by the dragoons, but that on the contrary it will be obliged to retreat.

This diſposition, the performance of which appears very difficult, is not in reality ſo, if the general hath taken the neceſſary meaſures, and if his troops are well diſciplined, and know how to move with order and exactneſs. Even when this motion is not performed with all the exactneſs possible, it can never be dangerous, becauſe the front of the two lines will not be destroyed, and becauſe it is alſo made upon the rear ; and that if the dragoons and hussars are at­tacked and beat in marching up, their defeat cannot be any way prejudicial to the main body of the army.

When the field of battle is in an open country, all the troops generally come down, eſpecially when there is no obstacle to prevent them. On theſe occasions, it is requiſite that the diſposition of the troops ſhould be strong in every part ; there ſhould always be a reserve, whether of infantry or dragoons, in order to be ready to assist the troops which have ſuffered.

If it is poſſible, in an open country, to find any hollow to ſupport the right, and a village to ſupport the left, the general ſhould make choice of that situation, ſupposing his intention is to accept, and not offer battle. If he deſigns to give battle, it would be unnecessary to take this position, becauſe he must quit it in order to attack the enemy : but if circumstances require his accepting it, he must ſeize this poſt, and place infantry and cannon in the village, and station other infantry in the rear to ſupport that which is in the village.

As to the diſposition for the order of battle, eſpecially for the front of the line, it must be regulated by the ground, by the diſposition the enemy has taken, by the troops that can mort easily act, and by thoſe that the enemy can oppoſe to them.

If the enemy has pitched upon a field of battle, and the general would attack him in it, he ſhould keep his whole front employed ; but ſhould make his chief efforts on one or two parts, upon the wings, or at the centre. This was the method practiſed by marſhal Saxe in all his battles : when he accepted, battle, as he was obliged to do at Fontenoy in 1745, he was in expectation that the oppoſite army would attack him on one side ſooner than another ; in this situation the diſpositions ſhould be properly regulated, the ports intrenched and occupied, the cannon distributed, and troops placed in the rear of each port to ſustain thoſe which are in it: victory ſhould then be expected from the capa­city of the commanders, the firmneſs of the troops, and the assistance that is properly given them. But when a general gives battle, he may attack either the right, the left, or the centre, always conforming to the situation of the ground, and the field of battle which the enemy has choſen, which cannot be aſcertained but by a thorough knowledge of the country.

It is dangerous to attack the whole front of the oppoſite army with equal vivacity, becauſe, if the attack does not ſucceed, the troops are diſheartened, and are witnesſes of each other’s defeat. If the first line is repulſed, the second is ſeldom of any great uſe ; whereas, by only employing the whole front of the enemy, and making a strong attack upon one or two parts, if it is ſucceſsful, the troops can take the enemy in flank ; and thoſe which amuſed his front will then attack him briskly, and prevent him sending assistance to the troops that are beat. If the general does not succeed in the first attack, he can try it again with greater force, by causing the troops of the second line to march as was done at the battle of Lafeldt fought in 1747 : the French troops being repulſed four times, Μ. Saxe sent them a reinforcement; theſe troops being united, carried

the village at the fifth attack, which determined the fate of the battle.

In a plain but incloſed country, a general can attack only part of an army. Antiquity furniſhes many examples of this. Epaminondas, at the battle of Leuctra, attack­ed only the right of the Lacedemonian army, with a large column of infantry that formed his left ; causing the right to be ſupported, and making the left march, the whole army according to the opinion of the chevalier de Folard, wheeled. The battle of Mantinæa, won by the same ge­neral, is alſo of the same nature ; with this exception, that it was the centre of the Lacedemonian army that was at­tacked. Theſe examples are only propoſed as what may possibly happen, but which it would be dangerous to imitate on every occasion, and which ſhould be purſued in circumstances only where a general expects great advantage from them.

As the cavalry can easily act in an open country, and be of great assistance to the infantry, all poſſible means ſhould be uſed to contribute to the ſucceſs of their attack ; they ſhould always be ſupported by troops in their rear. Cavalry is of great uſe, particularly where the two armies, from the situation of the country, find no obstacle to prevent their joining ; and if the cavalry, as Μ. de Puyſegur obſerves, is beat, even when the infantry of the same army is victorious, the best thing that can afterwards happen to it is, to retire in good order.

The ground ſo often varies, that even in an open coun­try there are unevennesses, thickets, moraſſes, and hollows ; in each of theſe situations the diſpositions ſhould be chan­ged. If theſe thickets happen to be in the line of cavalry, and it can act there (for it it cannot, it would be a very great fault to place it in them), it ſhould be intermixed with platoons of infantry, obſerving alſo not to take them from the main body of the army, but from the reserve, in order not to diminiſh the strength of the front ; which ſhould never be done on any occasion whatever, unleſs part of the army, either by its own or the enemy’s position, cannot act offensively, by reaſon of ſome morals, hollow, or any other obstacle that the enemy may have placed before him ; if, nevertheleſs, a general can take an advantageous position, by causing theſe thickets or theſe hedges to be occupied by infantry, he ſhould give it the preference, to enable the cavalry to act with the greater facility.

The diſpositions vary not only according to the situation of the ground, but alſo according to the general’s views. Some draw up the battalions without intervals, or like a wall ; others, with ſmall intervals ; others leave the distance of half a battalion between each ; and others, in purſuance of the chevalier de Folard’s method, place them in columns.

The first diſposition is without doubt formidable as to infantry ; but, as it has been already remarked, it is defec­tive with regard to cavalry. In the third, the interval of half a battalion is too wide : it would require an immenſe tract of ground ; besides, the battalions would not be near enough to have it in their power to protect each other. The second ſeems better, becauſe the front is not ſo large, the battalions are more within reach of assisting each other, and have only the distance neceſſary to prevent their mixing confuſedly together. The fourth is undoubtedly very good ; but can a general promiſe himſelf, that the soldiers can always march at an equal pace together, and without stopping ? The fire of the column is continual, it defends itſelf on all sides; but its oblique fire does not do much execution, and there are situations and ſpots where this position in column would be faulty. When it cannot ap­proach the enemy, and is alſo expoſed to his cannon, this diſposition would be dangerous ; becauſe it is certain that