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On: 19 January 2015, At: 07:31

Publisher: Routledge

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954

Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH, UK



Royal United Services Institution. Journal

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rusi19>

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Published online: 11 Sep 2009.

To cite this article: Major G. M. Orr (1914) The War in Poland and East Prussia, 1806-07, Royal United Services Institution. Journal, 59:438, 342-361, DOI: [10.1080/03071841409420124](https://doi.org/10.1080/03071841409420124)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03071841409420124>

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THE WAR IN POLAND AND EAST PRUSSIA, 1806-07.

By MAJOR G. M. ORR, 11th King Edward's Own Lancers, Indian Army.

TO understand how Napoleon came to invade Poland and enter on a campaign against the Russian armies, it is necessary to look back to the events which led to the campaign in Prussia in the autumn of 1806.

After the invasion of Austria in 1805, which ended in the decisive victory at Austerlitz over the Russian and Austrian armies, Austria was compelled to withdraw from the coalition formed by England, Sweden and Russia against France. Prussia had hesitated to join this coalition in 1805. However, in 1806, she was persuaded to do so, and, egged on by her people and her army, found a pretext in the threatening position of the French army cantoned in South Germany, to deliver an ultimatum enjoining Napoleon to withdraw his corps to the Rhine. Napoleon's answer was to march against the Prussian armies. The double victory of Jena and Auerstadt, followed by the relentless pursuit resulting in the surrender of Prince Hohenlohe at Prenzlau and of Blucher at Lübeck and of the fortress of Magdeburg, placed the whole of Prussia up to the river Oder at his feet. Ever since the victory of Austerlitz he had already looked beyond Prussia, and had seen in his wonderful imagination that opportunities would arise to break for ever the coalition. Sweden, he looked on as in a position to play only a secondary part. It was to bring England to abandon "the tyranny of the sea," that he issued from Berlin on 21st November, 1806, his famous decree, by which he forbade England all commercial intercourse with the Continent. To compel obedience to his policy on the Continent, however, it was necessary to beat Russia as completely as he had beaten Austria and Prussia.

From his position along the Oder he saw his opportunity to do this, since the Russian armies, summoned too late by Prussia to her aid, were now advancing towards the Vistula. Napoleon therefore determined to advance at once into Poland against them with his victorious corps. Poland with its fine granaries looked suitable as a theatre for operations, in spite of the rigorousness of its climate; moreover, its people had always said France was their friend. He looked therefore to them to rise in his aid, and he led them to believe he would restore to them their former independence. Austria had been compelled to declare herself neutral, though she belied her words by organizing her armies anew. Turkey had been induced to create a diversion in the S.W. of Russia and thus draw away an army from the main theatre of war.

France, Italy and the Confederated States of the Rhine gave recruits to Napoleon, while Austria and Prussia added immense sums of money for the maintenance of his armies. On the other side, to aid

Russia against him, Sweden could do but little. England eventually promised money, arms and an expedition, none of which, however, arrived in time to be of use; Prussia had but one remaining corps intact in her last remaining province of East Prussia.

To secure East Prussia by obtaining Königsberg was Napoleon's object, while on the other hand the Russian and Prussian armies advanced to prevent it. To accomplish his object Napoleon first had to cross the Vistula and crush the enemy's armies, and then he would have to turn his attention to the principal strategical points. By the success of the campaign just concluded he had gained the advantage of the Odér as a new base, and he prepared to advance at once against the Russians before they had time to make further preparations. The theatre of war in which the operations were about to take place was bounded on the north by the Baltic, on the east by the Niemen, on the south by the Bug, and on the west by the Vistula. (See Map I). The principal strategical points were Danzig, Thorn and Warsaw on the Vistula, and Königsberg on the Pregel.

The country was peculiar, being nearly level, generally of sandy soil much cut up by marshes and woods; to this soil succeeds a clay, which after a few days rain, becomes changed to a vast sea of mud. Military movements and combinations are not practicable except in summer, when the ground is entirely dry, or in winter when the frost has hardened the ground and frozen the lakes. Thiers describes the country as consisting of a moving soil alternately sand and mud, covered more with woods than cultivation. The rivers formed the principal lines of defence. In the southern portion of the theatre there was the Vistula with its tributaries, the Warka, the Narev, and the Omulev. In the northern portion, besides the lower waters of the Vistula, were the Passarge, the Alle, the Pregel, and the Niemen.

From the line of the Vistula three main roads converged on Königsberg :—

1. Warsaw—Pultusk, whence ran the great road to Wilna and St. Petersburg—Eylau—Königsberg.
2. Thorn—Lichstadt on the Passarge—Heilsberg on the Alle—Eylau—Königsberg.
3. Danzig—Elbing—Braunsberg on the Passarge—Königsberg and thence on to Tilsit.

Danzig was joined to Warsaw by two roads :—

1. Left bank of the Vistula, via Thorn.
2. Right bank, via Marienwerder, Soldau and Pultusk.

From Warsaw main roads ran due east to Moscow, south to Cracow, south-west to Breslau, west to Posen and Berlin.

For the purposes of narration it will be convenient to divide the war into the two campaigns of Eylau and Friedland, separating each into two phases.

The Campaign of Eylau.

FIRST PHASE :—The march to Poland. 1st November—31st December, 1806.

SECOND PHASE :—Winter quarters and the march to Eylau. 1st January—27th February, 1807.

The Campaign of Friedland.

FIRST PHASE:—Quarters on the Passarge and the siege of Danzig.
1st March—31st May, 1807.

SECOND PHASE:—The march to Friedland and the Niemen. 1st June—1st July, 1807.

THE CAMPAIGN OF EYLAU.

FIRST PHASE:—The march into Poland. 1st November—31st December, 1806.

On November 1st Napoleon's various corps were in the following positions (Map I).

Lannes (5th corps—18,000) at Stettin.

Davoust (3rd corps—23,000) at Kustrin and Frankfurt.

Augereau (7th corps—17,000) at Berlin.

Jerome (9th corps—14,000) being formed at Berlin.

Reserve of cavalry 10,000 at Berlin.

The Guards 8,000 at Berlin.

Bernadotte (1st corps—18,000) near Lübeck.

Soult (4th corps—23,000) near Lübeck.

Ney (6th corps—20,000) at Magdeburg.

Cavalry in the north, about to be put under the command of Bessières, 8,000.

Mortier was with the 8th corps in Hanover.

At this time the Allies' forces consisted of :—

The Prussian corps under Lestocq, 15,000, at Thorn.

A Russian army of four divisions under Bennigsen, 45,000, approaching Warsaw.

