to examine the places proper for fixing the ladders ; His diſcernment in the choice of the officers and ſoldiers who were to ſupport him ; and the harmony of the whole means that were employed on the occasion, afford very excellent lessons for any officer who may attempt ſuch an attack.

Sect. VII. *Of Surpriſes and Stratagems for seizing Posts.*

All the environs that have any relation to the place the enemy occupies must be known ; on what side lie the avenues, morasses, rivers, bridges, heights, woods, and all covered places that are in the neighbourhood, without which it is ſcarce poſſible to regulate approaches prudently. It is equally necessary to know nearly the number and kind of troops with which he possesses the post, that you may not attack him with inſufficient force. It is likewiſe necessary to know if the enemy is careful or remiſs in carrying on his duty. The knowledge of theſe circumstances contributes infinitely to form a project of ſurpriſe well, and to conduct the whole expertly.

As to the manner of ſurprising a post, it is impossible to establish certain rules on the ſubject ; becauſe, among a thousand means which chance offers, there are rarely two alike. It must, however, be obſerved, that there are stratagems with which it is impossible to ſucceed without a pro­per force to ſustain them. A town or village, for example, where we are introduced by a ſecret correspondence, can­not be carried unleſs we be well ſeconded. The only means of managing the ſurpriſe of posts well, is to divide your force instantly, to ſeize the castle, church, church-yard, or public ſquares. It has been ſaid, that troops ſo divided can act but weakly, and run a risk of being defeated ſeparately. But by making as many detachments as the enemy has posts, in the diſmay cauſed by ſurpriſe, it is eaſy to carry theſe posts before they who defend them have time to dis­pute them or even look round them. The enemy being likewiſe obliged to divide, and not knowing what side to prefer, there is almost a moral certainty, that, stupified with the noiſe which they hear all round, they are ready to let their arms drop cut of their hands; beside, the horrors of a dark night, and the dread that cannot fail to ſeize a party who are ſurpriſed, repreſent objects much greater than what they are, so that they imagine they have to do with a whole army.

The bad ſucceſs of the affair at Cremona mentioned in Sect V. makes nothing against this opinion. If instead of stopping to make priſoners, a detachment had gone directly to the citadel, which ſhould be the way in all ſuch actions, it would have been impossible for theſe brave officers who drove out the Imperialists to have made ſo glorious a de­fence.

Μ. de Schower did otherwise when he ſurpriſed Benevar in Spain in 1708, and did not fail. He learnt that the Spaniards neglected the guard of an old castle which was at the entrance of the place ; and marching in the night he took it, and detached ſeveral parties to attack the town. Surpriſed with ſuch a visit, they sought for ſafety in flight, and ran to take ſhelter in the citadel, but were ſcarcely en­tered when they were made priſoners. The enemy did not think of the attack being begun where they were strongest; but it is the best way, as it is to be preſumed they have divided their forces to be able to defend every where.

Μ. Menard, in his history of Niſmes, gives an account of the ſurpriſe of that town, which merits our attention. Ni­cholas Calviere, called Captain St Coſme, having reſolved to make himself master of this place, engaged a miller whose mill was situated within the walls, at the side of the gate, to file the bars of a grate which shut up the entry of an aqueduct through which the water passed into the town, and to receive 100 men armed into his mill, while a conſiderable body of cavalry and infantry ſhould arrive from different places to ſustain the enterpriſe.

The day for the execution of his project being fixed for the 16th of November 1569, and proper orders given for the rendezvous of the troops, St Coſme came out of the mill with his party at three o’clock in the morning, and advan­cing to the guard at the gate, put them to the ſword, and opening the gate let in 200 horſernen, with each a foot ſoldier behind him. Theſe troops having entered the town, formed ſeveral detachments immediately : one of which went to block up the citadel ; while the rest, ſcattering over the ſquares of the place, and sounding their trumpets, instantly made themſelves masters of the town.

There are a number of circumstances mentioned in this ſurpriſe, which convey a great deal of useful instruction. Captain St Coſme knew how to profit by the negligence of the governor, who omitted to guard the entrance of the aqueduct : to make a proper choice of cavalry for advancing ſo readily with the infantry from different quarters ; the justneſs of the orders given the troops, which brought them 15 leagues from Niſmes at the hour and place appointed for the rendezvous ; the precaution with which he invested the citadel, to prevent his having to do with the garriſon in the streets ; his attention in dividing his troops into the different quarters of the town, and making them sound their trumpets, that the inhabitants might imagine they were very numerous.

But the active corps of the partiſan, without trusting to the stratagems that others have ſucceeded by, must find other reſources than thoſe against which people are ſo pre­pared now-a-days ; and as the ſurprising of the enemy is the great busineſs of the partiſan in carrying on the Petite Guerre, he must see what can be effected by his hardineſs and activity.

The expedient which appears to be the most proper for an officer who has 400 infantry under his command, and is certain that the garriſon is only 200 (for surprises ſhould be always attempted with a double force), is to chooſe very bad weather ; the strong winds, for example, and fogs in winter; or the storms and tempests in ſummer, when, after excessive heats, violent winds rise iuddenly, and agitate the air.

When you have meditated ſuch a ſcheme, then is the time to put a part of your infantry in covered waggons, which ſhould be kept ready for the purpose. The whole party ought to be provided with dog-skin covers for their gun­locks and cartouch-boxes, to take off readily when there is occasion ; and the rest of the infantry to be mounted behind part of the cavalry. Both parties to assemble at ſome place a league distant from that which you would ſurpriſe, and there to stop ; when, if you see the bad weather diſsipating, you must retire till another occasion. If you renew it ten times, you need not deſpair ; a strong place deferves this trouble, and ſucceſs will overpay every fatigue.

But on the contrary, if the storm forms, and the wind increaſes, direct your approaches in ſuch a manner, that you may always have the wind on your back; becauſe if you have it in your face, the enemy’s ſentries can look forward and diſcover you ; and likewiſe if it is in your face, your horſes cannot be made to advance without a great deal of trouble. Theſe precautions being taken, you advance more quickly as the storm increaſes, the horſes and waggons go­ing with great ſpeed before the wind. You need be in no uneasineſs about the enemy’s ſentries seeing you, or hearing the noiſe of your march ; becauſe the ſeverity of the weather obliges them to enter their boxes, and turn their backs to