

Appendix Three

An extract from Alexis Muston, *Israel of the Alps*, Glasgow etc., 1858 (Originally published in French in Paris, 1851). It is reprinted, full length, just as it appears in Muston's work, Vol. II pp. 491-506.

APPENDIX, No. III.

JOURNAL OF A VAUDOIS OFFICER, CONCERNING THE MILITARY OPERATIONS WHICH FOLLOWED THE RETURN OF THE VAUDOIS TO THEIR OWN COUNTRY IN 1689, AND PARTICULARLY THE SIEGE OF THE BALSILLE IN 1690.

The work from which these extracts are made, is a quarto manuscript of seventy-two pages, written in a neat hand. On the margin of the first page is the following note: "Mr. G. ROBERT, the author of this narrative, was afterwards a lieutenant in the service of the Republic [of Holland]. In the year 1716, he sent to me at Voorburg this narrative, written with his own hand."

Arnaud, in the enumeration which he gives of the Vaudois troops and their officers, says, that the troops from Pramol and St. Germain were placed under the command of Captain Robert. (Glorious Return, First Day, p. 46.) It is probable that Captain Robert was compelled to leave the Vaudois valleys in consequence of the new vexations to which their inhabitants were subjected in 1698, and that he repaired to Holland, and there followed the profession of arms.

M. Clignet, postmaster at Leyden, of whom Arnaud speaks in his preface (p.54) resigned his office in 1734, in favour of a person named Robert, of Neuville, who was his relative. Perhaps this relationship may have helped to attract the author of the following memoir to the United Provinces.

Our extracts begin at the moment when the expedition reaches the Vaudois country.

When we reached Pragela, M. Arnaud offered up a prayer full of thanksgiving for the goodness of God to us in having enabled us to surmount all the difficulties which we had experienced on our way. We saw some cavalry on the heights above Fenestrelle, which had been detached in order to cut us off; but as soon as they perceived us in the valley, they withdrew. Fifteen or twenty young men of that valley joined us.

Having passed the night here, we set out next morning to enter the valley of St. Martin. Our route lay by the Col du Lis. This mountain makes the entrance to that valley very difficult. The first opposition which we met with there, was from a company of soldiers of the army of His Royal Highness [Vittorio Amedeo II, the 22 year old Duke of Savoy, nephew of Louis XIV of France, and ruler of the area in which the Vaudios valleys are located]; but after having rolled down some stones upon us as we approached, they fled. We pursued our way to the highest part of the mountain, where, unknown to us, the Marquis of Parele awaited our coming, at the head of 800 men. Besides that this number was superior to ours, they were so advantageously posted, that it would have been impossible for us to have forced the pass, if the heavens had not favored us in the way which I am now to relate. The air was as calm and serene as possible, when suddenly there came on a mist, so thick that a man could scarcely be seen at the distance of a few paces. Thus it happened that one of our people, who was a short distance from the rest, came unexpectedly upon a sentinel. He became aware of this fact by hearing before he saw any one; but marching right up to the sentinel, until he almost touched him, he was addressed in the words, "Say who you are, or I will shoot you;" upon which, without any answer, he shot the sentinel dead. A tumultuous noise arising from the ranks of the soldiers when this first shot was heard, we fired in the direction of the sound, and without giving the enemy time to make any observation as to the amount of our force, we rushed forward, and they, who had not imagined that we were so near, fell into confusion, and fled. Ten or twelve of them, wandering in the mist, fell into our hands. These we put to death.

The mist not permitting us to pursue the enemy, our further gains consequent upon this exploit, were limited to the capture of a flock of sheep, which we found upon this mountain. We proposed to kill them at the village of Barsile, the first to which we came, and the prospect of such food was most acceptable to us, exhausted as we were in consequence of the great scarcity of provisions which we had experienced from the commencement of our expedition. But we had scarcely begun, when our sentinels descried the company of soldiers which has been already mentioned. They also perceived us; but supposing that it was the Marquis of Parele, they imprudently advanced with their handkerchiefs on the ends of their muskets, to signify that they were friends. We surrounded them on all sides, and they discovered their mistake, but rather too late, for it cost them their lives. It may seem that we dealt too severely with our enemies; but it ought to be borne in mind that we had no place in which to keep our prisoners, and that to have allowed them to escape, would have been in two ways destructive to us, by their again fighting against us, and still more by the information which they would have given as to our numbers, which were not known, and were supposed to be greater than they were. Above all, it should be considered that any of our people who were taken by the French, were either hanged or sent to the galleys, and we were firmly persuaded that the Savoyards would not treat us with greater favour.