A second army of four divisions under Buxhowden, 30,000, in rear of the 1st.

A reserve of two divisions under Essen, 18,000, on the Niemen.

Another army of 50,000 or 60,000 under Michelsen was about to operate against the Turks, but sent up as soon as possible some 12,000 men to swell the reserve under Essen.

Having decided to make an advance against the Russians, but uncertain either of their strength or their whereabouts, Napoleon sent Davoust's corps as an advanced guard to Posen. He supported him with Augereau on his left rear and Jerome on his right rear, while Lannes was directed to come up on the left of Augereau. He had meant to concentrate these corps with some cavalry at Posen before the 18th of November, but finding the Russians were by no means advancing rapidly, Napoleon at once directed his leading corps on to the line of the Vistula, placing the whole under the command of Murat. Murat was to push on with the cavalry and Davoust's corps to Warsaw, to be followed by Lafnes via Bromberg and the left bank of the Vistula. Augereau was directed up the Netze to Bromberg, and thence up the Vistula to Plock and Mödlin. Jerome, who was at Kalich, was sent to Silesia to occupy the fortresses on the Oder still in the hands of the Prussians, and thus further extend the base of the Oder. The remaining

corps, as they became free, came into Berlin for a short rest and were thence despatched to Posen, thus :—Ney, followed by Bernadotte, to Thorn, Soult to Plock, while Napoleon himself with the Guards marched to Warsaw. Thus Napoleon had in first line about 70,000, and a little less in second line. As the first line approached the Vistula, Bennigsen withdrew to Ostrolenka, calling Lestocq towards him; but on being joined by Buxhowden he advanced again to Pultusk and sent Lestocq again towards Thorn. On the 7th December, Ney, followed by Bernadotte, was marching towards Soldau from Thorn; Soult and Augereau towards Pultusk via Plonsk; Murat and Davoust were bridging the Narev near its confluence with the Warka, having in rear of them Lannes, the Guards and the reserve of cavalry which up to now had covered the advance. From the 7th to the 20th December, movements were practically put a stop to, owing to the bad weather. A complete thaw accompanied by sleet and rain had broken up the ground. On the 23rd December, after a personal reconnaissance by Napoleon, Davoust successfully crossed the Warka, and on the 24th together with Augereau, the Guards and the reserve of cavalry was directed on Golymin, where Napoleon felt convinced the main force of the enemy was. Lannes was sent as a right flank guard towards Pultusk; Soult was given the task of moving against the Russian communications in the direction of Ostrolenka, while Ney and Bernadotte pushed back Lestocq to the north, and separated him from Bennigsen. On the 25th, Napoleon saw he had broken the line of the Warka and that the enemy were not concentrated, but he was still uncertain where their main force was. Indeed reconnoitring in a country by turns covered with mud or thick forests was impossible. Meanwhile Bennigsen, with part of Buxhowden's force, had retired to Pultusk leaving only two divisions under Prince Galitzin at Golymin, consequently on the 26th, Lannes, on arriving before Pultusk, was opposed to 43,000 Russians with the result that his attack was repulsed with severe losses. Meanwhile at Golymin, Napoleon's main body had merely to drive in a rearguard. To the north Soult had been successful over Lestocq at Soldau on the same date. Next day the Russians retired to the upper Narev, but no pursuit was attempted, Napoleon having resolved to look on the campaign as over. The weather had been, and was still, frightful; pursuit would have been practically impossible considering the lateness of the season, the condition of the roads, and the exhausted state of the army. Napoleon had shown before, after Ulm and Jena, that he did not spare his soldiers in the pursuit of a flying enemy, but on this occasion the roads were such quagmires that he could not move his artillery. The supply question, too, was most difficult, as the country had been drained by the Russians and now offered scarcely anything.

Uncertain of the enemy's movements, Napoleon had thought that, by advancing on a front of 80 miles against the line of the Warka, he would discover their intentions. If he found the Russian army at Pultusk he would turn it with his advanced left wing—Ney, Bernadotte and Soult—and force it on to the Austrian frontier, which at that time ran along the Vistula to a point 5 miles above Warsaw and thence to the confluence of the Bug and the Narev. If he found the Russians at

Golymin, as he thought they were, his intention was to cut them off from the great road through Pultusk with his right wing under Lannes, then to penetrate with his centre, consisting of Murat and the corps of Davoust, Augereau and the guard, to Ostrolenka where he would be between the Russians and their frontier; meanwhile Ney and Bernadotte would interpose between Lestocq and the Russian main body and throw the former back into Eastern Prussia, where, driven to the sea, he would soon, if the Russians were disposed of, be compelled, like Blücher, to surrender.

We see that at the commencement of this first phase Napoleon was groping for the enemy's forces and he advanced with his first line spread out; then from his position along the Vistula, from Thorn to Warsaw, he attempted to round up the Russians and surround them on all sides, though at the time he did not know where their main force was. This was not the principle on which he had looked for the enemy's main body on entering Prussia in 1806; then he had kept his columns close together, ready to fight the main body whenever and wherever he found it. In this campaign the wings of his army were advancing on two separate lines, from Thorn and from Warsaw, and could not effect a junction; further after crossing the Warka, he separated his corps still more by sending Lannes to Pultusk and Soult up to the north.

SECOND PHASE:—Winter quarters and the march to Eylau. 1st January—27th February, 1807. (See Map II.)

On 1st January, 1807, Napoleon returned to Warsaw to arrange the establishment of his winter quarters. Lannes was placed between the Vistula and the Bug, covering Warsaw with headquarters at Sierock. Davoust was between the Bug and the Narev, with headquarters at Pultusk. Soult was behind the Omulev as far as Willenberg on the road Warsaw—Eylau, with headquarters at Golymin. Ney was between the head waters of the Omulev and the Passarge, with headquarters at Mlawa, near Soldau. Bernadotte was on the extreme left behind the Passarge from Osterode to Elbing for the purpose of covering the siege of Danzig, which was to be undertaken by a newly formed 10th corps under Lefebvre; Augereau was on the Warka behind Soult and Ney, with headquarters at Plonsk. The Guards and Oudinot's grenadiers were at Warsaw. The light cavalry covered the entire front, while the heavy cavalry were cantoned along the Vistula.

