

THE EVENING NEWS
Published every evening, except Sunday.
By J. CANNON, Editor.
Office of South and East Temple Streets.
Subscription prices:
One year, \$10.00
Six months, \$6.00
Three months, \$3.50
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DESERET EVENING NEWS.

TRUTH AND LIBERTY.

VOL. III. SALT LAKE CITY, THURSDAY EVENING, AUGUST 25, 1870. No. 233

Pioneer Paper of the Rocky Mountain Region.
DESERET NEWS, Semi-Weekly
Published every Tuesday and Saturday.
The **DESERET NEWS WEEKLY**
(Published every Wednesday.)
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Three months, \$1.75

[SPECIAL TO THE DESERET NEWS.]
By Telegraph.
Per WESTERN UNION Telegraph Line.

NEW YORK.

The total German forces in France—Detailed account of the battle of Gravelotte.

A cable special to the *Herald*, dated Berlin 23, says the German forces in France have undergone a partial reorganization, and, as reinforced and redistributed, will go into battle in the following order: The first army, under the command of General Steinmetz, composed of the first, seventh, eighth and ninth Prussian army corps, amounting in all to 100,000 infantry and 25,000 cavalry; the second army, under the command of Prince Frederick, composed of the second, third, fourth, tenth and twelfth Prussian guards, the Royal Saxon corps and a division of the Grand Duchy of Hesse. This is the strongest of the three armies: It contains 48 regiments of infantry, with three batteries to each; and four regiments of cavalry, and 34 regiments of cavalry, amounting in the aggregate, in round numbers, to 230,000 men and 600 guns. The third army corps, commanded by the Crown Prince, is formed of two Bavarian army corps, under Generals Toun and Herman, containing each eight regiments of infantry, five battalions of riflemen and five regiments of cavalry; one corps of Baden and Wurtemberg troops, commanded by General Von Worde, consisting of eight regiments of infantry, two battalions of riflemen, four regiments of cavalry, five battalions of the army belonging to Wurtemberg, six regiments of infantry, three of cavalry and eight batteries of artillery belonging to Baden, also the fifth and fifteenth Prussian army corps, containing sixteen infantry and sixteen cavalry regiments and thirty batteries of artillery. The grand total of the German forces in France is 520,000, divided into sixteen army corps. Up to this time 300,000 of the landwehr have entered Alsace and Lorraine to invest and occupy places in the rear and to relieve the regular soldiers of these duties, so that they may join their own regiments in the front. Orders have been issued to disband the veteran reserves, called out at the commencement of the war.

NEW YORK, 24.—The following detailed account of Thursday's battle at Gravelotte, Aug. 18th, was received this morning in London, from our special correspondent who witnessed the battle at headquarters, and stood by the side of Bismarck and the King:

The first realization we had at Ponce, on the 15th of the extent to which the fighting had been going on Saturday and Sunday last at the front, was the coming in of the wounded. At first it was thought that they had been wounded in a skirmish, but on the 18th there were signs of the work being warm. On that evening, soldiers with ghastly wounds walked about the market place in Ponce, surrounded by eager groups of their newly arrived comrades. They told a story of disaster to them, borne away as they had been from the field without having hardly any result. I stood among these groups, and the narratives of the men all amounted to their having been sent to confront a much larger force than their own, and that their division had been cut up. I was struck by the fact that though there was some dissatisfaction suggested by their tone of voice, I heard no word uttered by narrators or listeners which accused any one. They dwelt rather on the fact they had dealt heavy blows on the 14th, and that though the 10th division had been an available organization had been demolished, it had sold its life dearly.

On Wednesday the 17th the wounded from the preceding day began to pour into Pont a Mousson. They were brought in on long grain carts lying upon hay. From my window, which overlooked the main street, and commanded more than ninety cars, each holding, on an average, about ten men. It was strange to see them as they passed, amid a file of French unable to conceal their joy on the one hand, and the Prussian soldiers on the other side. The streets began swarming with other wagons with other wounded, wearers of the red trousers, and now and then came a batch of unwounded prisoners. At length arrived a carriage with a French general. It was followed by a crowd of French, and a little time it seemed as if there might be a collision between the inhabitants and the Prussians, so earnest were the demonstrations of the people. It was now at last evident that the battle was very serious at the front. At midnight, or a little after, on the 17th, and on the 18th, all the trumpets for miles began to sound. This was the first time we had been startled by such wild music. Trumpet answered to trumpet through the bivouacs around the little city. For several days previously there had been troops almost perpetually marching through the town, but now the tramp through every street and by-way made a perpetual roar. Hastily dressing, I went out into the dark and managed to get a seat in a wagon going in the direction of the front, which was now understood to be one or two miles beyond the village of Gorze, some miles from Pont a Mousson. On our way we met considerable batches of French prisoners, who were looked upon with curiosity by the continuous line of German soldiers with whom we advanced; but only one or two offensive cries toward the prisoners were heard. The way was so blocked with wagons that I finally concluded I could do the remaining six or seven miles on foot, so I got off the carriage and began to walk and run swiftly ahead. At Monvion, on the Moselle, about half-way to Metz, I found vast bodies of cavalry, upland and hussars crossing the river by a

