

A CIGAR IN BATTLE.

Bismarck's Test of Von Moltke at the Battle of Koniggratz.

AN EPISODE THAT IS HISTORIC.

Second Part of Wolsley's Review of the Field Marshal's Book.

MANY IMAGINARY COUNCILS OF WAR.

The second part of General Wolsley's review of Field Marshal Count Von Moltke's book on the Franco-German war of 1870-71, which has been secured for THE DISPATCH, appears below:

The most interesting part of this work is the appendix. It deals with the War of 1866, and, therefore, in point of date, should be considered before the events of the Franco-German War. It contains more a new matter than is to be found elsewhere in the book, and is as a whole concerned with those imaginary "Councils of War" so often reported to take place by military correspondents in the field. These reports are made in the best of good faith, but I am sure they would never be made at all, if the correspondents fully appreciated how utterly damaging they are to the military reputation of the commander concerned, and how personally offensive they must always be to him. The correspondents of pictorial papers are often the worst sinners in this matter, and seem to take special pleasure in sketching any extraordinary gathering of Generals at an army headquarters, and describing it in the letter press, under the high-sounding title of "Council of War."

A Strong Temptation to Correspondents. There is an ancient importance attached to the idea of a solemn council of Generals assembled to decide some great problem, some serious point, to fight or not to fight, to advance or retreat, etc., etc. "A Council of War" is a source of information, especially when there is a dearth of army news. To speculate on the proceedings of these imaginary councils, on the result arrived at, affords scope for much writing, and if the subsequent movements of the army fall in at all with the ideas propounded in the letter "from the seat of war," the writer is able to plume himself upon his own prescience in all military and strategic matters.

A meeting at army headquarters of all the general officers in the neighborhood is not very uncommon. Some matter of discipline may have to be discussed, or the commander may wish to expound to them generally, or in detail, his plans for the accomplishment of some movement or object. He may wish to inquire from them the condition of their several commands; to find out if the men are strong, healthy and in good spirits, or the reverse. But he must, indeed, be a poor creature in command who would wish to transfer to a majority of his subordinates the responsibility for any great or important decision which it is his province to announce by word of mouth.

Von Moltke Lifts the Curtain. Moltke tells us in this appendix how tried he had been by the wild inventions of this nature which had been given to the world. In doing so, he gives us a most interesting account of his own relations with the King when in the field. He lets us in behind the scenes more completely than he had ever done before. At 10 o'clock every morning, except on marching or battle days, he had an audience with his royal master and laid before him the plans and schemes—based on the latest reports and news received—which he had previously discussed out with his own staff officers. At these interviews he was accompanied by his own immediate subordinate, the Quartermaster General, the Chief of the Military Cabinet, and such other officers as he deemed analogous to those performed by the Military Secretary to our Commander in Chief, was also present; also the Minister of War.

While the headquarters of the Crown Prince's army were at Versailles, His Royal Highness also attended as a spectator and listener at these morning or battle days. He had an audience with his royal master and laid before him the plans and schemes—based on the latest reports and news received—which he had previously discussed out with his own staff officers. At these interviews he was accompanied by his own immediate subordinate, the Quartermaster General, the Chief of the Military Cabinet, and such other officers as he deemed analogous to those performed by the Military Secretary to our Commander in Chief, was also present; also the Minister of War.

King William Trusted His General. Von Moltke thus describes what we may term the inner working of that great headquarters, on whose plans and decisions hung the fate of nations. King William was a great man, who did not imagine that because he was King he understood war and its difficulties better than his great general.

While disposing in this appendix of the myths about the councils of war reported in the current newspapers with all circumstantial detail, to have often taken place at the King's headquarters, Von Moltke confesses the story of the cigar offered to him by Prince Bismarck during the fight on the Bistritz, on that now famous day of July, 1866. The anecdote illustrates the relation then existing between him and the Chancellor, and enables one to fully realize and admire his great reasoning coolness during the climax of a crisis when to others everything around looked then very black and unpromising. Some readers may have heard of it, and others may have heard it contradicted on the erroneous assertion that "Von Moltke did not smoke."