Thus each corps had a base on a river in order to avail itself of water carriage.¹

The army by this plan was to rest, and he cautioned his corps commanders expressly not to incite the enemy to attack by making offensive movements. He himself devoted his time to regulating the supplies, obtaining reinforcements and especially horses, administering Poland and organizing Polish auxiliaries. Thiers says that at this

¹ Thiers, the French historian, remarks that Napoleon's dispositions and arrangements for the winter quarters from Thorn to Warsaw form a most admirable example.

time the total numbers of the whole French army was 580,000, raised to 650,000 with auxiliaries. Out of these, 300,000 were east of the Rhine, of which 150,000 only could come into line on the Vistula, while 80,000 from among them again only could be brought to the field of battle.

The Russians under Bennigsen had retired north and were joined at Bialla by Buxhowden and Lestocq, their united forces, according to Alison, being 75,000. Meanwhile Essen's force, raised to 30,000, advanced to the upper Narev. As soon as Bennigsen saw Napoleon's dispositions for his winter quarters, he resolved on an offensive movement against Bernadotte and Ney, whom he hoped to surprise in their cantonments, overthrow in detail and then, based on Danzig, he could spend the rest of the winter in East Prussia. Starting from Bialla on the 15th January, and screened by the lakes and forests of East Prussia, Bennigsen reached the Alle in the vicinity of Heilsberg. There his advanced cavalry suddenly came on Ney's cavalry, who were moving ahead of Ney with the intention of perhaps surprising Königsberg and at any rate obtaining supplies and booty from a tract of country hitherto untouched. Ney fell back to Niedenberg and warned Bernadotte, who at once endeavoured to concentrate his scattered forces at Mohrungen, where he was attacked on the 25th, and forced back to Osterode. Napoleon, convinced by the 27th January that the Russians meant business, issued orders for a concentration of the cavalry, and the corps of Davoust, Soult, Ney, Augereau and the Guards towards Allenstein. Lannes, supported by Oudinot's grenadiers, was to cover Warsaw and the right rear of the army from the line of the Narev, which was menaced by Essen. Bernadotte and Lefebvre were to fall back and cover Thorn.

Von Wartenburg in his book, "Napoleon as a General" points out how important Thorn was in Napoleon's eyes. If he advanced into East Prussia, he considered he would be unable to keep up his direct line of communications with Warsaw, for it would be exposed to a flank attack from Russia, and the further the line extended the more would the danger increase, he therefore determined to ensure the shorter and safer line to Thorn and to hold on to it at any cost.

Alison gives the total strength of the troops across the Vistula in January, 1807, as being as follows:—

| <i>With Napoleon.</i> | | <i>Detached.</i> |
|-----------------------|---------|------------------|
| Guards | | 12,938 |
| Oudinot's grenadiers | | 6,046 |
| Bernadotte | | 19,023 |
| Davoust | | 19,757 |
| Soult | | 27,824 |
| Augereau | | 10,000 |
| Lannes | | 18,119 |
| Ney | | 16,039 |
| Murat's Cavalry | | 15,621 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| Total | 147,367 | Total 68,943 |

In addition to Murat's cavalry, 24,000 light cavalry are included in the corps numbers. If we deduct from this mass of 147,000 infantry and cavalry on the Vistula, the 19,000 under Bernadotte, 18,000 under Lannes, 6,000 under Oudinot, there will remain 104,000 in Napoleon's main body.

On the 1st February, when Napoleon's corps were approaching the point of concentration, he sent instructions to Bernadotte to draw forward the Russian army, and then to slip back under cover of a rearguard to join the left of the main army. This message fell into Russian hands, with the consequence that Bennigsen on the 2nd concentrated at Junkowo with the intention of falling back before Napoleon's superior strength, as he himself had now only about 70,000. On the 3rd February Napoleon's army was concentrated in front of the Junkowo position. Soult and Davoust were at once directed down the Alle to cut Bennigsen's communications by turning his left, but Bennigsen succeeded in holding off Soult, and on the night of the 3rd retired in the direction of Heilsberg. Napoleon pursued in three columns; Davoust by the right bank of the Alle; Murat and Soult, followed by Augereau and the Guards, in the centre; and Ney on the left keeping Lestocq from joining the Russians.¹ On the 7th February, Murat and Soult overtook Bennigsen's rearguard at Eylau, with the result that Bennigsen resolved to await battle on a chosen position in rear of the village of Eylau. Before beginning the description of the battle of Eylau, it will be well to note some points as to Napoleon's concentration at Allenstein.

If his despatch to Bernadotte on the 1st had not fallen into the hands of the Russians, he would have been on the 3rd February to the east of Bennigsen, and from this position would have menaced Bennigsen with an attack in flank by superior numbers, and would have cut his communications with Russia and Königsberg; while Bernadotte, turning on Lestocq, would have separated him from the Russians and pushed him back to the sea. The movement to Allenstein was Napoleon's usual plan of marching with the bulk of his forces, so as to get in rear of the enemy during his advance.

One of Napoleon's maxims was: "At the commencement of a campaign, to advance or not is a matter of grave consideration, but when once the offensive has been assumed, it must be sustained to the last extremity."² In this case this axiom was faithfully followed, for though Bennigsen had initiated the offensive, Napoleon at once assumed the offensive himself, and by his advance regained the initiative.

THE BATTLE OF EYLAU.

(See Plans III., IV., V.)

The position selected by Bennigsen, on which to give battle to Napoleon, was about one mile to the north-east of the village of Eylau

¹ Bernadotte, through not getting the message, was far behind on the Thorn road.

² Maxim No. VI. Translation by General D'Aguilar.

along the summit of a slope. This slope rose from the foot of the small eminence on which Eylau itself was situated. A low ridge running north-west from Eylau for a short distance gave cover to anyone approaching from the south-west. The country, nearly level, was dotted over with lakes, which at this time were frozen and effaced by the snow, and in no way distinguishable from the rest of the plain. The road coming from the south-west into Eylau ran almost due north by the small villages of Schloditten and Schmoditten on its way to Königsberg. Another road starting from Eylau ran at first north-east to the hamlet of Anklappen, then east past the villages of Kutschitten and Lampasch on its way to Dommau and Friedland. The road from Bartenstein approached Eylau from the south-east close to the village of Serpalten. On the whole the ground was firm for infantry and well adapted to cavalry.

Authorities differ greatly as to the numbers engaged in this battle. If we deduct from the 104,000, which Alison says Napoleon concentrated at Allenstein, 14,000 as having been lost or left behind on the march, we get 90,000, which is the number Wilson gives in his history. On the other hand Thiers says 63,000. Alison strikes a mean and says that probably 80,000 with 350 guns was what Napoleon had. Undoubtedly the straggling on the march up to Eylau had been tremendous. The Russians are put at 65,000 with 460 guns in Alison's history, to which should be added 9,000 Prussians under Lestocq. Thiers on the other hand, says the Russians and Prussians together came to 80,000. At the commencement of the battle, if we exclude 14,000 for Ney's corps and 9,000 for Lestocq's Prussians, we get 66,000 on the French side and 65,000 on the Russian. The French were superior in cavalry, but had less guns, though they were of better quality and more ably served.

