus formed, an extensive group of defences was afterwards developed

as further experience suggested.* If this general idea is not altogether new, it at all events obtained a very singular and complete realisation at Plevna. It has been stated that the tendency exists to view field-works too much from the Engineering point of view and too little from the tactical side. The difference between these two points of view has been very clearly defined by Colonel Schaw, R.E., who states † 'in tactics the *troops* are the primary consideration, the central point on which our attention must be fixed. In Engineering we have to consider the *material means* which will aid the troops in carrying out some particular operation. And it no doubt is too often the case that the Engineer is inclined to put his works in the first place, and to forget that, apart from the troops, they are but a dead body without the animating spirit.' Plevna appears to supply a practical illustration of field works dealt with from a tactical point of view, and with the authors of the Plevna works the troops were doubtless the primary consideration. The guiding principle seems to have been, to cover and protect men and guns in positions where their presence was tactically desirable, and not merely to cover them from the enemy's fire, but to shelter them from weather and to make them in all respects as comfortable as circumstances admitted.

In the actual carrying out of their works both armies were much favoured by the soil—a stiff loam free from stones, which stood well at steep slopes both in cutting and embankment, and was, moreover, not very favourable to the penetration of shells. After heavy rains the water did not percolate readily through this heavy soil, and the trenches remained very wet for long periods.

Advantages
of soil.

The following appear to be the most salient features of the Turkish trench-work.

Breastwork of Redoubts.—The height of the crest varied from 6' 0" to 7' 0". The thickness varied from 21' 0", on faces much exposed to the Russian Artillery fire, to 10' 0" and 7' 0" at the gorges and in works of the second line. Many of the parapets showed evident signs of having been strengthened subsequent to their construction. The superior slopes varied from $\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{16}$. The exterior slopes were usually $\frac{1}{4}$ but occasionally flatter. In some cases, where they were not exposed to Artillery fire, they were considerably steeper and revetted with sods, or gabions. The interior slopes were steep and

Principal
features of
Turkish
works.
Pl.
VIII.-XII.

* The development from shelter trenches to redoubts was not, however, the invariable course. On the southern line of defence, as has been noticed, redoubts almost isolated, were constructed, and would no doubt have been largely supplemented by trenches if this part of the position had been threatened.

† *Field Works from a Tactical Point of View.* Lecture delivered at Chatham 6th September, 1876, and since printed among the *Occasional Papers*.

sometimes revetted, but not in every case. The banquettes were 4' 6" below the crests, 3' 6" broad, and usually stepped in rear.

Ditches.

Ditches.—The main ditches were from 7' 0" to 10' 0" deep, and the breadth at top varied from 13' 0" to 21' 0". The escarps and counterscarps were steep, sometimes $\frac{3}{4}$ or $\frac{1}{2}$ —occasionally the escarps were flatter. Berms were rather rarely employed; but their absence may perhaps in some cases be explained by a subsequent broadening of the ditch in order to get earth, or by the gradual deterioration of the exterior slope under fire.

Covered way.

Covered way.—The redoubts were usually provided with a glacis, forming the parapet to a covered way, by which a second line of fire was obtained. The glacis was not very high, and the banquette in rear was cut down below the level of the ground (*Figs. 1 and 2, Pl. VIII., Fig. 2, Pl. X.*), thus lowering the position of the defenders of the covered way, and allowing the fire from the parapet to clear them. In some cases the glacis was thrown forward (*Fig. 3, Pl. VIII.*), and, its banquette being well sunk, the ground left standing in rear formed a species of parados at the backs of the defenders of the covered way. By mounting on this parados the Turks may have been able in some cases to obtain a third line of fire—especially the high angle fire, which they sometimes commenced when the enemy was considerably over 2,000 yards distant.*

Traverses.

Traverses.—Traverses were very largely employed, and constitute a very distinctive feature of the Turkish works. They were of two kinds—1st, at right angles to the parapet, from 10' 0" to 14' 0" thick, sometimes finished off on a level with the crest (*Fig. 1, Pl. VIII.*), sometimes from 1' 0" to 2' 0" above it (*Fig. 2, Pl. VIII.*), and running on to form bonnettes on the top of the parapet: in both cases intended to protect the faces of the redoubts from enfilade fire. 2nd, detached traverses in the interior of the works, sometimes a straight line rising diagonally across the work (*Fig. 1, Pl. VIII.*); sometimes simply cruciform (*Fig. 2, Pl. VIII.*); occasionally cruciform with returned ends (*Fig. 3, Pl. VIII., Fig. 2, Pl. X.*), according to varying conditions. These traverses were usually higher than the crest, about 14' 0" thick, and with steep unrevetted side slopes. They served to defilade the terrepleins, and to protect blindages under or in rear of them. Traverses of curved (*Figs. 1 and 3, Pl. VIII.*) and straight trace (*Fig. 1, Pl. IX.*) were also employed to cover the entry to the redoubts.

* Todleben in his letter to Brialmont gives a description with an explanatory sketch, showing how a third line of fire was obtained by men standing on a step cut in the escarp. The adoption of this plan by the Turks does not appear to be confirmed, and even an ordinary berm was rare. Moreover, with steep escarps, the arrangement would not appear to be very practicable. The third line of fire may possibly, however, have been occasionally obtained as explained above.

Terrepleins.—The terrepleins of the redoubts were usually sunk 1' 0" to 3' 0" below the ground level, according to the conditions of the case and the earth requirements. *Terrepleins.*

Arrangements for Artillery.—The guns were usually placed in the redoubts, from 2 to 6 in each. They were sometimes mounted *en barbette*, and fired between bonnettes raised on the parapets, sometimes through embrasures, with or without bonnettes (*Fig. 6,* Pl. XII*). The embrasures seem more often to have been unrevetted. The guns appear usually to have been placed at or near the salients, but their positions were frequently changed. When not required they were withdrawn into shelter in rear of the parapet or traverses. Powder magazines were provided, usually under the traverses. *Arrangements for artillery.*

Blindages.—The covered shelters of the Turks were employed in the redoubts in rear of interior traverses (*Section VW, Fig. 1, Pl. IX.*); by the side of the traverses at right angles to the faces (*Section CD, Fig. 3, Pl. VIII.*; *Section PQ, Fig. 1, Pl. IX.*); under the banquettes of the main parapet (*Sections AB and CD, Fig. 1, Pl. VIII.*); in the counterscarp under the banquettes of the covered way (*Section CD, Fig. 2, Pl. VIII.*); and under the glacis (*Section AB, Fig. 3, Pl. VIII.*). Shelters of very similar construction were also employed in the reverse slopes of Infantry trenches (*Section AB, Fig. 2; NO, Fig. 3; and GH, Fig. 4, Pl. IX.*). The shelters in the redoubts and under the covered way had flat roofs supported on horizontal timbers (usually round, occasionally square), which were carried on vertical posts. The roofs were formed of hurdles (sometimes of fascines or layers of brushwood), covered with maize-straw or sods, and then a layer of earth. The depth of earth-covering varied considerably, ranging from about 4' 6" (*Section CD, Fig. 1, Pl. VIII.*) to 1' 0" (*Section EF, Fig. 2, Pl. VIII.*). They were excavated to different depths, according to the amount of cover required. By far the greater number of these blindages would apparently have afforded no protection whatever from mortar fire; † but mortars were only employed by the attack to a very small extent, and from high angle fire they were well covered by their positions, while their roofs were usually proof against shell splinters and shrapnel bullets. Rear walls of earth were *Blindages.*

* This figure is taken from a Russian source. The nationality of the work is not stated, and works bearing the number (7) exist both in the Russian and Turkish lines. General von Schröder (*das verschanzte Lager von Plewna*, p. 85) is inclined to assign it to the Russians; but the coincidence of trace with the Turkish work No. 7 (*Pl. III.*) is apparently too striking to be accidental. Moreover, there are other points, such as the *parados* behind the covered way, which seem to point clearly to Turkish authorship.

† It seems somewhat remarkable, however, that very little damage was effected in No. 2, Grivitza work, against which the Roumanians employed four 9·84" mortars at a range of only 250 yards.

occasionally employed. The huts shown in *Figs. 2, 3, 4 and 5, Pl. IX.*, in rear of the Infantry trenches, must have afforded little or no protection against Artillery fire; but they could not be seen by the Russians, who, moreover, appear usually to have confined their fire to the redoubts. The roofs of these shelters were frequently sloping, as shown in *Fig. 4, Pl. IX.*, and formed by a longitudinal ridge-piece supported on uprights, from which the sides of the roof—fascines, hurdles, or brushwood covered with sods or earth—sloped down, resting on the edge of the excavation, or on small banks raised slightly above it. The blindages had cooking places, provided with chimneys formed of sods, or rammed earth.