The Story of Bismarck's Cigar. The story appeared originally in one of the German newspapers, and has been repeated in some of the many amusing and gossiping memoirs of Prince Bismarck which have appeared from time to time. The story, and we now know it to be true, is as follows:

Toward noon, during the battle of Koniggratz, a fearful fight raged in the valley of the Bistritz, and the Prussians could make no further progress. The battle had already lasted between four and five hours, the outnumbered assailants had suffered most terribly from the overwhelming fire of the Austrian artillery, and were somewhat in confusion. The men of various battalions, regiments, brigades and divisions were hopelessly mixed up together. Everything depended on the due arrival of the Crown Prince's army, but nothing was yet to be seen of it anywhere. Anxiety was in every man's heart, no matter what the outward semblance of hope and confidence worn as a disguise upon his countenance. Prince Bismarck, like others about the King whose duties had not made war calculations their familiar study, grew profoundly uneasy. To attempt a retreat back over the suddy banks of the Bistritz, in face of the disaster superior force in front of them, would have meant disaster. The fate of Prussia hung in the balance.

The Responsibility of Prince Bismarck. What must have been Prince Bismarck's feelings at this time, and how he was chiefly responsible for the war; he was who had deliberately forced it on, not— as Von Moltke tells us—to redress any wrong, to avenge any insult, received, or to acquire any additional territory, nor in obedience to the cry of the people, who from the first were bitterly opposed to it, but simply to make Prussia the ruling power in Germany. Was failure, disaster, to be the result of all those years of warlike preparation, and of the incomparable diplomacy which immediately preceded the invasion of Bohemia? It is now clear to every man who has ever experienced anything approaching the terrible mingling of remorse with anxiety which must then have followed the stout heart of the greatest of living statesmen. Disaster on the Bistritz meant ruin to this man of blood and iron; he would

dozens have died there like a gentleman, amid the ruins of the Prussian army, knowing that his memory would thenceforth be held in veneration by the Prussian nation. He did not dare to let his face tell what his strained heart felt, nor could he venture at such a moment to worry Von Moltke with impertinent questions. Yet he wished, he longed to read what was in the great strategist's mind, to find out if he too was troubled with misgivings. He knew enough of war to know that, come what may, Von Moltke would allow no word of doubt to escape his lips, and his face was not one to be easily read under any circumstances.

How He Sounded Von Moltke. The Prince's quick, diplomatic skill came to his help. In his pocket he had two cigars—one good, one indifferent. He rode up to Von Moltke, and asking him if he would smoke, handed him his cigar case. He took it, and after a careful examination of the two cigars, deliberately took the best. Bismarck is said to have declared he was never so happy in his life as when he saw the coolness with which Von Moltke looked at the cigars, deliberately took the best. Bismarck is said to have declared he was never so happy in his life as when he saw the coolness with which Von Moltke looked at the cigars, deliberately took the best. Bismarck is said to have declared he was never so happy in his life as when he saw the coolness with which Von Moltke looked at the cigars, deliberately took the best.

Such is the story as it is currently told in Germany, and in the appendix to Von Moltke's book, he says of it with a certain grim satisfaction, "as I heard afterwards, he took it as a good sign that I composedly took the best." In the turn of the phrase, and in the use of the adjective "calmly," which he applies to his own action upon the occasion, there is just a hint of kindly malice towards his friend and colleague. That that was the case is remembered by the circumstances, and the words in which he refers to it, suggest the idea that at the time he had been disposed to punish the doubt which he clearly perceived was in the Chancellor's mind, and which he seems to have realized as the motive of the proffered cigar-case, by depriving Bismarck of his best cigar.