The Russian right, under Touchkoff, lay on either side of Schloditten, athwart the Königsberg road. The centre, under Sacken, was on either side of the hamlet of Anklappen, which was the key of the position. The left under Ostermann, rested on the village of Serpalten, with the hamlet of Klein-Sausgarten in its rear. Between the centre and Eylau, Bagration had 10,000, the Russian late rear guard. In rear were two divisions in reserve, under Doctoroff, in two close columns behind the centre. The infantry of the army was drawn up in two lines with the foot artillery along the front; the cavalry and Cossacks were disposed behind the centre and wings. Lestocq was, on the night of the 7th, about nine miles away from the right flank, and was expected to join before the battle was far advanced. The fighting between Soult and Bagration on the 7th had been severe and had lasted into the night, when Eylau remained in possession of the French. Napoleon seeing the possibility of a battle on the morrow had sent word to Davoust at Bartenstein to march at once on Serpalten, so as to be able to fall on the left flank of the Russians next morning. Ney, too, was sent for, but it was not expected that he would arrive in time.

Early in the morning of the 8th February, Bennigsen commenced the battle with his artillery. Napoleon massed the whole of his corps artillery to reply to it. Soult's three divisions were disposed, Leval at

Eylau, Legrand to his left, and slightly in advance, St. Hilaire a mile to the right by the village of Rothenen. In the interval, Augereau's corps of two divisions, Desjardins and Heudelet, were drawn up in two lines. Further in rear were the infantry and cavalry of the Imperial Guard, and the divisions of dragoons and cuirassiers under Murat. Napoleon's design was to turn the Russian left with Davoust's corps, and throw it back into the middle of the army, and then attack the Russian centre and left with Augereau's corps and the division of St. Hilaire, using Eylau as a pivot to wheel to the left.

About 9 a.m., a part of the Russian right advanced against the French left, which was slightly withdrawn, but otherwise held its ground. Friant's division of Davoust's corps now appeared on the right and occupied Serpalten, but was at once assailed by one of the reserve columns of infantry under Doctoroff, and the cavalry of the Russian left wing. Morand's and Gudin's divisions of Davoust's corps now arrived in turn, and Davoust caused the Russian left to fall back to Klein-Sausgarten. When Napoleon saw the Russian reserves directed against Davoust, he at once ordered forward Augereau and St. Hilaire to fling the Russian left back on its centre. It was 10 o'clock when they advanced, but owing to a sudden and violent snow storm they lost their direction and became separated; St. Hilaire, caught in an isolated position near Serpalten, was driven back, while Augereau bearing to his left met the whole of the artillery of the Russian centre, was repulsed, nearly annihilated, and driven and pursued to the hill where Napoleon stood. Napoleon at once ordered Murat to advance to the counter attack with all his cavalry, arrest the retrograde movement of the right wing, and fill the gap between St. Hilaire and Augereau, while a battalion of the Guard was brought forward to check Augereau's pursuers. St. Hilaire joining hands with the left of Davoust's corps again pushed the attack on the Russian left and successfully gained the line Anklappen—Kutschitten after most severe fighting. The Russian left wing was now drawn up, facing outwards, nearly at right angles to the centre. It was in this position when, about 4 o'clock, Lestocq arrived at Schmoditten, and passing behind the centre threw his Prussians, in conjunction with the Russian left, on Davoust and forced him out at Kutschitten and Anklappen, back to Klein-Sausgarten. Darkness had now come on and the battle seemed to be over, when Ney's arrival at Schloditten caused a renewal of fighting on that flank, with the result that Bennigsen decided to withdraw his army, since he considered Ney's position endangered his communications with Königsberg.

It was not till next day that the retreat of the Russians from the position was realized.

The losses on both sides had been very heavy; Alison computes the French losses in killed and wounded at 30,000, while 10,000 left their Colours and fled to the rear. On the Russian side the total of killed, wounded and prisoners amounted to 25,000. No attempt was made to pursue on the 9th owing to the exhausted state of the French troops; consequently it was not till the 10th that Murat was ordered to follow the enemy towards Königsberg, supported by Ney.

During the night of the 8th, Napoleon is reported to have been extremely anxious about his position. Not knowing of Bennigsen's retreat, but conscious of his own great losses, and believing the Russians would attack the next day, he had given orders for his heavy artillery and baggage to desfile towards Landsberg, and ordered Davoust to draw back to Serpalten. The distance from his base, too, caused him anxiety, and he despatched orders to Lefebvre to move up to Osterode as a general reserve, and pointed to the road to Thorn as his new line of communications, instead of to Warsaw.

Some points to be noticed in this battle are that Napoleon disposed his troops in less depth than usual, and thus gave a lesser mark for the enemy's numerous artillery; that the great counter attack by Murat's cavalry, amounting to about 12,000 horsemen in 80 squadrons, which pushed back the Russian centre, but was unsupported by infantry, failed to defeat it; the success with which Lestocq evaded Ney and arrived on the battle field several hours before him.

After sending Murat and Ney in pursuit, Napoleon remained several days at Eylau to rest and reorganize his army. The remains of Augereau's corps, which had suffered so severely, was broken up and distributed among the others. Bernadotte was brought up to Eylau, and orders were sent to put all the bridges over the lower Vistula in a state of defence, for Napoleon already had decided to draw back his army in that direction and rest them in cantonments. His advanced corps were recalled from the Frisching, and on the 16th February he issued orders for the retrograde movement to the Passarge, west of which his army spread itself into cantonments. Bennigsen hastened to occupy the country evacuated, and on the 25th February his outposts were in touch with the French along the Passarge.

THE CAMPAIGN OF FRIEDLAND.

FIRST PHASE:—Quarters on the Passarge and Siege of Danzig.
1st March—31st May, 1807. (See Map VI.)

