it had escaped from the enclosing horns of the Prussian attack. In spite of heavy losses the Austrians were perhaps better in hand and more capable of resuming the battle next morning than the victors, for they were experienced in war, and accustomed to defeat, and retired in good order in three organized columns within easy supporting distance of each other. On the other hand, the Prussians were new to the battlefield, and the reaction after the elation of victory was intense; moreover, if what happened at Hühnerwasser affords a guide, the staff would have required some days to disentangle the units which had fought and to assign them fresh objectives.

*Final Operations.*—The convergence of the Prussian armies on the battlefield ended in the greatest confusion. The Elbe army had crossed the front of the I. army, and the II. army was mixed up with both. The reserve cavalry reached the front too late in the day to pursue. Thus the Austrians gained 24 hours, and the direction of

their retreat was not established with any degree of certainty for several days. Moreover the little fortresses of Josephstadt and Königgrätz both refused to capitulate, and the whole Prussian armies were thus compelled to move down the Elbe to Pardubitz before they could receive any definite new direction. Meanwhile Benedek had in fact assigned only one corps with the reserve cavalry to oppose a Prussian advance towards Vienna, and the remaining seven retired to Olmütz, where they were on the flank of a Prussian advance on Vienna, and had all the resources of Hungary behind them to enable them to recuperate. They were also still in railway communication with the capital. On purely military grounds the Prussians should have marched at once towards the Austrian field army, *i.e.* to Olmütz. But for political reasons Vienna was the more important objective, and therefore the I. and Elbe armies were directed towards the capital, whilst the II. army only moved in the direction of the Austrian main body. Political motives had, however, in the meantime exercised a similar influence on the Austrian strategy. The emperor had already consented to cede Venetia to Italy, had recalled two corps from the south (see Italian Wars, 1848-1870) to∣