

*Military Report from Colonel Lowe, dated Headquarters, Army of Silesia, Champaubert, February 13, 1814.*

SIR,

FIELD-MARSHAL Blücher having remained in his position at Bergères for two days without any movement being undertaken by the enemy at Etoges, resolved on marching to attack Marshal Marmont in his position at the latter place.

The advanced guard of the corps of General Kleist, under the command of General Zieten, was sent forward to commence the attack. The enemy occupied the village of Etoges, and a woody height on the left of it: he shewed a large body of cavalry and several columns of infantry. His force supposed to be about nine or ten thousand men. As the advanced guard approached he gradually retired, maintaining, however, a very brisk fire, and giving occasion for some very bold and successful attacks on his rear, principally by the Cossacks, who displayed the greatest intrepidity, and experienced some loss. The pursuit continued from Etoges to beyond the village of Champaubert, where the Field-Marshal has halted for the night.

The enemy has bivouacked in front of Fromentieres, and will be attacked again tomorrow, should he remain in that vicinity.

I have the honour to be, &c.

H. LOWE.

*Lieutenant-General the Hon. Sir Charles Stewart, K. B. &c. &c. &c.*

*Military Report from Colonel Lowe, dated Headquarters, Army of Silesia, Chalons, 15th February 1814.*

SIR,

FIELD-MARSHAL Blücher has had to sustain another and most obstinate contest against a superior force of the enemy, under the command of Buonaparte in person.

After having driven Marshal Marmont from the position of Etoges on the 13th, he there learnt that Buonaparte had marched with his guards on the preceding day to Chateau Thierry; General D'York and General Baron Sacken having previously quitted that town, and retired behind the Marne.

Yesterday morning, Marshal Marmont was announced to be in retreat from the village of Fromentieres, Field-Marshal Blücher, who had bivouacked the night preceding at Champaubert, resolved on pursuing him. He had under his orders only the corps of General Kleist and General Kap-siewitz's division of General Count Langeron's corps.

The enemy retired until he came near the village of Janvilliers, where a considerable body of cavalry was observed to be collected.

In the ardour of pursuit, six guns, which had been carried forward, were suddenly rushed upon and seized by them. The Prussian cavalry, under Gen. Zieten and Col. Blücher, son of the Field-Marshal, immediately charged, and retook them. Several prisoners fell into his hands, and from them it was learnt that Buonaparte was on the ground, having just arrived, with the whole of his guards, and a

large body of cavalry. They had made a forced march during the night from Chateau Thierry.

The infantry of Field-Marshal Blücher was at this time advancing in columns of battalions on the open grounds on each side of the chaussée leading through the village.

The cavalry, which was observed to be increasing, suddenly came forward in a large mass, broke through the cavalry of the advanced guard, divided itself, and attacked with the greatest fury the columns of infantry on the plain. The movement was observed. The columns formed into squares, which remained firm on their ground, and commenced a heavy fire from their front, flanks, and rear. In a large field on the right of the village six squares were attacked at the same time; all succeeded in repelling the enemy, the cavalry of the advanced guard in the mean time retiring in the intervals, forming in the rear, and advancing again to charge the enemy's cavalry, after it had been thrown into disorder, and compelled to retire from the destructive fire of the squares. The enemy's numbers, however, increased, and large bodies of cavalry were seen to be moving round on either flank. Two battalions of infantry of the advanced guard, which had entered the village, could not form in time, and suffered considerably. Field-Marshal Blücher, who had little cavalry with him, resolved on withdrawing his force from a position where such an unequal contest must be waged.

The infantry were directed to retire in columns and squares, with artillery in the intervals, covered on the flanks and rear by skirmishers and cavalry. The enemy lost no time in making the boldest and most direct attacks. The country through which the line of retreat lay, was generally open, without inclosures, but with small woods and copses, which enabled the enemy's cavalry to conceal its movements. The infantry avoided in general entangling themselves in them, and were thus the better enabled to preserve their perfect formation, and hold the enemy in greater respect. From the village of Janvilliers to about half way between Champaubert and Etoges, a distance of nearly four leagues, it was one incessant retiring combat, not a single column or square of infantry that was not either charged by or exposed to the fire of the enemy, whilst a constant fire was kept up by them without any interruption of their march, firing and loading as they moved on, and still preserving the most perfect order. It frequently happened that the enemy's cavalry were intermixed with the squares, and always, in such case, compelled to retire with great loss. Various charges were attempted without any effect.

At sun-set it was observed, that the corps of cavalry which had been seen to take a circuit round the flanks had thrown themselves into the line of our retreat, about half way between Champaubert and Etoges, and formed themselves into a solid mass on the chaussée and on each side of it, with the evident determination to bar the passage. At this moment Field-Marshal Blücher found himself surrounded on every side. His decision was as prompt as the resolution determined to execute it—to continue his march, and break through the obstacle opposed to it.

The columns and squares, assailed now on every