As soon as Napoleon had returned to Warsaw on the 1st January he had seen the necessity of besieging Danzig, and had formed a special corps under Lefebvre for that purpose. In order to cover the siege he had been obliged to leave the corps of Bernadotte at a great distance from Warsaw, with the consequence that, when he advanced, he not only had to leave one corps covering Warsaw, but another covering Danzig. The siege of Danzig had now, at the end of February, become in Napoleon's eyes an operation of the utmost necessity. Its importance lay in the fact that its possession would prevent the French left being turned; that it commanded the lower Vistula; that it enclosed a spacious harbour. The advantages of a position along the Passarge were: that the whole army covered the siege without sending away any part of it for that purpose; that, if the Russians moved straight on Danzig, he could oppose them with his whole united army; that he could shorten his communications by shifting the line from Warsaw—Posen to Thorn—Posen; that, if the Russians moved on Warsaw, he could strike at Königsberg, then,

turning on the Russian Army, throw it back on the Narev or the Vistula.

Napoleon, then, placed himself between the Passarge and the lower Vistula. His first care was to organize the commissariat and form an immense magazine at the centre of his cantonments. He made the most strenuous exertions to fill up the gaps in his army, and above all to increase the strength of his cavalry. He formed a second army from among his allies with a backing of 40,000 veteran French troops; so that he had under Marshal Brune upon the Elbe an army of 100,000, which ensured his communications to France and was a warning to the threatening attitude of Austria. The army in Prussia was disposed as follows in villages, with the outposts comfortably housed in timber barracks:—

The numbers given below are those to which the corps were raised previous to the resumption of hostilities in June after the dispersal of Lefebvre's corps among the others:—

| | | | |
|-----------------|-----|--------|---|
| Bernadotte | ... | 27,391 | Braunsberg to Spanden. |
| Soult | ... | 31,565 | Liebstadt to Deppen. |
| Davoust | ... | 29,570 | Osterode to Allenstein. |
| Ney | ... | 17,000 | In advance at Guttstadt. |
| The Guard | ... | 9,127 | First at Osterode and then at Finkenstein. |
| Reserve Cavalry | | 21,428 | Lower Vistula and the Passarge. |
| Mortier | ... | 15,000 | Brought up from Pomerania to the lower Vistula. |
| Lannes | ... | 15,340 | At Marienberg (a newly-formed reserve corps). |

A total of 166,321, of which 21,428 was reserve cavalry and 10,410 was corps cavalry. The command of the Vth Corps, which was to continue guarding the extreme right flank on the Narev, was handed over to Massena and was reinforced by a Bavarian division under Wrede. Massena's instructions were to cover Warsaw, to form the right wing of the army, and to assume an offensive attitude in order to occupy the attention of the enemy. In order to carry out these instructions he was bidden to form an entrenched camp at Ostrolenka. To prevent the Cossacks penetrating between Osterode and Warsaw a small corps of Poles with 1,000 to 2,000 Polish cavalry was placed at Neidenberg under Zayonscheck. The siege of Danzig itself was conducted by Lefebvre with 20,000, while Colberg and Graudenz were blockaded by 7,000 auxiliaries. On the completion of the siege Lefebvre's corps was distributed among the others.

Danzig was surrounded on all sides by a rampart, wet ditch and strong palisades, and in most parts by formidable outworks. The fort of Weichelsmunde, commanding the opening of the Vistula to the sea, required a siege for itself. On the west the most important outwork was the fort of Hagelsberg. The garrison consisted of 12,000 Prussians and 6,000 Russians, under Kalkreuth. On the 20th March communication with the land, *i.e.*, by the Nehrung Peninsula to

Königsberg was completely cut off, but it still had the means of receiving succour by the sea. To stop this it became necessary to capture the island of Holm at the mouth of the Vistula. When this was successfully accomplished on the 6th May, Danzig became invested on all sides. Meanwhile an attack on Hagelberg had failed, so that the French decided to continue the siege by the more tedious method of approach by sap. Bennigsen, not deeming himself in sufficient strength to attempt the raising of the siege by an offensive movement against the line of the Passarge, resolved to attempt a combined land and sea attack from the Nehrung Peninsula and the mouths of the Vistula. In the middle of May, while 5,000 men under Kamenski sailed to the mouth of the Vistula and 2,000 Prussians advanced along the Nehrung peninsula, feints were made along the line of the Passarge and against Massena so as to prevent succour being sent to the besiegers. Owing to the late arrival of some of the ships Kamenski's attack was delayed so that Napoleon received ample warning of the intended expedition and was consequently able to reinforce Lefebvre with parts of Mortier's and Lannes' corps, with the result that the attempted relief was a failure. On the 26th May Kalkreuth capitulated with all the honours of war, owing to the ammunition in Danzig having come to an end. As soon as Danzig was taken Napoleon shifted his communications for the third time from the line through Thorn to lines through Marienwerder and Danzig. During the months that his army had been on the defensive covering the siege of Danzig, he had paid great attention to securing its position. All the bridges on the Passarge had been destroyed except one for the use of the corps of Bernadotte at Braunsberg and another for the convenience of Soult at Spanden. Two bridges over the Vistula, one at Marienberg, the other at Marienwerder, made a safe communication with the besiegers at Danzig, and two vast defences were added to each bridge end. With regard to these *têtes de pont*, Napoleon in his maxims says "It is essential that they should be constructed upon the principle that an army can form and rally between them and the river, otherwise they will prove a very inefficient assistance to protect the passage of an army over a large river."¹ So long as Thorn remained his principal advanced base, he was most attentive to its fortifications, and as soon as Danzig was captured it, too, was refortified and garrisoned. Napoleon laid great stress on fortresses and considered them equally useful in offensive and defensive warfare. "They would not in themselves arrest an army, but they were excellent means of retarding, embarrassing, weakening and annoying a victorious enemy."² He considered they should be capable of defence by a few men and those men should be recruited from the population and not from the armies in the field, in fact, a Militia. These permanent fortifications secured certain important points and that was all, but in a system of frontier fortification he also considered they had spheres of influence, that is, that their positions gave them influences beyond the range of the guns on their

¹ Maxim XXXIX., D'Aguilar's translation.

² Maxim XL., D'Aguilar's translation.

walls. In addition to the value Napoleon put on temporary fortifications, as exemplified by his *têtes de pont*, and permanent fortifications or fortresses, he laid great stress on the art of field fortification. One of the five things that he said a soldier should never be without was his entrenching tool.¹ He laid down that "in a war of march and manœuvre, if you would avoid a battle with a superior army, it was necessary to entrench every night; that the natural positions ordinarily met with were not sufficient to protect an army against superior numbers, without recourse to art."² It was thus that he defined the different uses to which the art of fortification should be put.

SECOND PHASE:—The march to Friedland and the Niemen. 1st June to 1st July. (See Map VI.)

During these months the Russians had been reinforcing their principal army, which was now disposed as follows:—

The right wing under Lestocq, 18,000, in front of Bernadotte.