Details of
Turkish
works.

Grivitzza
position.

Redoubt
No. I.

It is now proposed to describe some of the individual works of the Turkish defence in greater detail.*

The *Grivitzza position* consisted of redoubts Nos. 1 and 2, and a line of strong trench about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles long, running along the ridge to the West and embracing works Nos. 17, 18, 50, 47, and 46.

Redoubt No. 1 was quadrangular, with 49 yards side. The parapet, 13' 0" thick, gave cover of about 9' 0", of which 1' 3" was gained by excavating the terreplein. The interior slope was steep and revetted with gabions. The banquette was reached by steps, the exterior slope and the escarp were $\frac{1}{2}$. The counterscarp was nearly vertical.

In the interior was a cross traverse of the form common in the Plevna redoubts; it was a little higher than the crest of the parapet, from 8' 0" to 9' 9" in breadth at the crown, and had steep sides revetted with sods. The guns fired through embrasures protected by bonnettes and side-traverses, raised 6' 6" above the platform level.

This redoubt was considerably altered after its capture by the Roumanians, and the guns of the latter were so mounted as to be able to shell redoubt No. 2 on the North, and also to sweep the slopes on the West: they were, moreover, protected by oblique traverses from the fire of the Turkish works. No covered shelters or blindages remained in the interior.

From the North-West salient of this redoubt a line of trenches communicated with redoubt No. 2, and formed a curtain between the works. *IK, Fig. 5, Pl. IX.*, is a section of this trench, which

* The Swiss Federal Government, with an enterprise worthy of imitation, despatched two Engineer officers, Colonel Ott and Lieutenant Brüstlein, in February 1878, to visit and report upon the military works executed on both sides during the war. They reached Plevna on the 20th March, and remained till the 28th. The weather was bad and the ground covered with snow; moreover the earthworks had already begun to show the effects of exposure, while the wood-work had been to a great extent carried away by the country people. The report of these officers is full of useful information; and their drawings of the Plevna trench-work, reproduced in Plates VIII, IX., and XI., are the best which have yet appeared. It is from this report that most of the following details are derived.

was 9' 9" broad at the bottom. At intervals, ramps led down to the bottom of the trench from the rear, and there were also similar means of egress to the front. This trench was abandoned by the Turks after the fall of the redoubt. Another trench running from the redoubt to the South-West served for bringing up the Turkish reserves. This trench was provided with earth huts of the form shown in *Fig. 4, Pl. IX*. The roofs were formed of round timber on which rested brushwood, or simply maize-straw covered over with earth. The two trenches running from the North-East and South-East salients were thrown up by the Roumanians; the latter trench formed the first parallel of the formal attack on redoubt No. 2, and was traversed at intervals as a protection against enfilade fire from the Turkish positions South of the Grivitza brook: the former was used as a communication with the second parallel. (*See Pl. XIII.*)

Redoubt No. 2 (*Fig. 1, Pl. VIII.*) had the same trace as No. 1, but the traversing was different. This redoubt had four gun-banks at the salients. The banquette was carried round the side traverses as shown in section G.H. The gorge entry was covered by a lunette. The glacis gave cover to a second line of fire. The thickness of the parapet was originally uniform; but subsequent to the beginning of the Roumanian attack, the parapet on the southern and eastern faces was raised to a height of 13' 0" and thickened to about 14' 9". The berm had disappeared, and in order to get earth the terreplein had been excavated from 2' 0" to 4' 10". The parapets on the southern and eastern faces were much shot about, and also the interior slope of the parapet of the western face. The ditches had nearly perpendicular scarps and had been deepened to get earth. The interior slopes, the traverses, and the side slopes of the gorge entry, were revetted with gabions. The only places of access to the covered way were on both sides of the entry at the gorge.

Redoubt
No. 2.

The blindages under the banquette of the parapet are worthy of notice. Measured from a vertical line dropped from the foot of the banquette slope, they had a depth of about 8' 2". The height was about 6' 6", and the length varied in different places. The front walls stood alone in excavation, but in embankment were revetted with boards, or hurdles. The roof covering was formed of brushwood and straw; the depth of earth varied according to the height of the parapet, and was usually about 1' 8". (*Section AB, Fig. 1, Pl. VIII.*) Rear walls existed in some places and were about 1' 6" thick, formed of sods or rammed earth. According to the statements of Turkish officers these blindages afforded great security. Their positions, behind and close up to the parapets, or on the defiladed side of the traverses, protected

them completely from high angle fire. The Roumanian mortar shells seem to have done them very little damage. No brickwork was used at Plevna, and all the blindages, magazines, &c., were executed in a provisional way.

Redoubt
No. 17.

Work No. 17, West of No. 2, appears to have been developed from a quadrangular redoubt with a cross traverse of the usual form. The gun emplacements on the North face were directed against the Roumanian approaches on the ridge to the North-East. The remaining guns were directed so as to be able to fire upon redoubt No. 1 and between redoubts Nos. 1 and 2 on the works of the Roumanian attack. The Roumanians estimated the number of guns in this position at 18, which did not agree with the number of gun emplacements, doubtless because the pieces were frequently changed in position.

The crest of the Infantry parapets had a command of 9' 9" and for gun emplacements about 13' 0". The embrasures were cut down to 3' 3" below the crest.

The smaller works Nos. 50 and 47 offer nothing of special interest. The workmanship was extremely neat, and the interior and exterior slopes of the parapets were sodded.

Infantry
trenches.

The line of Infantry trenches along the ridge is highly typical. The trenches are shown in *Figs. 2 and 3, Pl. IX*. They were liberally provided with shelters. The main trench was 3' 3" broad at the bottom and about 8' 2" above, and gave from 7' 2" to 9' 9" cover; there was a banquette on both sides, about 4' 6" below the crest. The slopes, in cutting, were nearly vertical. The parapets were from 4' 10" to 6' 6" thick, and the interior slopes were formed of rammed earth or sods. The crest was crenelated with sods or sandbags. The shelter huts had their entries direct from the trench: they were circular or rectangular excavations of different sizes. In portions of the front exposed to fire they were entirely sunk in the ground: in naturally sheltered positions they were higher. The walls were sometimes revetted with hurdles, and the roofs were formed of round timbers supporting a layer of fascines, or branches, and straw, with about 1' 6" of earth on the top. They were quite invisible at a distance. Small chimneys of sods carried off the smoke of the fires. Small circular mill-stones which were found scattered about (each about 1' 0" in diameter and 7" thick, with a projecting pin fixed in one, fitting into a corresponding recess in the other) appeared to show that the maize was ground on the spot. In a few steps from these shelter huts the garrisons could reach their banquettes. Traverses of about the same height and thickness as the parapet were freely employed in these trenches, and the banquette was frequently carried round them. Where the trenches were liable to be enfiladed the traverses were carried up higher.

The loopholes were about 1' 7" apart, and were partly provided with wooden forks on which to rest the rifle.

The trace of these lines was well laid out and they partly surround works Nos. 17 and 18. In front of the main trench there was an advanced trench for Infantry fire (*Figs. 2, 3, 4, and 5, Pl. IX.*) about 3' 3" broad at the bottom, with a parapet giving about 5' 9" cover. The trenches followed the contour of the ground as much as possible, so that everywhere there were 2 lines of Infantry fire and 3 lines where the redoubts occurred. In some places, where the ground was favourable, lodgments and rifle-pits were formed further in front. These were detached and discontinuous trenches affording cover for a section or half-section. Further in front (18 to 20 paces) circular sentry pits for single men were sometimes dug, connected occasionally by narrow trenches, with the lodgments in rear. The Turks did not make much use of the usual obstacles, and only a few wire entanglements appear to have existed. They trusted rather to the effect of several lines of fire sweeping the ground in front. The communications, in rear of works Nos. 50 and 47, between this northern line of defences and the town, were well covered by the lie of the ground.