After this success, all the Vaudois who were amongst us, wished to proceed at once to their own respective villages. But M. Arnaud represented to them so well the certain destruction which they would thus bring upon themselves, that they remained together.

We next went to Pras, where we found some Savoyards, who had come into the place of the Vaudois when they were expelled. The avidity with which they had come to seize on possessions which did not belong to them, cost them their lives. None of them were spared whom it was in our power to kill. We found there also a little Protestant place of worship, which the Savoyards had used for saying their mass. We threw down the altar and cast out the images. Here M. Arnaud preached his first sermon to us. His text was, "Our help is in the name of the Lord," Psalm cxxiv. 8.

After we had remained in this place for some time, it was resolved to go into the valley of Lucerna, as being more habitable than that of St. Martin. However, a troop of our people remained there until we should return. As we were on the way, two battalions of a regiment of guards of His Royal Highness awaited us on the Col Julian, and seemed determined to dispute our passage. But having put our forces in order, we attacked them with such success, that we compelled them to take to flight, and pursued them for a good hour to a position still more advantageous, called the Sere-de-Cruel. But in this new position they made even less resistance than in the former. They abandoned it to us at the first discharge, and passing through the village of Beubisout in haste, they beat a retreat, and at the same time abandoned to us a part of the valley of Lucerne. We then made our cantonment in the hamlet above Beubi, whence we afterwards sent out different detachments.

One of these having made an incursion into the valley of Cayras, we brought back from it a considerable booty of cattle. This enabled us to change our diet, for we had lived for many days upon nothing but chestnuts. The animal food coming after this, we had it for ten days without mixture of any other thing whatever. At the end of that time, there came to us some peasants of that valley, asking us to restore them a part of their cattle, and promising to pay us a certain sum agreed upon, and to furnish us with some salt and other things of which we had need. We were very glad of this interview, and hoped that we might in future have some intercourse with them; and it was very much on this account that we granted them their request, although, indeed, some such arrangement was very necessary for us. They demanded an escort to conduct them over the mountain, and to which they should give the things that had been agreed upon. We gave them a few men for this purpose; but instead of keeping their word with us, they brought the men into an ambuscade of a company of French soldiers. Our people discovered this just in time to throw themselves into a building of four stone walls which had served as a sheepfold, and which became a sort of rampart for them, in which they defended themselves like lions, till the captain who attacked them, enraged that four men should resist him so long, resolved to storm their fortress, and rushed on, sword in hand. But his boldness cost him his life and the lives of some of the bravest of the soldiers who followed him. The rest, finding that only death strokes were to be got by

fighting with men thoroughly desperate, thought proper to retire. Our men then left the scene of combat unharmed. It may easily be conceived, that although those who had deceived us in this case had failed in their design, we did not like them the better upon that account, and did not omit the first proper occasion which presented itself of punishing them.

We sent another detachment to make an incursion into the valley of Angrogna. But the Marquis of Parelle had occupied a position which commands the entrance of the valley, and after a whole day spent in a combat of musketry, without our being able to force it, we were obliged to return without having gained anything by our enterprize.

