for fear of any ambuſcades being placed there by the enemy, in order to ſecure his retreat : nevertheless, the general ſhould endeavour to make the most of his victory, and ſhould never be content to win a battle by halves ; at least it ſhould be carried so far as to make the enemy ſensible of his loss, and of rendering him incapable of continuing openly in the field.

But if the army that attacks the lines ſhould be unable to force them, after many repeated attacks, and if the general perceives that his troops are diſcouraged, he ſhould imme­diately retire. If the retreat is made over an open country, he ſhould begin it by marching off the cannon, the infantry next, and the cavalry will form the rear-guard in two or three lines ; the hussars and dragoons will be upon the flanks of the cavalry : if there are any defiles or woods to pass through, the general ſhould leave ſome infantry at the en­trance of them, to ſustain and protect the cavalry, which will retreat by files. If the enemy is in full strength, the general ſhould leave ſome field pieces with the infantry that is poſted at the entrance of the woods and defiles, which will certainly stop the enemy’s impetuosity : if, on the con­trary, the enemy purſues the army with only a few troops, it will be proper to charge him if he approaches too near. In this diſposition an army may retreat easily, provided that order is obſerved, and the movements not made with too much precipitation.

ECT. VI. *Of the Attack of a Convoy.*

The same motive that ought to oblige a general to practiſe every reſource of art, in order to conduit the eſcort of a convoy in safety, ſhould alſo induce him to uſe the same ex­pedients to carry off the enemy’s ſubsistence ; for to deprive him of the means of ſubsisting, is, in reality, to overcome him without fighting.

An advantageous method for attacking a convoy is, by forming three attacks, one real and two falſe. Thoſe at­tacks are called *real* which the troops make with vigour and in full strength, and when their charging is provided for and determined ; the *false* ones are when the enemy’s intention is only to keep back the enemy, and prevent his sending assistance to the troops that are really attacked.

Theſe attacks, true or falſe, are determined by the situation of the country, and in proportion to the degree of eaſe with which the convoy may be turned from the road it is in ; that is, if the general ſhould meet with an avenue near the advanced guard, which will draw the enemy ſome distance from his main body, and which alſo leads to that of the troops which attack, it is at that part the real attack ſhould be made : if this avenue is found at the rear-guard, the two falſe attacks ſhould be made at the advanced guard and at the centre, ſupposing there is an opportunity of attacking the centre. Theſe falſe attacks ought to be ſufficiently nu­merous in troops, to be able to employ the enemy, without running a hazard of being beaten, and to prevent his sending assistance to other parts.

If the troops designed to attack the convoy are ſufficient­ly numerous, although divided into three bodies, to attack every part at the same time with equal vigour, the ſucceſs will thereby become more certain. The eſcort of a convoy is often more numerous than the troops which attack it ; but it being certainly weakened by the division it is obliged to make in order to guard the whole length of the convoy, the troops which attack have greatly the advantage, although inferior in number, becauſe thoſe which they attack cannot send assistance to the parts attacked, eſpecially if attacked on all sides.

If the road is wide enough, and there is room for a wag­gon to turn, the general ſhould rather chooſe to attack the advanced and rear guards than the centre, to prevent the enemy’s ſaving any of the waggons belonging to the rear­guard, which will undoubtedly be the case, if only the ad­vanced guard and centre are attacked. If the road is ſo narrow that the waggons cannot turn about in order to go back, the general ſhould attack the advanced guard, and em­ploy the centre and rear-guard as much as possible.

A convoy may alſo be attacked at the opening of a de­file into a ſmall plain ; then it is again the advanced guard that the general ſhould attack, though he ſhould alſo con­trive to have the rear-guard attacked at the same time. The troops in the centre will be confuſed, and not know where to send assistance, becauſe they will hear firing both in front and rear ; nevertheless, the general ſhould defer charging till part of the waggons are passed, and the troops of the centre are still on this side the defile. An attack, when unforeſeen, brisk, and ſustained, can never fail of ſucceeding, particularly when the troops attacked are ſo divided as not to have it in their power to assist each other ; and if the whole convoy is not taken, there is almost a certainty of taking a great part of it, or at least of ſetting it on fire, and hamstringing the horſes, if there is not time to carry them off.

The ſucceſs of theſe attacks partly depends upon the choice of thoſe places where the troops which are to fall upon the convoy are placed in ambuſcade ; the most ſecure are thoſe which are least liable to the inſpection of the ene­my’s parties. It is ſufficient to have ſentries upon the tops of the hills, ſo that they may see into the roads, and give notice when the convoy is near the place appointed for the attack : then the troops charged with the attack of the rear­guard, having nothing more to apprehend from being diſcovered by the enemy’s parties, may draw near the entrances of the avenues.

If the ambuſcade is diſcovered, the conduct which ought to be obſerved by the troops composing it depends entirely upon their force and that of the eſcort ; nevertheless, even when they are weakest, the attack ſhould be attempted, which, if unſucceſsful, will at least have retarded the march of a convoy, for want of which the enemy may be greatly distressed. A general never risks much in attacking a con­voy ; the object of the officer commanding the eſcort being to conduct it in safety, and to avoid fighting : it is the same with the eſcort of a convoy as with a chain of forage, the end of which is only to complete it ; and conſequently the troops charged with them will rather be attentive to execute the orders which have been given them, than to purſue the enemy, although beaten and driven back.

When a convoy marches through an open country, there ſhould be many ambuſcades formed : an enemy is leſs apprehensive in an open country, becauſe, seeing all before him, his ſearches become the leſs exact, in proportion as the country is unfavourable for troops to form ambuſcades ; ne­vertheless, a general may always find ſome hollows, heights, or places of the same nature, where troops may be conceal­ed. As ſoon as the convoy ſhall be arrived at the place fixed on for the attack, the general ſhould fall upon the ad­vanced and rear-guards, in order to take in the whole, and to induce, if poſſible, the troops in the centre to divide themſelves, to run to their assistance ; then the third ambuſ­cade must ſhow itſelf, and attack the centre, and endeavour to divide the convoy, before the commandant of the eſcort has had time either to park it or double it up. If the general ſucceeds in dividing the convoy, and if the troops in the centre of the eſcort are beaten and broke, he ſhould detach ſome infantry, cavalry, and hussars, in purſuit of them : the remainder must be divided into two parts, in or-