The Opanetz Group.—These works remained almost intact and were never seriously attacked. The group consists mainly of redoubts, and the covered communications freely used in the central group not being required here, were but little employed. The Opanetz heights command the low ground on the West and the Roumanian position near Dolny-Netropol: their fire could also sweep the ground North and East. Works Nos. 38 and 39 are both quadrangular redoubts, the latter having sides about 58 and 49 yards in length. The parapet of this work was 19' 7" thick on the exposed sides, with a crest about 11' 6" above the ground. On the remaining faces, the parapets were about 9' 9" thick and 8' 3" high. The traverses were about 13' 0" broad at the crown, and, the terreplein being excavated 3' 3", they gave about 16' 3" cover. The guns fired through embrasures with very high bonnettes. The blindages were numerous and similar to those shown in *Fig. 1, Pl. VIII.* They had, in many instances, rear walls with openings for light and air. The ditches were steeply scarped and from 8' 4" to 9' 9" deep. There was a glacis and covered way running round the work. The interior slopes were revetted with sods and the steep exterior slopes had been turfed.

Work No. 37 was remarkable for its exceptional size and polygonal trace. The total length of crest line was about 442 yards and the interior area more than 10,700 square yards. The trace does not appear to be based on any particular local requirements, and Colonel

Opanetz
group.

Redoubt
No. 39.

Redoubt
No. 37.

Ott states that the work seemed to have been 'fancifully and leisurely executed.' The many blindages afforded lodgment for troops and Staff, together with ample storage room and stabling for horses. The parapet was 13' 2" thick, except at the gorge, where it was about 9' 9". The command varied from 5' 10" to 4' 4", and with the excavation of the terreplein the parapet gave about 7' 6" cover.

The traverses were 6' 6" to 9' 9" thick according to their position with respect to the enemy's fire, with side slopes of $\frac{3}{4}$ to $\frac{2}{3}$. The whole execution of this redoubt is stated to have been a pattern of workmanship.

Redoubt
No. 36.

Redoubt No. 36 was for Infantry only; the parapets were 6' 6" high, and 13' 2" thick on three faces, and 9' 9" at the gorge. This work possessed an oven built of tiles. It was connected by a trench with No. 35, which apparently mounted two guns directed on Dolny-Netropol.

The communications between the Opanetz position and the town were out of sight of the enemy.

Central
group.

Central Group.—The works of this group were commanded by the Radichevo ridge, and its exterior lines could be almost looked into. On the other hand the right flank of the position rested on the steep and rocky Tutschenitsa ravine, the North was covered by the Grivitza ridge, and the communications with the town were shut and completely out of sight. There can be little doubt that the Radichevo ridge would have been included in the defences of this group, but that there was a fear of making the position too extended for the available garrison. The works were much damaged by the Russian Artillery.

Redoubt
No. 10.

Redoubt No. 10 (*Fig. 1, Pl. IX.*) was designed for Infantry only, and was a square work of 60 yards side, with a cross traverse in the centre, five side traverses at right angles to the faces, and one covering the gorge entry. The thickness of the parapet was 16' 6", and its height such as to give 8' 3" cover. All the traverses were about 3' 3" higher than the crest of the parapet, and about 11' 6" broad at the crown. The terreplein was excavated 1' 7", and steps led up to the banquette. The interior slopes were almost vertical, as was the case of all such slopes when revetted. The exterior slope, about $\frac{1}{2}$, ran down without a berm to the bottom of the ditch, which was 9' 9" deep. The covered way is worthy of notice. It was sunk 3' 3" below the top of the counterscarp, and was traversed at the centre of each front in such a way that the line of fire was not interrupted and a flank fire could be brought to bear on the slopes of the glacis on either side of each traverse. This was managed by throwing forward the glacis at the position of each traverse, as

shown in *Fig. 1, Pl. IX*. In front of the salients the glacis was rounded off in such a way that a traverse was formed in rear of the curved portion of the crest, which served as a parados to the defenders of this portion from reverse fire, and also as a traverse from enfilade fire to the straight portion of the covered way. Moreover, by the rounding off the undefended angle was got rid of. The whole of this arrangement appears to be very ingenious. Access to the covered way was provided at the gorge entry, and also by ramps leading up from the bottom of the ditch, at the points where the rounding off of the angles began. The blindages in the interior of the work were entirely sunk below the ground level. From the gorge ran a trench connected with a strong system of Infantry lines, which could bring at least two tiers of fire to bear upon the ground in front.

Work No. 1 (*Fig. 3, Pl. VIII*.) was also a square redoubt of about 49 yards side, for Infantry and Artillery. It was well traversed, and amply provided with blindages. The converging fire of the Russian Artillery had considerably damaged it, and the parapet was found to be full of 4·2" and 6" shells, the greater part of which had not burst. The parapet on the southern and eastern faces was 16' 6" thick, and provided 11' 6" cover: on the other faces it was 13' 2" thick, and gave 8' 3" cover. The bonnettes protecting the guns were raised 3' 3" above, and the level of the soles of the embrasures was sunk 1' 6" below, the crest. The traverses were all about 5' 0" higher than the parapet, and the cross traverse had apparently been heightened about 1' 6". The ditches had been dug out to a depth of 13' 2", in order to get earth for the restoration of the parapet, and the berm was omitted, or had disappeared. The covered way was carried round three faces of the work, and was omitted at the gorge. It was sunk 3' 3" below the ground level, and was at a little distance in front of the edge of the counterscarp (Sections AB and GH, *Fig. 3, Pl. VIII*.), the earth left in rear forming a species of parados on which a part of the defenders of the covered way could mount if required. It seems possible that in this way three lines of fire could be brought to bear on distant objects, but this would hardly have been practicable for the close defence. The covered way was further provided with shelters (Section AB, *Fig. 3, Pl. VIII*.) at intervals of about 11 yards. These shelters were niches under the glacis capable of sheltering a few men each. Access to the covered way was provided at the gorge, and also by steps—three in each face—leading up from the bottom of the ditch. At a short distance from the covered way of the southern face was an Infantry trench connected with it by narrow trenches. In front of the covered way of the eastern face there was a similar trench at a

Redoubt
No. 1.

greater distance. The ground in front of these faces was, therefore, swept by three lines of fire, exclusive of that from the top of the parados.

Work No. 7 is shown in *Fig. 6, Pl. XII.*, and appears to have been designed mainly for Artillery. This work was doubtless intended to flank the ground East of redoubt No. 10, and to render this work untenable if captured. Its guns probably were brought to bear across the Tutschenitsa ravine on the troops of Skobelev's attack on the 11th September. This whole group of works was at a disadvantage in being commanded at comparatively short range by the Radichevo ridge, and it was artificially strengthened by Infantry trenches, covered ways, and communications, having a total length of about 9 miles. The ground all round was much ploughed up by the shells of the Russian siege guns, the greater number of which had not burst.

Southern
defences.

Southern Defences.—The southern defences of Plevna follow the line of the ridge terminating above Blasigas on the West to the heights North of Krischin; here the ridge forks, running North-East towards Plevna and South-East over the 2nd Knoll of the Green Hills to the Tutschenitsa ravine, with an advanced position on the 1st Knoll, communicating by covered ways with the three redoubts on the 2nd Knoll.

Redoubt
No. 13.

Redoubt No. 13 was square, with $98\frac{1}{2}$ yards side; it had accommodation for four guns at the salients. The parapet on the North-West face was 13' 2" thick, and on the remaining faces 16' 6". The crest was 8' 0" high, the bonnettes 2' 0" above it. The terreplein was excavated from 1' 6" to 3' 3", thus gaining cover to the extent of from 9' 6" to 11' 3". The exterior slope ran down without a berm into the ditch, which was 8' 3" deep. This work was somewhat exceptional in having no glacis. The traverses were from 11' 6" to 13' 2" high, with a breadth at the top of 9' 9". The traverses had a step in their side-slopes, 1' 7" broad, 4' 3" below the parapet. No blindages existed, with the exception of one behind the traverse covering the entry, and the terreplein showed traces of tents having been pitched. Near the work, in well covered positions, there were numerous shelters for reserves. This redoubt, with Nos. 26, 12, and 11, formed a second line, or reserve position, to the defences of the Green Hills. Redoubts Nos. 11 and 12 are stated to have remained open at the gorge after their recapture from Skobelev on the 12th September, but their side faces were completed.

Redoubt
No. 25.