On our way back, however, we attacked the garrison of Le Villars, and carried the outwork which defends the entrance of the place, whereupon the garrison threw themselves into the church, making use of it as their last entrenchment. To carry this stronghold, we rolled great casks before us, always advancing nearer; but when we were just near enough the gate and ready to enter, there came a detachment sent by the enemy from the town of Lucerne. As we were not strong enough to make head in two directions at once, we left the church to oppose the relieving party; and whilst we were engaged with them, the garrison in the church issued from it and fled. Upon this the detachment which came to their assistance also retired. Not being able to pursue them, and being unwilling that all our efforts should end in accomplishing nothing, we demolished the church. The enemy, however, being reinforced by a new detachment, returned to attack us. Being thus opposed by a force greater than our own, and feeling ourselves to be the weaker party, we retired with the loss of a few men killed and taken prisoners. M. Montoux, minister, was amongst the latter. The enemy, having set fire to the village, retired also.

Upon this, it was thought proper to form a little flying camp of ninety men to scour the valley and observe the enemy. Being near the fort of La Tour, we came upon two women who were gathering chestnuts, and to whom we did nothing except questioning them. On finding themselves at liberty, they went and gave information to the Marquis of Parelle of the place where we were and our supposed numbers. The marquis did not allow the opportunity to pass unimproved, but despatched a party during the night to form an ambuscade and surprise us. When the day broke, unarmed men were sent out, who made a pretence of gathering chestnuts. We, having perceived them without suspecting the artifice, ran after them to the place where the party in ambush arrested us by a discharge of musketry. We replied in a similar style. At the sound of the firing, one of our captains, who had come to the vicinity with the view of seizing some grain, attacked the enemy on another side, and we had begun to pursue them, when a double detachment of horse and foot came to reinforce them. The foot soldiers advanced to take possession of a height to which we might have retired, and the cavalry followed the course of a river, thinking to place us between the foot soldiers and themselves. But perceiving their design, we saved ourselves by running with all speed till we gained Le Villard. Deeming this position strong enough to arrest them, we barricaded a bridge which was there, and entrenched ourselves behind the walls of a garden which fronted the bridge. A portion of the enemy having pursued us, delayed to attack us, that they might give time to the other detachments to come up and take us in the rear. But discovering their scheme, we abandoned this post. We were pursued beyond Beubi, which is more than a league and a half from the place we were first attacked. They left a garrison at Beubi and we rested at Serre-de-Crust, rather less than a quarter of an hour's march from that place.

All this trouble having been caused to us by those two women, and we considering that all with whom we had any intercourse must be proper objects of suspicion to us, as all conspired to seek our destruction, and moreover, that these people followed us in order to gather our chestnuts and grapes, which was to deprive us of the means of subsisting for any considerable time, it was resolved that, in future, no quarter should be given to any one.

The new garrison at Beubi was a great annoyance to us, as we could no longer move about with the same freedom as before. But we kept the garrison also very closely shut up, and no convoy could reach it without a strong escort. We occupied the heights in the neighborhood, and as soon as we discovered a convoy, we were ready to fall upon it. We had always the heights to retreat to. The enemy placed a watch at the distance of a musket-shot from the gate of their garrison, and we surprised it during the night and put all who composed it to the sword except two,

who escaped and carried the tidings to the garrison.

About this time a Vaudois named Gros, who had hitherto preferred his patrimony to his religion, came and joined us. But being unable to submit to fatigue and hunger which we were obliged to endure he took the first favourable opportunity of deserting us again; and having asked a cousin whom he had in our troop to accompany him a little way, he conducted him to the enemy. He played us another trick, which we discovered a few days after, on the death of a captain whose detachment we defeated. Those who killed him found in his pocket a memorandum of the places of concealment in which we had stored up the little provisions which we had. It was in the handwriting of Gros himself. Hereupon, having made a serjeant of the guards prisoner, we pretended to consider that Gros was a prisoner also, and proposed an exchange. He fell into the snare, thinking that he would find opportunities enough of escaping again. But being convicted by the memorandum in his own handwriting, and having no answer to make when he was asked for news of his cousin, he was immediately incapacitated for any further treachery.

There was yet another Vaudois who, being won over by the two capuchins and the Chevalier De Molte, whom we still kept prisoners, fled along with them.

The Savoyards at Roura thought themselves pretty secure, because of their greater distance from us, and of the garrisons which were between, but we came upon them by surprise. We killed all whom we could find of both sexes, carried off much cattle, and set fire to the village. We burned also every house in the neighborhood where the enemy could find shelter; and they doing the same thing on their part, it was in a short time so completely done, that it would have been difficult to have found in the whole valley a roof under which to be protected from the rain.