The centre under Bennigsen, 88,000 on the Alle.

The left wing under Tolstoi, 15,000, on the Narev.

A reserve of 30,000 was coming up from the interior under Labanoff, but could not arrive before the end of June. Bennigsen's headquarters were at Heilsberg, where he had formed an entrenched camp.

After the capitulation of Danzig, Napoleon returned to his headquarters at Finkenstein and prepared to commence hostilities on 10th June by advancing against the Russian right, taking Königsberg and throwing their army back on the Niemen. However, just as in the commencement of the year, he was forestalled by Bennigsen, who, attracted by the apparently exposed position of Ney's corps, had resolved to overwhelm it, and had set his divisions in motion on June 5th. The main body in three columns was directed against Ney; the Cossacks, under Platoff, were to attack between Ney and Davoust; two columns under Doctoroff were to attack Soult's bridges and prevent him from succouring Ney, while a column under Kamenski demonstrated against the bridge of Spanden, and another under Lestocq against Braunsberg; the Imperial Guard was held in reserve behind the main body. This formidable attack would doubtless have succeeded if the French troops had remained scattered in villages, but with wonderful foresight Napoleon had ordered on the 1st May all the corps to come out of their cantonments, and encamp by divisions within reach of one another, on well chosen ground, and under protection of good earth works. On the 5th, Ney was attacked by double his numbers, but effected his retreat to Ankendorf with comparatively little loss, resuming this movement next day closely pressed to Deppen on the Passarge. When Napoleon on the 6th was assured that the Russian move was more than an affair of outposts, he ordered his corps to concentrate, drawing back his more advanced corps and advancing those in rear. He pointed to Saalfield as the central point of concentration, on the principle that "an army being driven from its first

¹ Maxim. LIX., D'Aguilar's translation.

² Maxim. XVII., D'Aguilar's translation.

line should rally its retreating columns sufficiently in rear to prevent any interruption from the enemy.”¹ Napoleon himself hastened to Saalfield, and on the night of the 6th, found Ney holding the Passarge at Deppen. No further attacks had been made on the other marshals, so that he was still in possession of the line of the Passarge, while Bennigsen’s offensive seemed to have come to a stop. Napoleon had under his hand Murat’s cavalry and the corps of Davoust, Soult, Ney, Lannes, and the Guard, while Mortier was a day’s march in rear; Bernadotte, on the lower Passarge, was ordered to watch the Prussians for a day or two. As soon as Bennigsen saw that his purpose of attacking Ney in an isolated position had failed and that he now stood with inferior numbers before Napoleon’s army, he resolved to fall back on his entrenched camp at Heilsberg. The position of Heilsberg was an important one, as it commanded roads from the north, west, and south, and blocked the road to Eylau and Königsberg. As long as the Russians retained both it and the course of the lower Passarge, their position was unassailable; but directly the enemy interposed between Heilsberg and the sea, threatening Königsberg and Eylau, then the advantages of Heilsberg were lost.

Napoleon had three courses open to him. Firstly, he could advance against the fortified camp, and by storming it hope to terminate the war in a single bloody battle. Secondly, by advancing on the right bank of the Alle with his right forward, he could throw the enemy back on Königsberg and the sea and cut him off from his frontier. To carry out this latter operation Napoleon would have had to act in a difficult country, already exhausted, and he would probably have had to change his base from Danzig again to Thorn. Thirdly, he could advance against the entrenchments of Heilsberg by the left bank of the Alle, and, if he found them too strong to force, thrust his left wing forward and menace the enemy’s communications with Königsberg. This doubtless would expose his own left wing to be crushed between the sea and a superior mass of the enemy, and also tended to push the latter back to their own frontier; but he did not fear for his left wing, and calculated Bennigsen would, while endeavouring to relieve Königsberg, give him an opportunity of inflicting a great disaster on him on the way. Further, his line of communication would remain with Danzig through a fertile country.

To understand how this choice of country came to be one of more than secondary consideration it is necessary to realize that the country, in which the armies were, consisted of a succession of lakes, which extend from the Vistula to the Pregel, and are formed by a long chain of downs, parallel to the sea, retaining the waters; on the side towards the sea the soil was well cultivated, while toward the interior the country was scantily peopled and covered with thick forest, in an advance through which Napoleon had earlier in the year experienced the misery arising from want of food. Napoleon therefore on the 8th, when the Russians commenced to retire on Heilsberg via Guttstadt under a rear guard skilfully commanded by Bagration, directed Murat, Soult,

¹ Maxim XXVII. D’Aguilar’s translation.

and Lannes by the left bank of the Alle on Heilsberg followed closely by the remaining corps. On the 10th, Murat and Soult coming on the Russians at Heilsberg, attempted to attack them in their entrenchments and were severely repulsed, while a second attempt with some regiments of the Guard and Lannes was similarly driven back with great loss. On the following day the Russians were still in their position, so Napoleon resolved to compel them to evacuate it by manœuvring on their flank. To accomplish this Davoust was pushed past their right flank, while orders were sent to Victor, who was now in command of Bernadotte's corps owing to the latter having been wounded on the 5th, to push back Lestocq. Davoust's movement so alarmed Bennigsen, that he evacuated Heilsberg that night and retired to Bartenstein. Napoleon at once sent Murat's dragoons in pursuit up the right bank of the Alle while he directed his whole army on Eylau, whence he pushed Murat, Davoust and Soult along the road to Königsberg, and called Victor up to him. This movement cut Lestocq and Kamenski completely off from Bennigsen, so that they retired to Königsberg. From Eylau Lannes with some cavalry under Grouchy, followed closely by Mortier, was sent to Dommau to discover whether Bennigsen was quitting the Alle or not, and whether he was or was not on the march to relieve Königsberg. Ney, the Guard and Victor remained at Eylau.

Meanwhile Bennigsen on the 13th reached Schippenbeil, and learning that the French had appeared at Dommau, had hastened to reach Friedland, the point where the Alle approaches nearer to Königsberg than in any other part of its course. On the evening of the 13th, Lannes had reached the village of Posthenen in front of Friedland with 7,000 of Oudinot's division, and 3,000 cavalry under Grouchy, but was there checked by the enemy's strong advanced guard of cavalry. Meanwhile Napoleon, from the reports he had received, had put the Guards, Ney, and Victor in motion to Dommau. Bennigsen, arriving on the bank of the Alle at daybreak on the 14th, and thinking Lannes' corps was isolated and without support, decided to cross over, crush it, and continue on his way to Königsberg. As the morning advanced Lannes' force, increased by Mortier's to a total of 10,000 infantry and 7,500 cavalry under Grouchy, maintained himself on the line Heinrichsdorf—Posthenen—Wood of Sortlack, thus holding the road to Königsberg in the face of 50,000 of the enemy until Napoleon arrived about 3 o'clock in the afternoon.