Redoubt No. 25 (*Fig. 1, Pl. X.*) is five-sided, with sides from 28 to 38 yards long.* The entry was protected by a species of

* The lengths of the sides as shown in the drawing, which is taken from a Russian source, do not quite agree with Colonel Ott's measurements.

tambour. The south-eastern salient was provided with embrasures for two guns, protected by bonnettes. The interior traverse was of somewhat peculiar form, and the work, like No. 13, had, apparently, no glacis.

The Krischin redoubt, No. 14 (*Fig. 2, Pl. X.*), seems to have had no very special feature; except that the glacis at the salients, instead of being rounded off, as was usual in the Plevna works, was simply heightened for about 10 yards on each side of the angle, by which some slight protection from enfilade fire may have been obtained for the defenders of the covered way.

Redoubt
No. 14.

Redoubts Nos. 19 and 23 (*Fig. 2, Pl. VIII.*) were much alike in their general details. No. 19, the larger work of the two, had sides about 59 yards long, and was provided with a cross traverse and eight side-traverses. There were embrasures for five guns at the salients. The parapets appeared to have originally had a command of 6' 6" and to have been subsequently raised about 3' 3", which, with a 3' 3" excavation of the terreplein, gave 13' 0" cover. The parapets were from 19' 7" to 26' 3" thick; and the eastern* face had been much knocked about, probably by the Russian guns posted East of the Tutschenitsa ravine.

Redoubts
19 and 23.

Redoubt No. 23 was very similar, with sides about 65 yards long. The parapet was 19' 8" thick and gave 11' 6" cover. The ditch was 9' 9" deep, with no berm and a steep escarp. The counterscarp was flatter, to give access to the covered way. The glacis was rounded off at the angles after the manner previously explained. The entry at the gorge was covered by a lunette-formed projection of slighter profile. The gorge ditch was flanked by two small traverses for Infantry fire. Blindages, 13' 3" long and about 9' 6" apart, were provided under the covered way and were cut down to the level of the bottom of the ditch.

Redoubts Nos. 23, 19, and 24 were connected by trenches for Infantry fire, provided with shelters. Two long, nearly parallel, trenches ran South-East and cut the Lovtcha-Plevna road; the more southerly of these trenches (about 1,090 yards long) terminated in an advanced Infantry trench immediately in front of the Russian lines.

The 2nd Knoll was strongly defended, and the effective action of several tiers of fire was secured as much as possible. The earth-shelters were numerous, and were both of circular and rectangular form. The parapet and trench in front of them usually gave about

* The North and South arrow appended to this figure does not seem to agree very well with the bearing of the faces of this redoubt as shown in *Pl. III.* The gorge side should apparently run more nearly North and South.

8' 3" of cover, and the shelters had about 5' 10" of headway. The position was strewn everywhere with empty cartridge cases, and tin prismatic ammunition boxes filled with earth were freely used on the parapets to form loopholes or bonnettes.

The rest of the works of the Southern line of defences, as well as those on the West, along the right bank of the Vid, present no distinctive features worthy of notice. The communications of the Southern defences with the *chaussée* on the North, and with the town, were completely covered by the ground.

RUSSIAN WORKS.

Russian
works.

The Russian works do not present any very special features, and show considerably less ingenuity than those of the Turks. It will be sufficient to notice a few typical specimens of the trench-work.

Sections Nos. II. and III.—The general idea of the works of these Sections was to block the road leading from Plevna, especially the *chaussée* running along the Grivitza valley, and to pour a heavy plunging fire from the Radichevo ridge on the Turkish works of the central group. The works are connected on the North with those of the Roumanians belonging to the IInd Section. They cross the Grivitza valley West of the village and, running South to the Radichevo ridge, they bend to the West, ending on the eastern verge of the Tutschenitsa ravine. The possession of the Radichevo ridge was of great importance to the Russians, and their works here were of considerable extent. The more commanding points were occupied by lunettes, or redoubts, mostly designed both for Infantry and Artillery. The siege guns were usually placed in open batteries, about 2,200 yards from the Turkish redoubts. In front of them, or at the side, were Infantry trenches and numerous lodgments: rifle pits were formed to sweep the ground in front of the batteries with rifle fire. Covered shelters in the works and also in the advanced Infantry lines were exceptional. The positions of the Reserves were usually in naturally covered ground, and numerous shelter huts, sunk into the ground (*Fig. 5, Pl. XII.*), were provided.

West of Grivitza stood a large lunette (*Pl. III.*) with faces about 44 yards, and flanks 33 yards long, arranged for mounting 3 guns at each salient. The parapet was only about 8' 2" thick and 6' 6" high, and the terreplein was not excavated. The ditch had a nearly vertical counterscarp. The gorge was closed with a slight Infantry trench. The interior slope was unrevetted and stood at about $\frac{1}{4}$ in rammed earth.

Further South, opposite the Turkish redoubt No. 1 of the central group, was another lunette, with faces about 33 yards and flanks 27 yards long, mounting three guns; between the gun portions and behind the flanks, resting-places were excavated, about 5' 0" broad and sunk 1' 3" below the terreplein. From these excavations steps led up to the banquette, and they were sloped off in rear. In rear of the gorge-traverse were similar resting-places.* The parapet of this work was of similar dimensions to those given above.

Another work, thrown up East of Radichevo on contour 300, had a polygonal trace. The salient angle of the northern face was provided with embrasures on the left side for guns, with a slight traverse between each. The ditches were very deep, in order to get earth, and the interior slope of the parapet, as well as the side-slopes of the traverses were revetted with fascines. From the height on which this work is placed the ground slopes on the North towards the Grivitza brook. This height stretches, with a slight fall only, towards the West, and from it the town of Plevna is well seen.

On the Radichevo ridge, South-East of and 1,300 yards from the Turkish work No 10, was a rectangular Russian redoubt with sides about 65 and 76 yards long, mounting four guns *en barbette*. The parapet was 10' 0" thick, 9' 2" high on three faces, but only 4' 6" at the gorge. Under the banquette were blindages, sunk 4' 10" into the ground, with walls formed of a framework of squared timbers and gabions filling up the panels. The roofs were formed of fascines and earth. Several traverses were provided, giving cover to resting-places for the garrison. In front and on the side of the redoubt were three Infantry trenches, connected by communications, and the whole position was strengthened by numerous battery emplacements.

There were several types of batteries. *Fig. 1, Pl. XI.*, shows a *barbette battery* with a parapet 13' 2" thick and 2' 10" high. The guns were 13 yards apart. A trench, 3' 3" deep and 2' 10" broad at the bottom, ran in rear of the parapet and in front of the guns. This trench was carried round the traverses, and the portion at the ends of the latter was prolonged so as only just to leave room for bringing up the guns. The trench served to give cover to the gun detachment; and if the banquette to the interior slope of the parapet had been a little broader, it could have been utilised to give a line of Infantry fire when the guns were not in action. The traverses were about 10' 0" thick and 5' 0" high. This battery was from its position liable to be enfiladed

Batteries.

* These so-called resting-places (*Ruhegräben*) were merely trenches in rear of the banquette to give greater height of cover. They are shown in *Fig. 1, Pl. XII.*, which is taken from a Russian source.

by the Turkish fire from the West side of the Tutschenitsa ravine, and the magazines and covers for limbers and men were placed in rear and sunk into the ground.

The battery, *Fig. 4, Pl. XI.*, had a parapet 2' 10" high, with traverses 5' 4" high carried forward on to the parapet. The guns were further protected by splayed bonnettes, as shown in the figure. In rear of the parapet and between the traverses a trench was excavated, and small expense magazines were formed at the ends of this trench, under the traverses. The breadth of the traverses was 13' 2" in front and 10' 0" in rear: they were at about 46' 0" central intervals, and were carried about 19' 6" to the rear, measured from the rear edge of the trench.

Timber platforms appear to have been rarely employed. The execution of the batteries is stated to have been rough, and the work carried out by the Artillery was very inferior in finish to that of the Engineers.*

Sections IV.
and V.

Sections IV. and V.—The works of these Sections divide into two somewhat different types, a portion of those in Section IV. belonging to Skobelev's trench attack on the Green Hills position, and the rest being simply works of investment. The latter appear to offer nothing of special interest.

On the 1st Knoll there were several nearly parallel lines of Infantry trenches, connected by covered communications and approaches. The trenches were about 3' 3" deep and from 5' 0" to 6' 6" broad at the bottom, with parapets about 4' 3" high. They were partially provided with shelter huts of the forms shown in *Fig. 6, Pl. XI.*, but the latter were not nearly so numerous as those of the Turks. From the bottom of the trench a step led up to the banquette. In the communications also steps were provided to render it easier to get out of the trenches if it were required to do so. The trenches and the approaches were traversed according to the requirements of the case. Zigzag approaches were partially employed on the left flank of the position.