His Royal Highness having sent three regiments to join the garrison of Beubi, they proceeded to attack us. It became necessary for us to beat a retreat, having first sent away forty cows and 800 sheep which we had on the mountain. But whilst we were retreating a lamb fell behind on the way and its mother left the flock to seek it, whereupon she was followed by a second and that by a third; and so one after another all the sheep went over to the side of the enemy, who raised shouts of joy as if they had gained a battle. Having taken up a position at a place called Le Quille, we were there attacked by the enemy on more sides than one, but we repulsed them at all points; and they, having continued these assaults against us all day, retired in the evening. We, seeing no good prospect of being able to maintain our ground much longer in that valley, adopted the resolution of returning to the valley of St. Martin. Fifteen of our friends, however, spent the winter there, moving rapidly about amongst the rocks from one hole to another, and living on whatever they could contrive to get hold of. We passed the Col de Julian again, and went to Pras, where we found the troop still remaining which we had left there. They had found means to make some bread, and upon our arrival they shared it with us, of which we had much need.

After having reposed there for two days, we proceeded to seize the villages of Perier and Villeseche, which are situated at the entrance of that valley and at no great distance from Peyrouse and Pignerol. A small garrison which was in Perier retired at our approach. There we burned a monastery, and demolished it to the foundations. It was within that monastery, according to the Vaudois, that most of the woes inflicted upon them were devised. The vintage not having yet taken place, we replenished our cellars. We collected also a large quantity of chestnuts, with the design of drying them for winter use. Being near La Peyrouse, we attacked a post which was about a cannon-shot from it, and having driven out the French who occupied it, and killed some of them and taken others prisoners, we caused one of them to be hanged by his comrade in the sight of our enemies.

We had here too good a position for the French, with whom we had to do, to permit us long to occupy it. A great detachment was sent out from Pignerol and passed the Col du Pis, the highest mountain which bounds that valley. We encountered them, dividing our forces so as to meet them in each of the defiles by which they had to come. But being inferior to them in numbers, and being attacked in different parts at once, we were compelled to give way, but not until we had disputed, as well as we could, all the passes in which we could act against them with advantage. They set fire to every habitation which they found in their way, from the highest to the lowest part of the valley. They burned the chestnuts which we had laboriously collected, poured out our wine, and

retired by Peyrouse. We returned to reoccupy our position, wasted by fire as the place was, and thence we continued to make our excursions. Being generally upon the heights, to see what could be seen, we one day descried three mules approaching, two of them laden with bread, and one with wine for a post in the neighbourhood, and conducted by two companies of Piedmontese. Upon this, a Vaudois captain, named Tron, exclaiming, "He that loves me, follow me," eighteen of us went with him in pursuit of the mules. We could not come up with them until they reached the post whither they were going, but the two companies abandoned it to us. Thus, we had bread and wine, which we carried off, after having killed the mules, for we could not bring them by the paths which we were accustomed to use. The chestnuts now began to fail, and we were at a loss to find anything on which to live. This was the reason that thirty French refugees, losing courage, resolved to return to Switzerland by the mountains of Dauphiny. But they had the misfortune to be taken by the French, who conducted them to Grenoble, where sentence was passed upon them, and some were hanged and others sent to the galleys. One of them was put to a cruel death for having assumed the title of Commandant, which, however, the Vaudois had not accorded to him. He was broken on the wheel. A dozen Vaudois, who also thought fit to leave us, were arrested as they were passing by the..... They had chosen this route in the hope that, on account of the language, they might have less difficulty. His Royal Highness merely kept them prisoners.

The French being informed of our condition by those of our people whom they had taken prisoners, again sent out a great detachment to seize upon the villages of Perier and Villeseche. They came again by the Col du Pis. Although we were only about 480 men, we did not hesitate to go to meet them. But not being sufficiently strong to occupy all the defiles, as would have been requisite, and fearing that we might be cut off, we retired after a few discharges. They thought to fortify themselves at Macel. But as this would entirely have cut off our communication with Pras and the valley of Lucerne, we took post on a height above the village, from which we fired upon them, so that they were obliged to retire.