THE BATTLE OF FRIEDLAND.

See Plans VII., VIII., IX.

The River Alle in its course to the Pregel at Wehlau is very sinuous and it is within an angle formed by one of its bends, open towards the French, that the little town of Friedland is situated on its left bank. The road from the right bank, after crossing the Alle and entering Friedland from the south, forks, sending one branch to the north-west to Königsberg, and the other to the west to Dommau and Eylau. On the Königsberg road at a distance of four miles from Friedland lies the village of Heinrichsdorf, while at the same distance

along the Eylau road is the village of Posthenen. These two villages lie on the eastern slope of a ridge running parallel with the Alle. This slope before finally reaching the river bank rises again just to the west of Friedland. A brook called the millbrook runs from Posthenen towards Friedland, where it forms a pond on its northern side before finally joining the river, after having divided the rolling downs into two unequal parts. To the north and north-east of Heinrichsdorf the ground is more open and level; while to the south and south-east of Posthenen is the Wood of Sortlack. The slopes are everywhere gradual and at this time of the year covered by high crops of rye.

The strengths of the French corps engaged at Friedland were Guard, 7,500; Lannes, 15,000; Ney, 14,000; Mortier, 10,000; Victor, 22,000; cavalry, 11,500; a total of 80,000.

The whole force of the Russians on both sides of the river, according to Alison, did not exceed 55,000, of whom about 10,000 were cavalry. Thiers says the Russians had 72,000.

North of the millbrook, bending back to the river bank, and covering the Königsberg road, Bennigsen had disposed four divisions under Gortchakoff. The greater part of the cavalry under Uvaroff was on the right flank and slightly to the front. South of the millbrook, as far as the Wood of Sortlack covering the Eylau road, were two divisions under Bagration with the remainder of the cavalry under Kolagriboff. The Imperial Guard formed the reserve at Friedland. The 14th Russian division had been left on the other side of the Alle to rally the army. There were besides a number of guns on the right bank. Thus the Russians stood on the arc of the segment of a circle formed by the Alle in their rear, which was crossed by few bridges, while their front was to be assailed by superior numbers.

As soon as Napoleon arrived and saw the Russian position he decided on his plan of battle, which was to engage the Russian right wing with his left, push the main attack against their left wing, seize Friedland, capture the bridges and cut off their line of retreat. He placed Ney's two divisions with Latour Maubourg's cavalry on the right between Posthenen and the Wood of Sortlack to inaugurate the attack. In support of Ney were Victor's two divisions and La Houssaye's cavalry. Just north of Posthenen Lannes' two divisions formed two lines. Between Lannes and Heinrichsdorf were Mortier's two divisions; while on the left flank in the plain of Heinrichsdorf were Grouchy's dragoons, Nansouty's cuirassiers and Beaumont's and Colbert's light cavalry, all under the command of Grouchy, making a mass of 7,500 horsemen. The Guard infantry and cavalry were kept in reserve at Posthenen. At 5 o'clock Ney's divisions emerged from the wood, and, driving in the Russian left wing, were about to storm the town when they were charged by the Russian Imperial Guard and driven back on to Dupont's division of Victor's corps which was coming up in support. Rallying on it, the three divisions again advanced, supported by all the cream of both Ney's and Victor's corps under Senarmont which was pushed well to the front. By 8 p.m. they had fought their way into the town of Friedland, and all the bridges were in flames. Meanwhile north of the millbrook neither side had gained any advantage, but when Gortchakoff

saw Friedland in flames and his own left exposed, he directed a column against Ney and Dupont. The assault by this column failed, and then, attacked in front by Lannes and Mortier and in flank by Ney and Dupont, the Russian right wing was driven back into the River Alle. The cavalry and Lambert's division on the right managed to make their retreat by the left bank to Allensburg, to which place the remainder of the army arrived by the right bank.

The failure to pursue is unaccountable; Savary, in his memoirs, and he was an eye witness, says, "The Russians had on their right 22 squadrons of cavalry who covered the retreat; we had more than 40 with which we should have charged them, but, by a fatality without example these 40 squadrons received no orders, and never so much as mounted their horses."

Alison puts the losses at 17,000 killed, wounded, and drowned on the Russian side, and 10,000 on the French. The Russians had fought with the utmost stubbornness, and rather than surrender had preferred to be drowned.

Bennigsen's resolve to cross to the left bank was the first mistake he made; having crossed, his second mistake was his failure to push Lannes aside; his third, to await Napoleon on a field of battle which had a river immediately in his rear. Napoleon caught him in the most disadvantageous position possible, and at once took advantage of the chance given him. "When two armies are in order of battle, and one has to retire over a bridge, while the other has the circumference of the circle open, all the advantages are in favour of the latter. It is then a general should show boldness, strike a decided blow and manœuvre on the flank of his enemy. The victory is in his hands."¹

The most distinct feature of the battle was the massing of the guns of Victor's and Ney's corps under Senarmont, and the tactical skill with which this general supported Ney's second attack.

By the morning of the 16th June, Bennigsen had put the Pregel between his force and Napoleon, and destroyed the bridges; in this position he awaited Lestocq and Kamenski. Meanwhile Soult had pushed up to the walls of Königsberg, while Murat and Davoust, apprised of the victory of Friedland, moved to the Pregel and crossed at a point half way between Wehlau and Königsberg, hoping to cut off Lestocq and Kamenski who had abandoned Königsberg and retreated on Tilsit by the forest of Baum. On the 18th June the whole of the Russian army was across the Niemen, while Napoleon's corps approached it from the south. However, on the 19th June, the Russians proposed an armistice which led to the famous meeting between Napoleon and Alexander on the raft in the middle of the Niemen, on the 25th June, 1807.

By the peace of Tilsit Napoleon entered into an offensive and defensive alliance with Russia; but it was at the expense of Prussia, the former ally of Russia. Napoleon could well have afforded to be generous and should have endeavoured to have drawn the people of Prussia to him, but by taking the other course and by leaving the

¹ Maxim XXV. D'Aguilar's translation.

King of Prussia little either of land or money, he merely laid the seeds of that revenge which the Prussians eventually wreaked in the year 1815, to which 1813 and 1814 were the preliminaries.