The batteries usually had an Infantry trench in front, as shown in *Fig. 5, Pl. XI.* From this drawing it does not appear possible that Infantry and Artillery fire could have been carried on at the same time; and even when this may have been practicable, the arrangement would seem to have been a bad one. The Infantry would be very unlikely to shoot steadily with the Artillery fire going on just above their heads.

* It is only fair to notice, however, that Lieutenant Welch says of the trenches, very hastily executed by the Russians near Poradim after the defeat of 30th July, 'the work is perfect and looks like a model.'

In the battery shown in *Fig. 8, Pl. XI.*, the guns fired through embrasures, whose sills were about 2' 7" above the platform. The traverses between adjacent guns were detached from the parapet, and in front and rear of them trenches, 3' 1" deep and sloped off at the ends, were dug, the front trench apparently for Infantry, and the rear trench for the gun detachments. Another Russian battery is given in *Fig. 4, Pl. XII.*, which shows small expense magazines in the parapet immediately in front of the traverses. The trench in rear of the traverses is, in this drawing, shown as continuous, which would render it difficult to withdraw the guns. The batteries and communications are stated to have shown signs of night-work, and there was little or no revetting.

Fig. 9, Pl. XI., shows the huts constructed by the Russians for officers and men. These were, of course, only in the reserve positions, either out of range, or effectually covered from the Turkish fire. *Fig. 5, Pl. XII.*, shows the arrangement of shelter trenches for reserves in more exposed positions.

Section I.—This position extends from Tyren, on the Vid, across the *chaussée* to Dolny-Netropol, and, bending to the North-East, terminates on the Vid opposite Bivolar. The works have the character of pure lines of investments, designed simply to prevent the Turks from breaking out. They consist of a broken advanced line of Infantry trenches, between the intervals of which, and sometimes a short distance in rear, batteries were thrown up. In the second line were Infantry trenches, chiefly in the form of lodgments of short length, and a few closed works, as *points d'appui*. Rifle pits were freely employed. The general profile of the Infantry trenches is shown in *Fig. 2, Pl. XI.*, and gabions, built into the parapet, were sometimes employed to store cartridges.

The batteries were usually built for six or more guns, and had Infantry trenches on their flanks, sometimes connected with them. Some of the slopes were revetted with 'straw-work,' but they were generally formed simply of rammed earth. Sods were only occasionally employed.

Fig. 7, Pl. XI., shows one of the batteries of this Section. The traverses are disconnected from the parapet, and a trench is carried round them, and also in rear of the latter. The parapet is bonnetted in front of the traverses, and under the bonnetted portions small expense magazines were formed.

Several conical tumuli, from 32' 0" to 64' 0" high, existed in this portion of the position, which were occasionally utilised by the Russians. One of them, South of Dolny-Netropol, was formed into a

battery at the top; it also afforded shelter to huts in rear, while Infantry trenches were cut in a semicircle round it in front, so as to give several tiers of fire.

The execution of the work generally is stated to have been better than Section IV, which certainly ought to have been the case, since from Dolny-Netropol to the South the Russians were little troubled by the Turkish fire, and the work could all be carried on by day.

Roumanian
works of
attack.

Section I.—Roumanians.—The works of this Section comprise, 1st, the investing lines running from Bivolar to the ridge North of No. 2; 2nd, the line of defensive works running North from the Grivitza position, and passing to the West of Verbitza; these were thrown up immediately after the great defeat of the 11th September to protect the right flank of the Allied army, in case Osman Pasha should make a movement towards Sistova. 3rd, the works of the sap and mining attack on the Grivitza redoubt No. 2. The two former classes of work possess no special interest; the attack by sap, although unsuccessful, might very probably furnish some valuable data if fuller details as to all the minor operations were available. The trenches of attack are shown in *Pl. XIII.** The first parallel was begun on the evening of the 12th September. The last parallel, about 30 yards from the ditch of the redoubt, was apparently completed by the 19th October, the day on which the last assault (p. 166) was delivered. The works of the attack do not seem to possess any very special features. Trench cavaliers were employed, and blinded trenches. The work was carried on in twelve standing relays, chiefly, however, by night. The Turkish work completely dominated the attack, and the Roumanians suffered considerably. Lieutenant Welch says 'the sapping was done by two men digging sufficiently deep to cover themselves, the trench being taken out to its full proportions by men working behind them;' from which it would appear that a species of deep Turkish sap was employed without sap-rollers, or shields. The ground was easy to work; 'but every inch of it was dug under fire, and that of the very hottest description.'

Mining
attack.

After their failure on the 19th October, the Roumanians began to mine, and drove two galleries, one starting from a shaft in the first parallel and directed on the alignment of the southern face of the Turkish redoubt, the other starting farther in rear and directed on the middle of the eastern face. The former gallery appears to have been about 60, the latter 90, yards long. The gallery floors were nearly

* Enlarged from *Military Notes Round Plevna*, by Lieutenant F. Welch, 25th Regiment. *Journal of Royal United Service Institution*, No. XCV., 1878.

level and at a depth of about 21' 0" below the ground. After passing under the ditch of the redoubt at this level they seem to have been inclined upwards with a slope of about $\frac{1}{4}$. Seven charges were prepared at depths of from 10' 6" to 15' 0" below the ground level. The charges were intended to demolish the whole of the eastern and a portion of the southern parapet of the redoubt; they are stated to have been laid, with the fuzes prepared, about ten days before the fall of Plevna, and the fact that they were never fired has given rise to much speculation. Had the expected demolition been realised and followed up by such an attack as the Roumanians were quite able to deliver, there is no doubt that the redoubt would have fallen. It appears that there was a general, but probably unfounded, belief, that the redoubt was itself mined and would be blown up, if occupied; and this has been proposed as a reason. It has also been supposed that another general attack was contemplated, and that the mines were to be kept in readiness for it. This is extremely improbable in face of Todleben's fixed purpose. It is very possible, however, that the Roumanians, having begun their mining operations, were determined to carry them through; that they really intended to fire their charges and to storm the redoubt; but that they were overruled by Todleben's orders. When the Roumanian assault of the 19th took place, Todleben had only occupied his position as Assistant to Prince Charles for about a fortnight, and it may be that the latter was favourable to the attempt, but that subsequently Todleben's influence became paramount and his will law.

The Roumanian technical troops before Plevna consisted of 1 battalion of Engineers, made up of 4 companies, Sappers and Miners, 1, Railway and Telegraph, and 1, Pontooners, in all about 900 men, under the command of Colonel Berindey. The Sapper companies had each 2 waggons with civilian drivers; the pontoons were iron boats of the Belgian pattern. The Sapper and Miner companies were specially employed in the formal attack, and two of these companies were subsequently told off for the mining operations. The Infantry carried out their own works, and the Artillery built the batteries.

Roumanian
technical
troops before
Plevna.

TRACING AND EXECUTION OF THE RUSSIAN WORKS.

As to the many minor details of execution of the Russian trench work, there is little information beyond that contained in Captain Kouropatkin's notes. The latter, however, contain much that is interesting; and, though they relate only to Imeretinski's operations before Lovtcha and Plevna and those carried out in the IVth Section

Details of
execution of
works in the
IVth Sec-
tion, &c.

under Skobelev, they embrace some of the most interesting work of the kind.

Batteries
before
Lovtcha.

Before Lovtcha on the night of the 2nd September, 4 batteries had to be built on the height A, and 2 on that figured B (*Pl. V.*); 2 batteries having been already posted on the latter height. The tracing began at about 4 P.M. The ground was in parts covered with vines, or maize, and in other places bare: both pickets and soldier-markers were employed to indicate the positions of the batteries. As soon as it became dark, 8 gunners under an officer were sent out to mark the position of each gun. When the officer had made himself fully acquainted with the ground, he went back to his battery and led it up to the position. The working parties appear to have been of Infantry.

First en-
trenchment
of Red Hill.