They placed garrisons at Le Preier, Villeseche, and Le Becet, by which we were so closely hemmed in, that we could no longer find anything on which to subsist. We spent some days to no purpose in moving about around their garrisons, thinking that some convoys would make their appearance. Three days having passed, during which we did not succeed in seizing anything, we were reduced to the necessity of feeding on the coarsest wild fruits which we found in the woods. One of our parties having gone in the direction of Angrogna surprised a small body of the troops of His Royal Highness, who fled and abandoned their very camp, and thirteen mules which brought them munitions of war. Our people killed the mules, set fire to the tents and carried away some provisions which they found there.

We then resolved to seek a proper place to winter in. That which seemed to us the best, was a little hill at the base of the mountain of Le Clapie. It is called the Four Teeth [*Les Quatre Dents.*] I suppose it has received this name from its form; for this little hill has four points in the form of teeth, which served us for bastions and half-moons; the second commanding the first, and the last commanding all the rest. It is situated above the village of La Balsille. We there made some entrenchments and barracks, which we dug in the earth, in order to render them less subject to cold, covering them with hay, straw, or boards, as we could find materials for our purpose. Thirteen days were employed in this work, during which we had no food, except some coleworts and radishes, which we boiled without salt, fat, or butter. Often, indeed, we ate them without taking time to cook them.

We afterwards discovered a few houses on the mountain, which had escaped burning, with corn unthrashed, of which several barns were full. We carried it to our post. There were two mills in the neighbourhood, one at the distance of a musket-shot, and the other of half-an-hour's walking. But the millstones only were there without any machinery. We fitted them up again at the expense of two other mills which we plundered in Dauphiny, and we laboured so assiduously, that in a few days our mills began to yield us flour,

The enemy, contrary to their usual conduct, had given us time to accomplish all this, without incommoding us, till one morning they surprised those of our men who were at the mill farthest away, of whom they killed two and carried the other two to Pignerol. When we heard the

firing, we ran to the spot, but were not able to reach it soon enough; so that the enemy broke the millstones, and set fire to the building, after having thrown the corn and flour into the river. But we gave them something to do at the two most difficult parts of the way which lay between them and our stronghold, keeping them in check so long, that our people who were at the other mill had time to retire. This they did after taking away all the machinery and some boards which covered it. The whole place seemed nothing but a paltry ruin; for our people had also taken the precaution to cover the millstones with water. The French, arriving and seeing nothing but a ruin, planted themselves behind it to fire at us. There they remained till evening. And when they retired we convoyed their rear-guard with discharges of musketry, which were not all thrown away. They returned afterwards several times to attack us, but managing always in the same way, we preserved our mill during the whole winter. As we continued to make incursions into Dauphiny, the enemy being apprised that one of our detachments had gone towards Bouriet, sent a party from Villeseche to cut it off. But we seeing them, advanced to meet them. We found them just arrived at the base of the mountain. But as it was of importance to gain the height, by which our people must return to their own place, we climbed within pistol-shot of each other, without a musket being fired. We very soon, however got before them, being better used to that sort of climbing than they were, and seized the pass. There they attacked us several times, but they were repulsed. In the evening, our people arrived, and we returned to our fort, and the French to their garrison.

There now took place so great a fall of snow, that it was almost impossible for us any longer to make incursions into Dauphiny. Moreover, there was no village on the frontier, where there were not now troops, and when we approached any of them, the enemy entrenched themselves in the churches, in which also they slept, so as to prevent us from taking them by surprise. Sometimes we made an attempt upon one village, sometimes upon another. When we arrived, we divided our force into two parts, the one half confronting the enemy, whilst the other entered the houses and loaded themselves with bread or flour. Those who had confronted the enemy, then became the rear-guard, and then we divided what we had got, which often was very little, among the whole detachment.