pontoon bridge, and hurrying at the top of their speed towards Gorze. Hurrying my own steps I heard the first thunder of cannon, seemingly coming from the east of a range of hills on the right. Passing through the village and ascending a high place, I found myself in a battle field strewn as far as the eye could reach with dead bodies. In one or two parts of the field companies were still burying the dead, chiefly Prussians. The French being necessarily buried last were still lying in vast numbers on the ground. A few of these I saw were not dead. As I hurried on a splendid regiment of cavalry came on behind, and when they reached the brow of the hill they all broke out with a wild hurrah and dashed forward. A few more strides and I gained the summit and saw the scene which had evoked their cry and seemed to thrill even their horses.

It would be difficult to imagine a grander battle field. From the hill to which I had been directed by good authority to come, the entire sweep of the Prussian and French centre could be seen, and a considerable part of their wings. The spot where I stood was fearful. It was amid ghastly corpses and burdened with the stench of dead horses, of which there were great numbers. I was standing on the battle field of the 16th. The Prussian side thereof on the left stretched like a silver thread by the road from Verdun to Paris. Between the lines of poplar, which stood against the horse on my left, as far as the eye could reach towards Metz, with military regularity, strung on the roads like beads, were the pretty villages, each with its church tower, which, although they have separate names are really only a hundred yards apart: Mars la Tour, Flavigny and little south of the road Vionnelle, Rezonville and Gravelotte, which is divided into Great and Little Gravelotte. On my right were the thickly wooded hills, behind which was the most important village of the neighborhood, Vissegrange, on the foreground of the battle field, which should, one would say, be called the battle field of Gravelotte.

Here there was a break in the report, which was continued as follows:

Bismarck, Gen. Van Moltke, Prince Frederick Charles, Prince Carl, Prince Albert and Adjutant Kerauski, and Lieut. Gen. Suerdian, of the U. S. A., were also present. At this moment the French were making a most desperate effort to hold on to the last bit of the Verdun road that lies between Rezonville and Gravelotte, or that part of Gravelotte which, in some maps, is called St. Marcel. The effort was desperate but unavailing, for every man in the French ranks had two to cope with, and their line was already beginning to waver.

Soon it was plain that this wing of the French right was withdrawing to a new position. This was swiftly taken up under the cover of the continuous fire of their artillery from the heights beyond the village. The movement reached at 1.30. I believe nine military men out of ten would have pronounced it impregnable. When once this movement had been effected the French retreating from the pressure of the Prussians' artillery fire, the Prussians as rapidly advancing, the battle field was no longer at Rezonville, but had been transferred and pushed forward to Gravelotte, the junction of the two branch roads to Verdun. The fields in front of that village were completely covered by Prussian reserves, and over it interminable lines of soldiers were marching. This part of the battle field was more extensive than the first, and brought the opposing forces into fearfully close quarters. The peculiarity of it is, that it consists of two heights, intersected by a deep woody ravine. This ravine is over a hundred feet deep, and the top over 300 yards wide. The side of the chasm next Gravelotte, where the Prussians stood, is much lower than the other side, which gradually ascends to a great height. From their commanding eminence the French held their enemies fairly beneath them, and poured upon them a scorching fire. The French guns were in position far up by the Metz road, hidden and covered among the trees. There was not an instant's cessation of the roar of artillery. Distinguishable among all was the curious grunting roll of the mitrailleuse. The Prussian artillery was posted on the north side; and, being necessarily raised for an awkward, half-vertical fire of the French, stood their ground and died by hundreds, and I had almost said by thousands. This was for an hour or two, that seemed ages, so constant was the slaughter.