On the morning of the 7th September, when Skobelev's troops were taking up their positions on the Lovtcha-Plevna road, the troops came under a heavy Artillery fire from the Krischin redoubt. To reply to this fire and also to prepare the way for the Infantry attack on the 2nd Knoll, Skobelev ordered 3 9-pounder batteries of the 2nd Artillery Brigade to take up a position on the Red Hill. The general direction for the batteries having been previously decided upon, the position of each of the 24 guns was marked by a Sapper with a shovel, who then lay down. The distance between the batteries was 15 paces, that between each pair of guns in a battery 9 paces. The Infantry working party was brought up in small separate detachments, each consisting of 8 men with shovels and 2 with picks under a Sapper, to the sites of the gun positions, and began work at once. 'In less than an hour' cover was obtained and the guns were brought into line.

Working
parties.

The calculation of the working parties was very rough and simple. For a company trench or for a battery, 1 company of workmen were told off, so that, 'in order to fortify a position for 8 companies and 4 batteries, 12 companies of an Infantry Regiment were detailed.' The 3 rifle companies of the same Regiment formed the covering party.

When at a distance from the enemy, the work was carried on in two reliefs; but at closer quarters the men worked all night without relief in order to avoid confusion and probable loss from the enemy's fire in bringing up a fresh working party. Each company had 100 shovels and 20 picks. The working parties were marched off, as soon as it was dark, in great order and silence: talking and smoking were not allowed. The mess-tins were left behind, as they caused a noise on the march. Each company employed as a working party had its full complement of officers and non-commissioned officers present, and was provided with two or three stretchers. On arriving on the spot, each company usually sent out 2 picquets of 3 or 4 men—the number of picquets

depending on the proximity of the enemy—who advanced from 100 to 200 paces to the front and formed a chain to cover the working party. The shovellers were then formed in single rank, dressed, turned about, and piled arms. They then fronted and began work by word of command given in an undertone. Each man made a furrow in front of him with his shovel, marking out the top of the rear slope of the trench. The men were then dressed again and marched 6 paces to the front, where they marked the front of the excavation in the same way. They were then formed on the centre line of the trench and arranged chequerwise, after which the work began at once. The work began with great energy and silence, but flagged after about two hours, when the men would begin to cease work and to talk.

Captain Kouropatkin very graphically describes the scene on the night of the 7th September. 'The hum of voices increased into open conversation: the shovels clashed, and here and there even a dispute could be heard. A short time longer and some of the men sat down to rest; the boldest took out their pipes. Under such circumstances nothing restores the quiet and energy of the workmen so quickly as a few shots from the enemy. The whistle of the bullets had an electric effect, recalling the reality of the situation and the necessity for prudence. The bullets began to come apace and the workmen to duck. The peculiar thud of a bullet which had hit its mark was heard in the trench as a soldier dropped his shovel and fell on the newly dug earth, exclaiming, "Ah! comrade, I am hit." There was a slight confusion in the neighbourhood of the wounded man. The order of the company officer was heard, "A stretcher! keep your places! silence!" Then a soldier with a rifle forced his way into the working party, coming from the picquet line to say that a movement of the Turks towards the position had been observed. The news "The Turks are coming," spread like lightning through the ranks! The command was heard "Stand to your arms," and in a few seconds the company was ready to receive the enemy. Elbow to elbow the men crowded down, or knelt in the newly dug trench, getting as close as possible to the parapet. A few anxious moments passed. A trusty non-commissioned officer and 2 men were sent out to call in the picquets, but principally to make sure of the advance of the Turks. They returned with information that the Turks were not in sight. The man who had caused so much confusion had in the darkness mistaken the Turkish outposts, or a patrol of a few men, for a whole column. The company laid down their arms and resumed work in a somewhat disorderly manner; the men were looking about for their shovels, and a profitless exchange of words took place.'

Night of 7th
September.

By daybreak the men were completely covered, and the trench was inspected by the superintendent of the work and the company officers, who then gave directions for the finishing off of the slopes, levelling the bottom of the trench, and general remedying of defects.

In the line of advanced trench, executed on the 1st Knoll during the night of the 9th November, many such defects were apparent by daylight. 'The parapet had in most places a triangular profile, being about 5' 0" high, with a sharp angle at the crest. The angle had to be cut down, and notches made on which to rest the rifles. The trench was 3' 0" deep in parts. A step 1' 0" to 1' 6" high was made to enable the men to get on the banquette, serving at the same time as a seat. In places, also, the trench was so shallow, and the parapet so low, that men passing along were not completely covered. The breadth of the sole of the trench was from 4' 0" to 8' 0"; the slopes even of the excavation were slight. The base of the front slope rather less than the height, that of the rear slope about equal to it. Later, the rear slope had to be cut down to $\frac{1}{2}$, or less, in order to facilitate recapture in case the trench fell into the enemy's hands.'

It is noticed as a special defect, subsequently felt in this particular trench, that there were no breaks in it even for the passage of picquets, while this continuity was very unfavourable to counter-attacks.

When daylight came on the morning of the 8th September, the picquets were drawn in and replaced by sentries on the banquette of the trench. After the work of the night was over, and the trenches had been inspected, the men lay down and rested till the reliefs arrived. The Turks opened a heavy fire as soon as they could see the new works, even at a range of 2,000 paces, but the Russians were well covered and suffered little or no loss.

Second
entrench-
ment
of Red Hill.

The general tracing of the works on the Red Hill in November, previous to Skobelev's capture of the 1st Knoll, was carried out as follows:—About 2 hours before sunset, the officer entrusted with the tracing stole over with 2 Sappers, keeping as much as possible under cover, towards the flank of the position, and marked the proposed lines for Infantry and Artillery, with long picquets. 'Each company had a separate trench, and each battery was for 8 guns. The length of the company trenches varied from 120 to 150 paces, according to the strength of the company; 21 feet were reckoned for a gun, and only exceptionally this distance was reduced to 14' 1". The method of marking the sides varied according to the distance from the enemy.

In some cases the ends of each company trench were marked; in others only the flanks of several trenches together.'

Picquets, 6' 9" long, were employed, with the bark scraped off to render them more visible. In the scrub and maize with which the ground was covered, it was often difficult subsequently to find the picquets, especially on dark nights. Straw or hemp ropes were tried instead, but this did not answer, and finally Sappers were employed as markers. To economise men, a trench for four companies was marked only by two Sappers, one at each flank. When near to the enemy the markers frequently attracted attention and drew fire; they therefore lay down and did not move till the working parties approached. Markers were instructed that their duties were the same as those of sentries, and the officers placing them noted their names and posts, so that, by calling out a name, any particular position could be found in the dark.

Picquets and markers.

On the third day after the beginning of the advanced trench on the 1st Knoll of the Green Hills, loopholes were constructed. The white sand-bags were found to be unsuitable, as they presented a good mark to the enemy. An attempt was made to smear the bags over to make them less conspicuous; but the dry earth imparted but little colour, and there was no water on the spot. Finally the loopholes were formed of two sand-bags made as dirty as possible and with their front ends covered by earth: branches were laid across them, and the whole covered with earth. No universal type of loophole existed, however, and in some cases a sand-bag was laid across the top in the usual way. Each man had to make a square niche in the parapet close to his rifle to keep part of his ammunition.

Loopholes.

In the Green Hills position in the latter part of November, the general programme was as follows: By 9 A.M. arms were cleaned and oiled, and the men were then employed on work of various kinds in the trenches. The dinners were eaten at the kitchens in rear, where the men went, at first by parties and afterwards by companies; they made their tea in the trenches. 'From noon till evening the men did as they liked; many slept, others preferred to steal out of the trenches under all sorts of pretexts, to gather wood, dig up potatoes, &c. The sentries and volunteers, of whom there was no lack, observed the enemy unceasingly, and every Turk who showed himself was fired at.' Nearly every evening a regimental band played in the trenches. After the receipt of the news of the fall of Kars, a large illuminated transparency, bearing the words 'Kars taken' in Turkish, was exhibited at dark, which immediately drew a heavy fire from the Turks.

Life in the Russian trenches on the Green Hills.

Kouropatkin gives some interesting details of the firing from the Volley firing.

Russian trenches during the Turkish attacks. 'Independent firing was forbidden; volleys were to be given at the word of the battalion commander or of General Skobelev himself.' The company commanders had to see that their men got on to the banquettes and took proper aim. Alluding probably to the first night in the advanced trenches, he says: 'The first volleys were not a success; the men did not fire together, and some loaded and fired a second time without waiting for the word of command. This led others to do the same, and the commander would thus soon lose control over his men, especially as his voice would be lost in the volleys of neighbouring companies. It was left to the energy and resource of the officers to restore fire discipline at these critical moments.* Generally speaking, after 3 or 4 volleys the extractors of some of the rifles jammed and the ramrod had to be used to eject the empty cartridge case. When this occurred the men had to be watched to see that they waited for the next volley instead of firing when they were ready.' The volley firing from the front trench was so effective that none of the Turkish attacks succeeded in getting nearer than 100 to 150 paces.