Towards the peasants of that region, we conducted ourselves in a very different way from that which we adopted towards the Savoyards. For we frequently paid for the victuals which we took, when no resistance was made to us. Whereupon, some of the people of the village of Bourcet came and offered them to us for payment. They added, that we must go to the village and take them. We sent eight of our men along with them, who, on arriving at the village, found themselves surrounded by soldiers; and the soldiers hastily firing on them, killed one of our captains. The rest found means of escaping. We soon punished this treachery, one of our detachments burning the village.

We afterwards made an expedition to passing by the Col du Pis. This mountain being very high, there was so much snow upon it, that for two leagues we found it in many places more than four feet deep. And as no previous parties of any kind had passed that way, we found it necessary to make a path for ourselves, which was not done without much labour. Arriving in the neighborhood of the village during the night, we sent scouts to reconnoitre, who brought us word that the garrison was stronger than we, and entrenched in the church. We did not think our force sufficient to attack them; we therefore found ourselves obliged to return without doing anything, and without gaining anything by our toil but a great appetite. Many had brought no bread with them, some, because they had it not, and others, because they counted upon getting it; so that those who had a little were under the necessity of sharing it with their companions.

On our way back to our fort, we did not know what was to become of us. We were surrounded by mountains covered with snow, with enemies at the mouths of all the passes which led from them, and without any provisions. In this hard extremity, having no longer any help to expect from men, we lifted up our hearts and our hands to God, whose Providence and infinite goodness had already supplied our wants before we had even asked it. He had preserved a kind of manna in our frightful wilderness, by which we saw that he never utterly abandons those who have really put their trust in him. Thus it was. When we arrived in the valleys, there were some fields in elevated situations which had not yet been reaped, and the corn having been laid flat upon the

ground by the rain, had been afterwards entirely covered with snow. All who are acquainted with that country, are aware that these heights are covered with snow during six months of the year. But by a special interposition of Providence, at the very time when we were at the point of perishing for hunger, there came a south wind and melted the snow which covered the corn, and had preserved it for us. Hereby we saw that God was always for us. This wind began in the month of January, and continued till the end of April. In this wonderful and peculiar manner we were supplied with bread all the time that we were shut in upon every side. The enemy also ceased to harass us, because the snow made the roads impracticable. And as they were not aware of the source from which our means of subsistence were derived, and had been informed that we were destitute of provisions, they thought themselves sure of having us without any risk.

Here I must not omit to state what our conduct was amongst ourselves. In general it was founded upon perfect mutual confidence. Therefore, whatever was done, and whatever happened, every one was contented. When the whole body went on any expedition, and left only a detachment to guard the stronghold, everything that we had was equally divided on their return. When a small party went out, the members of it were allowed to keep to themselves for their reward, whatever they might get. Our barracks contained each a company, which was as a family residing under the same roof. However, as there is a great depth of corruption in most men, there were some individuals of our body who did not do exactly as they ought. They had in some excursion made prize of a little money. But instead of making this known, they even denied it. Against this conduct our minister spoke very strongly in some sermons which he made upon the subject. He declared that those who kept the forbidden thing, put themselves in danger of the chastisements of God. Time shewed us how foolish it is to despise such warnings; for the most of these persons, and particularly those of them who were Vaudois, being tempted by their money to return to Switzerland, were taken on the way, as has been already related.

M. Arnaud preached three sermons to us every week, and conducted prayer twice every day, when the enemy left us at peace to meet for it. He led forth no detachment without having first implored the Divine aid, and when they had reached any place where they were to spend the night, they did not lie down nor rise up without engaging again in prayer. In our barracks, some of us read aloud one or more chapters at daybreak, a psalm or two were then sung, and this was followed by a prayer. This exercise was repeated three times a day. Thus it was that our time was spent on that mountain. In spite of us, indeed, it was a Lent, kept with very meagre fare. We ate nothing for some months except bread made of the grain which Providence had led us to discover, as I have already mentioned. This bread was very brown, and had little substance in it. We had nothing to drink but water.