Bismarck gave the Other Cigar Away. There is in this little story more of life-like instruction, more that is suggestive of that attitude of mind referred to in my last article as the one thing needed by the great Commander at critical moments, than is to be found in any other contemporary volume on war. I must not quit this subject without recording the fact, so creditable to the generous disposition of Prince Bismarck—great smoker—that he gave this, his last cigar, rejected by the General, to a wounded soldier. It was the only comfort and assistance he could render him, for at that moment the "headquarter staff" were finishing for want of food. It is to be noted, that the confidence which Von Moltke felt all through the campaign of 1866 up to the crowning moment of victory, began, as he tells us, among the interior lines between the two armies into which the Prussian forces were at the moment divided. The theorist in war will be horrified to learn from Von Moltke himself, that when he heard how the Austrians had really occupied the Bistritz position, instead of being dismayed, "the news received all doubt, and lifted a heavy weight from his heart. With a God be thanked, I sprang from my bed."

Marvelous Powers of Forecast. The pedant who pins his faith on the oracular declarations of Jomini, or the wise sayings of Napoleon, forgets how altered are the conditions under which war is now waged, from those of the period to which the great Corsican directed his criticisms, and from which the famous Swiss strategist drew his deductions. The story, which ends with the rout of the Austrians at Koniggratz, shows the clearness of Von Moltke's views as to the general position, his marvelous power of forecast, and the mathematical confidence—if I may use such an expression—with which he consequently awaited calmly the result.

He frankly describes the danger in which Prince Frederick Charles stood for some long time before the smoke of the Crown Prince's guns became visible. He freely admits the danger of the attack upon the Bistritz position, and the consequences which attended it up to the Crown Prince's arrival. He says: "Isolated detachments were taken prisoner, others were dispersed." "A crowd of this kind fled from the wood, just as the King and his staff arrived in the neighborhood." But the reader must not run away with the idea that Von Moltke, even at that unfortunate moment, repeated him of his plan for the battle, or in the calm of his study years afterwards, thought it bad or even faulty.

Difference in Theory and Practice. Yet the man of no war experience, whose notions of good strategy and good tactics are based upon the military writers of the first half of this century, will at once utterly condemn Moltke's plan for the Battle of Koniggratz. This lies the great difference between the theory of war as written upon by a pedantic theorist, and the practice of war as carried out by a master of the art. It was the former, the theory of the Prussian Charles, driven home and preserved in it as it was, that opened the way for the subsequently delivered flank attack upon the Crown Prince. Referring to the attack upon the Swiss woods by the Seventh Division, Von Moltke writes: "That division had drawn upon it very formidable forces of the enemy which were not available after the battle at the places it was their business to defend."

Whatever critics may say, it is a fact in these days of smokeless powder, that the attack of a position in front by one portion of an army while troops are gathering to strike the decisive blow upon a flank, must be pressed home to a point which the inexperienced outlooker will think a positive waste of human life and even the shallow-thinking soldier will deem dangerous, if not positively disastrous. When, as in this instance, victory crowns the attack, the critics who, in the science of war, words, but who do not grasp its actual spirit, will describe the result as a wonderful piece of luck, unable to realize the careful train of reasoning upon which the plan was formed and the final success achieved.

STRANGE STORY OF A SUSPECT. He Pleads Innocence to a Charge of Murdering a Giant—Gael Man. INDIANAPOLIS, Nov. 14.—[Special.]—The dead body of a man, with stab wounds in the breast, side and head, and otherwise horribly mutilated, was found yesterday morning in Green Castle, about 40 miles from here. A party of tramps had been seen in the neighborhood the day before, and an empty freight car was found to be covered with blood. Last night a dispatch from Terre Haute announced the capture of a tramp, William O'Brien, who confessed that he had been with the men who did the murder, but denied that he himself had taken any part in it. O'Brien says the dead man was Matt Shea, of Toronto. He says that he and three others were with Shea at Green Castle, and that Shea told him certain things in the slightest possible manner, or for any consideration, no matter how small. O'Brien says that Shea was the proprietor of a saloon in Toronto, and was in communication with the Gael-na-Gael, who instructed him to send a report that Cronin had been seen in Canada, on his way to Europe, for the purpose of throwing aside suspicion. He also says that Shea was wanted by the Chicago police, and often got money from Chicago, and further stated that it would be as much as his life was worth if he were to go to Chicago and be recognized there. O'Brien says the men who murdered Shea had fallen in with them two days before, in a Green Castle saloon. He says he does not know

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