* Kouropatkin recommends that, at critical moments, the company commander should mount on the parapet and direct the fire of his company, as was frequently done with success in the defence of the Schipka position. Unless, however, the urgency were extreme, the probable loss of the company commander would seem to be a more serious evil than a bad volley; and careful previous training in volley firing would probably be sufficient to counteract the weaknesses pointed out, which were, however, very excusable in young soldiers under heavy fire, and occupying a very exposed and isolated position. The whole question of volley firing by word of command or signal is one deserving of consideration.

NOMINAL STRENGTH OF RUSSIAN FIELD ARMY (COMBATANTS).

Nature of Service		War Footing				Peace Footing			
		General Officers	Officers	Men	Horses	General Officers	Officers	Men	Horses
Infantry	Guard	12	948	49,164	—	12	768	23,244	—
	Grenadiers	—	912	37,092	—	—	720	21,636	—
	„ (Caucasus)	—	320	16,268	—	—	256	7,628	—
	Line	—	10,640	432,740	—	—	8,400	252,420	—
	„ (Caucasus)	—	1,920	97,608	—	—	1,536	45,768	—
	Rifles { Guard	—	104	3,552	—	—	88	2,108	—
	„ { Line	—	624	19,608	—	—	528	11,544	—
	„ (Caucasus)	—	84	4,052	—	—	68	1,892	—
Total Infantry		12	15,552	660,084	—	12	12,364	366,240	—
Cavalry	Guard	12	424	9,442	7,552	12	406	8,698	6,808
	Line	—	1,680	42,798	37,128	—	1,680	42,798	37,128
	„ (Caucasus)	—	132	2,912	2,912	—	132	2,912	2,912
Total Cavalry		12	2,236	55,152	47,592	12	2,218	54,408	46,848
Artillery	Guard	—	108	4,482	2,916	—	108	3,042	684
	Field { Grenadiers	—	144	5,976	3,888	—	144	4,056	912
	„ { Line	—	1,476	61,254	39,852	—	1,476	41,574	9,348
	„ { Guard	—	35	1,170	1,445	—	35	1,145	975
	Horse { Line	—	210	7,020	8,670	—	210	6,870	5,850
	Total Artillery	—	1,973	79,902	56,771	—	1,973	56,687	17,769
Engineers	Guard	—	28	1,010	—	—	28	702	—
	Grenadier	—	28	1,010	—	—	28	702	—
	Line	—	461	17,240	840	—	436	10,878	—
Total Engineers		—	517	19,260	840	—	492	12,282	—
Staff	20 Corps Staffs	60	260	—	—	60	260	—	—
	64 Division „	64	192	—	—	64	192	—	—
	191 Brigade „	191	—	—	—	191	—	—	—
Total Staff		315	452	—	—	315	452	—	—
Grand Total		339	20,730	814,398	105,203	339	17,499	489,617	64,617

APPENDIX II.

STRENGTH OF AN INFANTRY REGIMENT.

			Combatants		Non-Combatants		Train	
			Officers	Men	Officers	Men	Horses	Waggons
4-battalion Regiment	War footing	. . .	80	4,057	7	226	186	44
	Peace „	. . .	64	1,897	7	185	52	17
3-battalion Regiment	War footing	. . .	76	3,081	6	136	174	41
	Increased Peace footing	. . .	60	2,363	6	135	135	41
	Peace footing	. . .	60	1,793	6	105	49	16

STRENGTH OF A CAVALRY REGIMENT.

	Combatants			Non-Combatants		Train	
	Officers	Men	Horses	Officers	Men	Horses	Waggons
4-Squadron Regiment . . .	33	728	593	6	141	64	16

The above establishment is maintained in peace and war; except the train, which, on a peace footing, consists of 15 horses and 9 waggons,

APPENDIX III.

DETAIL OF REGIMENTS COMPOSING THE NINE ARMY CORPS WHICH FORMED THE ORIGINAL RUSSIAN FIELD ARMY.

IVth Corps (Lieut.-General Zotoff)	16th Division (Lieut.-General Pomeranzef)	1st Brigade	{ 61st Vladimir Regiment.
		2nd "	{ 62nd Susdal "
	30th Division	1st Brigade	{ 63rd Ugliz "
			{ 64th Kasan "
		2nd "	{ 117th Jaroslaff "
			{ 118th Schuja "
VIIth Corps (Lieut.-General Ganetoki II.)	15th Division (Lieut.-General Schostala)	1st Brigade	{ 119th Kolomna "
		2nd "	{ 120th Serpuchoff "
	36th Division (Lieut.-General Mark I.)	1st Brigade	{ 4th Jekaterinoslaff Dragoons.
			{ 4th Charkoff Lancers.
		2nd "	{ 4th Mariopol Hussars.
			{ 4th Don Cossacks.
	7th Cavalry Division (Lieut.-General Mansëi)	1st Brigade	{ 57th Modlin Regiment.
			{ 58th Praga "
	9th Division (Lieut.-General Prince Mirsky II.)	1st Brigade	{ 59th Lublin "
			{ 60th Zamoscht "
		2nd "	{ 141st Moschaisk "
			{ 142nd Svenigorod "
VIIIth Corps (Lieut.-General Radetzki)	14th Division (Major-General Dragomiroff)	1st Brigade	{ 143rd Dorogobusch "
		2nd "	{ 144th Kaschira "
	8th Cavalry Division (Major-General Prince Manueloff)	1st Brigade	{ 7th Kinburn Dragoons.
			{ 7th Olviopol Lancers.
		2nd "	{ 7th Weissrussland Hussars.
			{ 7th Don Cossacks.
	9th Division (Lieut.-General Prince Mirsky II.)	1st Brigade	{ 33rd Jeletz Regiment.
		2nd "	{ 34th Siefksk "
	14th Division (Major-General Dragomiroff)	1st Brigade	{ 35th Briansk "
			{ 36th Orel "
		2nd "	{ 53rd Volhynia "
			{ 54th Minsk "
IXth Corps (Lieut.-General Baron Krudener)	8th Cavalry Division (Major-General Prince Manueloff)	1st Brigade	{ 55th Podolia "
		2nd "	{ 56th Schitomir "
	5th Division (Lieut.-General Schilder- Schuldner)	1st Brigade	{ 8th Astrachan Dragoons.
			{ 8th Vosnesensk Lancers.
		2nd "	{ 8th Lubni Hussars.
			{ 8th Don Cossacks.
	31st Division (Lieut. General Veliaminoff)	1st Brigade	{ 17th Archangel Regiment.
		2nd "	{ 18th Vologda "
	9th Cavalry Division (Major-General Loschkareff)	1st Brigade	{ 19th Kostroma "
			{ 20th Galiz "
		2nd "	{ 121st Penza "
			{ 122nd Tamboff "
	9th Cavalry Division (Major-General Loschkareff)	1st Brigade	{ 123rd Kosloff "
		2nd "	{ 124th Voronesch "
	31st Division (Lieut. General Veliaminoff)	1st Brigade	{ 9th Kasan Dragoons.
			{ 9th Bug Lancers.
		2nd "	{ 9th Kieff Hussars.
			{ 9th Don Cossacks.

Xth Corps (Lieut.-General Prince Voronzoff)	13th Division (Lieut.-General Richter)	1st Brigade	{ 49th Brest Regiment.
		2nd "	{ 50th Bielostock Regiment.
	34th Division (Lieut.-General Baron Korff)	1st Brigade	{ 51st Lithuania "
		2nd "	{ 52nd Wilna "
	10th Cavalry Division (Lieut.-General Dediulin)	1st Brigade	{ 133rd Simpheropol "
			{ 134th Feodosia "
		2nd "	{ 135th Kertch-Jenikale Regt.
			{ 136th Taganrog "
1st Brigade		{ 10th Novgorod Dragoons.	
		{ 10th Odessa Lancers.	
2nd "	{ 10th Ingermanland Hussars.		
	{ 10th Don Cossacks.		