The hill where I stood commanded chiefly the conflict behind the village; and to the south of it, the Prussian reinforcements coming up on their right, fled out of the Bois d'Agneux, and it was at that point, as they marched on to the field, that I could get the best idea of the magnitude of this invading army now in the heart of France. There was no break whatever for four hours in the march of men out of the wood. It seemed almost as if all the killed and wounded had revived and come back, and marched forth again. Burnham wood advancing to Dunsinane was not a more ominous sight to Macbeth than these men of General Goeben's army, hidden as they were by the woods until they were fairly within range and reach of their enemies. So the French must have felt, for between four and five o'clock, they concentrated upon that spot their heaviest fire, mauling all their valuable guns and shelling the woods which covered the Prussians unrelentingly. Their shot reached the Prussian lines and tore through them, and though the men were steady, no general care to long subject his troops to such a fire. They presently averted a little from that line of advance, and there was no longer a continuous column of infantry pouring out of the woods. The attack of the Prussians in the centre was clearly checked.

About five o'clock, however, another brigade of fresh infantry was again

formed in the woods, and emerged from its cover. Once out from under the trees, they advanced at quick time. I watched the movement, for the French guns had not lost range of the wood north of the ground in front. Seen at a distance through a powerful glass, the brigade was a huge serpent coiling with the undulation of the field; but it left a dark track behind it, and the glass resolved the black track into falling and dying men. As the horrid significance of that path so traced came upon me, I gazed on more intently. Many of those who had fallen leaped up again and ran forward a little way, striving to go on with their comrades. Of those who ran backwards instead of forward there were a few, though many fell as they painfully endeavored to follow the advance.

I do not know whether, after the vain effort of that brigade, another movement was attempted from the wood, but half an hour afterward a great number of troops began to march over the hill where I was standing, and moved forward toward the field where so hard a struggle had been so long protracted. There were, I think, a portion of Gen. Goeben's troops, who had been ordered forward on a direct route. The conflict from this point on the Prussian left became fierce but it was soon lost to us, but now and then a thick cloud would open a little and drift away on the wind, and then we could see the French. I tried to get a better view of this part of the field. I went forward about half a mile, and from a new stand found myself not far from Almazan. The French line was still unbroken, and to all appearances they were having the best of the battle, but this appearance was due perhaps to the fact that the French were mostly visible on their broad heights, and fighting with such obstinacy they plainly silenced a Prussian battery every now and then. But the Prussian line was also strengthened by degrees. On the northern point infantry and artillery were brought up, and from far in the rear, away seemingly in the direction of Thionville, and shell began reaching the French ranks. These were the men and guns of Steinmetz, who formed a junction with the army of Prince Frederick Charles and completed the investment of Metz to the north-west, with the reinforcements that continually arrived.

On both sides the battle grew more and more obstinate. There could be no doubt the French understood the meaning of the new movement of the Prussians, and the gradual development of the line to the north of Metz. Steinmetz was able to extend his line gradually further and further until the French were outflanked, and began to be threatened as it appeared with an attack on the rear of their extreme right. So long as the smoke from the Prussian guns hovered only over their position, the French clinging to their position, the distance from the headquarters, where the Prussian flank attack stretched forward, was great.

Darkness coming on, I know not how long the French held out, nor at what precise moment the Prussian onset became irresistible. What I saw was this: the puffs of smoke from the French guns, with flashes brightening as the darkness increased, receded; the very serious pillar of cloud and flame from the north as gradually developed and approached, and with that advance the fire of the enemy became every moment more slack. It was not far from nine o'clock when the ground was yielded finally to the north. The last shots fired on that terrible evening were heard in that direction.

A correspondent describes the scene of the battle of the 16th as one seldom witnessed. Thirty miles of ground were covered with the dead and wounded of both sides. The cannonade of the German side and the rattle of the machine guns were terrific and the defeat of the French was total. Three long columns could be seen pushing toward the North to evade pursuit, by Briey. The loss on both sides was immense. Many French prisoners were taken. The King himself attended to the French wounded. A French peasant taken while killing a wounded German was hanged. At Gorze, out of one thousand inhabitants of the neighborhood scarcely any remained.

The battle of the 14th is described as less bloody than at Sedan. In the morning a party of Germans had pushed forward on the position of the French, who retired as they advanced. The French subsequently received strong reinforcements and entrenched themselves behind the city at a distance of two or three miles in a circle including the villages of Borney, Calaberg, Montay, Nasseville and Noller. On the side of the Germans there were encamped in the immediate neighborhood the seventh and first army corps, which with the eight army corps, which was further to the rear along the way from Stavelot to Metz, formed the first army under Steinmetz, and the extreme right of the German combined armies.