It may be noted that the ill-timed parsimony of the British Government had withheld all subsidies from Russia during this struggle. Alison says that 300,000 Russian Militia, whom even a small loan would have clothed and armed, might have averted the catastrophe; while 20,000 British troops as auxiliaries would have converted Friedland into a glorious victory.

In conclusion, let us try to answer the question "In what way would the modern conditions of railways and the electric telegraph have affected the plans of campaign and the operations?"

It is probably known to all readers of Napoleon's campaigns that his great principle was to move his army concentrated, that is to say, he moved on a narrow front with one or perhaps more corps following each other on the same road, so that he could concentrate for battle either the whole or the greater number of his corps in one day. The reason he did this was that inter-communication between widely extended columns was never certain, and consequently there was the danger of failure in any preconcerted action. The electric telegraph has almost completely removed this objection, for though an enemy may succeed in placing himself between two columns so that even a horseman cannot pass through from one to the other, yet by means of the telegraph the two columns can inter-communicate by a circuitous line far in rear and many hundreds of miles in length.

As to whether the principle of movement in masses is better than the principle of movement on a broad front *under modern conditions*, we cannot do better than quote what Moltke, the great strategist of the latter half of the 19th century, said in his "Memorandum to Superior Commanders of Troops"¹ in 1869. In the beginning of it he pointed out that an army which remained concentrated was difficult to supply and to billet, but that for the decisive battle the last battalion should be summoned; consequently to remain separated as long as possible while operating, and to be concentrated in good time for the decisive battle, was the task of the leader of large masses of troops. Allowing that the mere frontal attack was not likely to be attended with success, but very likely with a great deal of loss, it became necessary to turn towards the flanks of an enemy. To turn the flank of an army of more than 100,000 men would necessitate a day's march if the turning column had to be detached from a force already concentrated, which would necessitate the battle being put off for another day. Further, the separation with the object of turning the enemy's flank would necessitate a flank march within his striking distance. However, if the operations have been conducted in such a manner that a final short march from different points lead all available forces simultaneously upon the front and flanks of the adversary, then things would shape themselves much more favourably on the day of battle.

¹ Vide translation from the German of "Development of Strategical Science," by General Von Caemmerer.

It may be deduced from this that had Napoleon had the use of the telegraph by which to keep his corps in acquaintance with his plans and the turn of events, he would have adopted the principle of moving on a broad front, and, instead of concentrating beforehand for a battle, he would have concentrated his forces from different points on to the battlefield itself. It has already been pointed out that Napoleon's advance from the Oder to the Vistula and thence to the Warka, on a broad front, was an exception to his principle of moving with his army concentrated. However, we see he returned to it for his concentration towards Allenstein and subsequent march to Eylau in February, 1807, and again in June, 1807, for the campaign of Friedland. If Napoleon had sent his instructions along the wire via Thorn to Bernadotte, they would not have fallen into Bennigsen's hands on February 1st, and the great battle would have been fought near Allenstein. If we suppose that Napoleon would have advanced towards Bennigsen on a broad front with the intention of enveloping him near Allenstein we can picture that he would have directed Ney to act with Bernadotte from behind the lakes of Osterode, and Soult and Davoust to move on the front, Neidenberg—Ortelsberg; while Augereau and the Guards in reserve threw their weight towards his left wing by advancing along the line Warsaw—Soldau—Osterode.

As regards railways we will first consider their influence on the strategic concentration of the French and the Russians towards one another, in November, 1806. We may assume that Napoleon's position in Prussia was so secure that he might regard it as his own country as far as a line north and south through the Goplosee. On the 1st November Napoleon had available on or near the Oder the corps of Lannes; at Stettin, Davoust, Augereau; the Guards and Jerome at Berlin and Frankfurt. The Russians had Bennigsen on the Niemen (we will assume at Grodno) with Buxhowden close behind him. The only lines of rail leading across the Niemen towards the Vistula are the St. Petersberg—Grodno—Warsaw line and the St. Petersberg—Kovno—Bartenstein—Allenstein line. Warsaw is, however, connected with central Russia by the line to Moscow, and to S.W. Russia by the line through Brest—Litovsk. The farthest line to detrain on, which would have been safe for the French was Bromberg—Jarotschin, and the lines that the corps above mentioned would have probably used would have been, Davoust from Frankfurt to Wreschin, followed by the Guards, Jerome to Lissa and Jarotschin, Augereau via Küstrin and Landsberg to the Goplosee, and Lannes via Stargard and Schneidmuhl to Bromberg. Soult, Bernadotte and Ney, when they became free about the 9th November, could have been brought into Berlin and thence despatched to prolong the front, or strengthen a wing, as might have been required. The distance from Grodno to Warsaw is the same as from Frankfurt to Wreschin, but Napoleon would have had the advantage in the number of lines for his strategic concentration. We may assume that Napoleon's columns would have started on their march from their rail-heads before Bennigsen and Buxhowden had detrained. However, these latter, conscious of their inferior numbers, would have been content to stay on the

line of the Vistula and await Napoleon in a selected position. They could hope, too, that, by means of the lines from St. Petersberg, Moscow and South-West Russia, the Imperial Guard, the reserve under Essen and the reinforcement from Michelsen's army in South-West Russia would arrive to swell their numbers before the decisive battle took place. Thus we see that the railway system would have favoured Napoleon in deploying on a broad front, while on the other hand the railways in Russia would have brought reinforcements to the Russian Army at Warsaw. The decisive battle would have still taken place near Poltusk, but the Russians would have had greater numbers on their side than they mustered in 1806.

If we assume that the Russians were beaten, and had retired to the lake district, they would certainly have rendered the line to Grodno useless, though the line from Warsaw to Allenstein, and those in East Prussia, would have probably remained available for Napoleon. However, the railways would not have helped the movement of troops either in the march to Eylau or in the campaign of Friedland. On the other hand the supply question would have been made more easy. The supply question with Napoleon was always a difficult one, and he paid the greatest attention to it. His thoughts were always being turned to where he could safely form large magazines, and, when he had formed them, how he could protect them. With the railway he would not have had to concern himself about this, as his reinforcements of men and horses and his daily requirements of material and victuals could have been carried to any required point from the remotest districts. With assured and adequate lines of supply by means of the railway behind it, the army in its march to Eylau would not have been weakened by the absence of the immense number of stragglers who fell out from want of food, and not from foot weariness. Thiers states that after Eylau the number of men absent from the army, and shown as sick or marauding, was 60,000, that of these not one half were sick in hospital, while the remainder were marauding. They had to pillage in order to live, since there were no supplies.

(It should be noted that this paper was compiled some three years ago.—ED.)