XIth Corps (Lieut.-General Prince Schackoffskoi)	11th Division (Major-General Ernroth)	{ 1st Brigade 2nd "	{ 41st Selenginsk Regiment.
			{ 42nd Jakutzk. "
	32nd Division (Major-General Aller)	{ 1st Brigade 2nd "	{ 43rd Ochotzk. "
			{ 44th Kamschatka "
	11th Cavalry Division (Major-General Tatischeff)	{ 1st Brigade 2nd "	{ 125th Kursk "
			{ 126th Rylsk "
		{ 1st Brigade 2nd "	{ 127th Putivl "
			{ 128th Starjorskoe "
{ 1st Brigade 2nd "			{ 11th Riga Dragoons.
			{ 11th Tschugujeff Lancers.
{ 1st Brigade 2nd "	{ 11th Isimn Hussars.		
	{ 11th Don Cossacks.		

XIIth Corps (Lieut.-General Vannoffski)	12th Division (Lieut.-General Von Fircks)	{ 1st Brigade 2nd "	{ 45th Azoff Regiment.
			{ 46th Dnieper "
	33rd Division (Major-General Timofejeff)	{ 1st Brigade 2nd "	{ 47th Ukraine "
			{ 48th Odessa "
	12th Cavalry Division (Lieut.-General von Driesen)	{ 1st Brigade 2nd "	{ 129th Bessarabia Regiment.
			{ 130th Kherson "
			{ 131st Tiraspol "
			{ 132nd Bender "
			{ 12th Starodub Dragoons.
			{ 12th Bielgorod Lancers.
{ 12th Achtyrka Hussars.			
{ 12th Don Cossacks.			

XIIIth Corps (Lieut.-General Hahn)	1st Division (Lieut.-General Prochoroff)	{ 1st Brigade 2nd "	1st Neva Regiment.
			2nd Sofia "
	35th Division (Major-General Baranoff)	{ 1st Brigade 2nd "	3rd Narva "
			4th Korpor "
	13th Cavalry Division (Major-General Von Eaden)	{ 1st Brigade 2nd "	137th Nieschin Regiment.
			138th Volkoff "
		{ 1st Brigade 2nd "	139th Morschansk "
			140th Saraisk "
13th Dragoons.			
13th Vladimir Lancers.			
{ 1st Brigade 2nd "	13th Narva Hussars.		
	13th Don Cossacks.		

XIVth Corps (Lieut.-General Zimmerman)	17th Division (Major-General Porochovnikoff)	1st Brigade	65th Moscow Regiment.
		2nd "	66th Butirki "
	18th Division (Lieut.-General Narbut)	1st Brigade	67th Tarutino "
		2nd "	68th Borodino "
	1st Don Cossack Division (Lieut.-General Schamscheff)	1st Brigade	69th Riäsan "
		2nd "	70th Riäjsk "
		1st Brigade	71st Bieleffski "
		2nd "	72nd Tula "
			15th Don Cossacks.
			16th " "
			17th " "
			18th " "

The details of the above Corps are taken from *Der Orientalische Krieg*, W. Rüstow. The Corps and Divisional Commanders were in several cases changed during the course of the campaign.

APPENDIX IV.

ADVANCE OF RUSSIAN ARMY INTO ROUMANIA.

Right Column. *Troops*.—8th and 12th Cavalry Divisions, 21st, 26th, and 37th Don Cossack Regiments, under Lieut.-General Baron Driesen.
Route.—Crossed the frontier at Ungheni, bivouacked on the night of 24th April at Jassy; thence *via* Plojesti to Bucharest, the 8th Cavalry Division moving on towards the Danube, opposite Nicopolis.

Centre Column. *Troops*.—XIIth Corps, 5th Infantry Division, 34th Don Cossacks, under Lieut.-General Vanoffski.
Route.—Crossed the frontier a little South of Ungheni, moved parallel to and about 20 miles from the Pruth to Foksani; thence to Bucharest.

Left Column. *Troops*.—Advanced guard, Caucasian Cossack Brigade, 23rd Don Cossacks, 4th Rifle Brigade, and all the mountain Artillery, under Lieut.-General Skobeleff; followed by the 11th Cavalry Division and the VIIIth Corps. The whole under Lieut.-General Radetzki.
Route.—Crossed frontier 50 miles South-West of Kischeneff, near village of Bestamak. The Cavalry of the advanced guard reached the Sereth and took possession of the bridge near Galatz on the evening of the 24th April. The whole force subsequently moved on to Bucharest, the advanced guard proceeding to the Danube opposite Rustchuck, and the 11th Cavalry Division to the Danube opposite Silistria.

Column of the Lower Danube. *Troops*.—XIth Corps, under Lieut.-General Schackoffskoi.

Route.—Crossed the frontier at Kubei, and advanced to Galatz and Braila, relieving the Cavalry which had previously arrived.

The 9th Cavalry Division and the 31st Infantry Division were forwarded by rail shortly afterwards from Ungheni to Slatina.

APPENDIX V.

DISPOSITION AND STRENGTH OF TURKISH ARMY OF
THE QUADRILATERAL IN OCTOBER.

Station	Infantry		Cavalry	Artillery	
	Bat- talions	Men		Field Guns	Men
Varna	9	7,446	269	36	2,243*
Hadji Oglar Bazardjik	13½	8,637	1,591	22	522
Silistria	18½	10,776	389	12	2,022*
Rustchuk	20	12,630	60	12	1,767*
Kadikœi	18	10,730	1,595	26	2,347
Rasgrad Camp	25	13,552		65	
" Town	1	463		18	
Solenik	13	7,429	1,369	30	628
Near Djelin Jenikeui	3	1,973			
Djuma and Karahassankeui	20	11,196	208	22	539
Jaila	13	7,757	284	18	1,411*
Slimnia and Kasan	10	7,832			
Schumla	8	4,817			
Totals	172	105,238	5,755	261	11,479

* Including in these cases garrison artillerymen.

RUSSIAN REINFORCEMENTS ORDERED TO BULGARIA EARLY IN AUGUST, 1877.

INFANTRY DIVISIONS.			
	Guards	Grenadiers	Line
Divisions	<div>1st Div. (Lt.-Gen. _____).</div> <div>2nd „ (Lt.-Gen. Tcherkoff).</div> <div>3rd „ (Lt.-Gen. Katalei).</div> <div>Rifle Brigade } (Major-Gen. Ellis).</div>	<div>2nd Div. (Lt.-Gen. Schwyatskin).</div> <div>3rd „ (Lt.-Gen. Daniloff).</div>	<div>2nd Div. (Maj.-Gen. Prince Imeretinski).</div> <div>3rd „ (Lt.-Gen. Karzoff).</div> <div>24th „ (Lt.-Gen. Delingshausen).</div> <div>26th „ (Lt.-Gen. Baumgarten).</div>
Artillery Brigades	1st, 2nd, and 3rd Brigades of the Guard.	2nd and 3rd Brigades, Grenadiers.	2nd, 3rd, 24th, and 26th Brigades, Field Artillery.
CAVALRY DIVISIONS.			
	Guards	Line	
Divisions	<div>2nd Division (Lieut.-Gen. Gourko).</div> <div>This Division has three Brigades, and attached are two Regiments of Don Cossacks of the Guard.</div>	<div>1st Division (Lieut.-Gen. Doktouroff).</div> <div>14th „ (Lieut.-Gen. Baron Mengden).</div> <div>3rd „ Don Cossacks (Major-Gen. Koulgotscheff), composed of 22nd, 25th, 32nd, and 33rd Don Cossacks.</div>	
Horse Artillery batteries	2nd, 3rd, 5th, and 6th H.A. batteries of the Guard.	<div>1st and 2nd H.A. batteries, attached to 1st Division.</div> <div>12th „ 21st „ „ „ 14th „</div> <div>18th „ 20th Don „ „ 3rd Cossack Div.</div>	
UNATTACHED TROOPS.			
<i>Cavalry.</i> 35th Don Cossack Regiment.		<i>Engineers.</i> 1st Sapper Brigade { Sapper battalion of the Guard. 1st Telegraph Park.	
<i>Gendarmerie.</i> 1st detachment Gendarmes of the Guard.		{ 3rd and 4th Sapper battalions. 2nd Railway battalion. 1st Engineer Park. 3rd and 4th Telegraph Parks.	

THE ZEPHYRUS

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Plate I.



NB. The Slatina valley is on the 1
the Osma further south (See Rustu 3 miles
Austrian Map.).

