enveloping attack on Münchengrätz by his whole army, but, owing to distances and the number of units now requiring direction, it was late in the following day before all were in readiness for action. The Austrians then slipped away, and the whole of the next day was spent in getting the divisions back to their proper lines of advance. Clam-Gallas then retired deliberately to Gitschin and took up a new position. The Prussians followed on the 29th, but, owing to the lie of the roads, they had to march in two long columns, separated by almost a day’s march, and when the advanced guard of the left column, late in the afternoon, gained touch with the enemy, the latter were in a position to crush them by weight of numbers, had they not suddenly been ordered to continue the retreat on Miletin.

*Battles of the II. Army : Trautenau and Nachod.—*Meanwhile the situation of the II. army had become critical. On its right wing the I. corps (General v. Bonin) had. received orders on the 27th to seize the passages over the Aupa at Trautenau. This was accomplished without much difficulty, but the main body was still in the defiles in rear, when about 3 p.m. the leading troops were attacked by an overwhelming Austrian force and

driven back in confusion; the confusion spread and became a panic, and the I. corps was out of action for the next forty- eight hours. Almost at the same hour, a few miles to the south­eastward, the advanced guard of the V. corps (Steinmetz) began to emerge from the long defile leading from Glatz to Nachod, and the Prussians had hardly gained room to form for action beyond its exit before they too were attacked. Steinmetz was a different man from Bonin, and easily held his own against the disconnected efforts of his adversary, ultimately driving the latter before him with a loss of upwards of 5000 men. Still the situation remained critical next day, for the I. corps having retreated, the Guard corps (next on its left) was endangered, and Steinmetz on his line of advance towards Skalitz (action of Skalitz, June 28th) could only count on the gradual support of the VI. corps. Benedek’s resolution was, however, already on the wane. From the first his supply arrangements had been defective, and the requisitions made by his leading troops left nothing for the rest to eat. While trying to feed his army he omitted to fight it, and, with the chance of overwhelming the Prussians by one great effort of marching, he delayed the necessary orders till too late, and the Prussian II. army made good its concentration on the upper Elbe with insignificant fighting

at Soor and Königinhof (Guard corps) on the 28th and 29th, and at Schweinschädel (Steinmetz) on the 29th, the Prussians in every encounter proving themselves, unit for unit, a match for their adversaries. It is customary to ascribe their successes to the power of the breech-loader, but there were actions in which it played no part, cavalry *versus* cavalry encounters, and isolated duels between batteries which gave the Prussian gunners a confidence they had not felt when first crossing the frontier.

*Junction of the Prussian Armies.—*By the morning of the 30th it was clear that the junction between the two armies could be completed, whenever desired, by a forward march of a few miles. But Moltke, wishing to preserve full freedom for manœuvre for each army, determined to preserve the interval between them, and began his dispositions to manœuvre the Austrians out of the position he had selected as the best for them to take up, on the left or farther bank of the Elbe.

This is so characteristic of von Moltke’s methods and of the tactical preconceptions of the time that it deserves more detailed notice. Neither army had covered its front by a cavalry screen, both preferring to retain the mounted troops for battlefield purposes. Hence, though they were only a few miles apart, each was ignorant

of the other’s position. Moltke, knowing well the danger for a great army of being forced into a battle with an unfordable river behind it, and with his naturally strong bent towards the defensive in tactics, concluded that Benedek would elect to hold the left bank of the Elbe, between the fortified towns of Josephstadt and Königgrätz, with his right thrown back and covered by the lower courses of the Aupa and the Mettau. Frontal attack on such a position being out of the question, he decided, after weighing well the weaknesses of the Austrian flanks, to direct his principal efforts against the left *(i.e.* southern), although that entailed the uncovering of the communication of the II. army and a flank march of almost the whole of the I. and II. armies across the front of the Austrians in position. As an eminent French critic (General Bonnal) says, this was but to repeat Frederick the Great’s manœuvre at Kolin (*q.v.*), and, the Austrians being where they actually were and not where Moltke decided they ought to be, the result might have been equally disastrous. Never­theless the necessary’ movements were initiated by orders at noon on the 2nd of July, and one phrase in these saved the situation. According to these orders, the Elbe army was directed to Chlumetz on the way to Pardubitz, the I. army diagonally to the south-east across the front of the Austrian position. Two corps of the II. army were to make a demonstration against Josephstadt on the 3rd of July, and the other two were to move in a general direction south-west to keep touch with the I. Prince Frederick Charles was warned to guard the left flank of his marching troops and authorized to attack any forces of the enemy he might encounter in that direction, if not too strong for him. On receipt of these orders (about 3∙3o p.m. July 2nd) the