The number of German troops actually in battle was 450,000. The French had a great deal of artillery and cavalry. The Germans carried all the breastworks against the murderous fire of the French, who were always compelled to retire before them; but the murderous fire of the chasseur told very severely on the Germans, who, in the engagement, lost many more than the French. It was the superior courage of the Germans which compelled the enemy to retire; they did this slowly, contesting every inch of the ground until they were driven almost against the walls of Metz.

Every account is agreed that this battle was more sanguinary than any during the campaign of 1870. No unwounded prisoners were taken on either side. A reconnaissance made the day previous, the 17th, showed that the French army was retreating on Verdun. The column was out in two by the advance of the Germans, and the last part driven back between Gravelotte and Metz. It was resolved to attack there at the retreat of the French

to Verdun, which was cut off. The Germans were posted in a northeast direction from Gravelotte, commanding the road from Briey to Metz. The 7th Prussian corps formed the right of their line; next came the 8th, posted on the road to Gravelotte; then the 9th and 12th corps. The guards were on the extreme left. The 3d, 1st and 10th army corps were held in reserve.

A fire was kept up along the whole line from eleven o'clock. The Prussian artillery seemed overpowering and the French batteries were gradually driven back on a second line. I pushed forward to test the French line, thinking their position was abandoned, but to my surprise found the enemy still there and myself a prisoner.

Of what happened afterwards I can give but little account. The cannonade was renewed on both sides lasting till nearly one o'clock, when the French appeared to be retiring, and the Prussian guns alone maintained a fire. I was treated kindly by my captors who went off through the woods and lost their way in the darkness. While they slept I escaped and reached St. Marie, which was in possession of the Germans.

In this village many houses were battered down, and every available spot was crowded with wounded. Even the streets were covered with straw, and the French and German wounded were lying there in groups together for the night. Beyond Rezonville the country is stripped bare, and no conveyance or food is to be had. Metz is completely surrounded by the Prussian forces, the 4th army corps having moved round from the east to the north. The Saxon corps of pioneers has been sent to the front. Four Prussian corps will be left also at Metz to carry on the siege. The remainder of the army is to advance towards Verdun.

FOREIGN NEWS.

GREAT BRITAIN.

What Prussia will be likely to demand.

LONDON, 23.—An extraordinary force called out by the Swiss government, is returning home, the regular army being considered sufficient to protect the neutrality of the country.

The details of the battle of the 18th, at Gravelotte, are still wanting, even at Berlin. The German dispatches, today, are meagre, but from them we gather that the military situation is as follows:

The twelfth Prussian army corps is now between Metz and Thionville, and serves to keep up communication between Prince Frederick Charles and Steinmetz. The fortress of Metz is enclosed on all sides. Communication between Chalons and Paris are cut off. The headquarters of the Crown Prince are at Bar-le-Duc. McMahon and Fialley are still retreating to cover Paris.

The following statement, from a semi-official source, foreshadows the demands likely to be made by Prussia in case of a successful termination of the war. "The time has arrived when Germany must be freed from French interference and menaces, and have a long period of unbroken peace. A change of dynasty in France would not be sufficient to insure this, for the next sovereign would seek, as soon as possible, to recover the loss of the military prestige of France, and the burden of an armed peace would be perpetuated. Suppose France should issue from this struggle with her strength unimpaired and with her strongholds, whence she menaces the valley of the Rhine and Palatinate, intact, the war from which the incapacity of French generals and the bravery of the German army have delivered us, will be renewed, and there can be no trustworthy peace. Not thus must this costly struggle terminate. We will only accept a guarantee of security against a fresh contest, whenever it may suit the political necessity of a French ruler to resume it."

FRANCE.

PARIS, 23.—The *Journal Officiel* explains, at length, facilities of the Bank of France for manufacturing paper currency. It says special arrangements have been made to print new bills of twenty-five francs with the utmost rapidity, and in a few days the bank will be able to furnish four thousand per day; and after September 15th ten thousand per day. On July 1st there were in circulation 3,768,000 bills of the denomination of a hundred francs, and 7,999,000 of the denomination of fifty francs. Since then 382,000 bills of the former, and 950,000 of the latter denomination have been issued.

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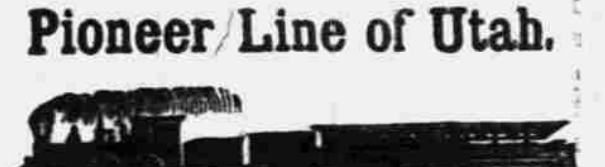
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