The month of April being come, we began to be released from winter bondage so as to be able to renew our excursions. Every one, as it may well be imagined, was anxious to see an end of our Lent. We sent out a detachment to try if anything could be got with which to keep Easter. It was necessary to march by night, to avoid being discovered by the French, for we passed very close by them. We passed over a mountain where there was still much snow, and were exposed all night to snow then falling. But notwithstanding all this, we arrived an hour before daybreak at a place half a quarter of a league from Pramort. There part of us awaited the dawn, and the rest went on to St. Germain. These two places, both in the valleys, were inhabited by Savoyards, who dwelt in great security, trusting to their garrison, and imagining, as others did, that we must all have died of famine in course of the winter. This being the case, they were, in no small degree, astonished when we burst into their villages, which was at daybreak, and just about the same time the garrison beat the alarm. We did not succeed in surprising the garrison, which fled by the one end of the village as we entered by the other. Not many, even of the peasants, lost their lives. After having collected together all the cattle, we set fire to the village. Whilst we were thus occupied at Pramort, our comrades were doing the like at St. Germain, and from these two places we carried off a considerable booty. Towards evening, the party from St. Germain rejoined us; and we repassed the mountain. We thought to have kept the same road, under cover of the night, by which we had come. But the French having been apprised, posted themselves at a pass which we could not avoid, without retracing our steps. This, therefore, we were compelled to do; and, after having

passed over the mountain, we were under the necessity of ascending it again on the other side. We were so fatigued, and so overcome by sleep, that we flung ourselves down upon the snow to sleep. But the cold soon compelled us to rise, and when the one left us, the other laid hold of us. In this condition it was that we moved along the mountain side, not far from its summit, till we had reached the vicinity of our fort. In this counter-march we lost some of our cows, which, sliding and falling upon the frozen snow, were seized by the enemy, who followed closely on our track. It was the only advantage that they gained. We arrived happily at our fort, without any other loss.

In the beginning of May, the French came, in order, as they said, to exterminate us. They were 11,000 men, as we afterwards learned; and having made themselves masters of all the positions around our entrenchments, they remained there within pistol-shot. The sentries were obliged to keep themselves concealed, because there was a continual firing on the one side or the other. As their intention was to cut off all possibility of our escape, by occupying all the passes; they were obliged, for this purpose, to place some of their troops on the highest parts of the mountain, where there was a considerable quantity of snow, and where they had not even wood to make a fire. Besides which, all the time that they remained in our vicinity, snow, hail, or rain never ceased to fall; and, what was most remarkable, was, that every time they attacked us, the weather was almost the same, which made them say, that we had the command of the winds and of the rain.

All their precautions did not hinder one of our detachments from making a sortie by night, in order to annoy a regiment of dragoons, encamped on a wooded slope, above which was a great rock. There our people, having gathered a great quantity of large stones, and arranged them as well as they could on the edge of the rock, launched them all at once. As they fell, they set loose other stones, and altogether came down with terrible din upon the poor dragoons. The dragoons having been obliged to kindle fires upon account of the cold, the light of their fires enabled us, amidst the darkness of the night, to see burning billets thrown up as high as the tree-tops when the stones came in contact with them. We learned afterwards that many of the dragoons suffered upon this occasion. Those who were struck by the stones, escaped death only by the loss of a limb. Some were cut through the middle. When it was day, they placed a guard at the spot from which the evil had come upon them; our people, in the meantime, having left it as they went to it.

This regiment of dragoons was encamped by itself, apart from the rest of the enemy's troops, so that their provisions must of necessity be carried past our fort. They were carried past it only during the night. A corporal of our company, and three men with him, meeting this convoy upon one occasion as it passed, without regard to the number of the enemy, fired upon them, and each of our men killing his man, they seized what these men had carried, and each brought back to us a bag of bread, which served as a supply for us all. The corporal who performed this exploit, found himself seized by the collar when he had fired, but as he was stronger or more adroit than his adversary, he threw him down and killed him with his bayonet. The French being apprised of what was taking place by the noise that arose, and more perfectly by the fugitives, marched their piquet towards the scene of action. We descried them by the light of the moon, and saluted them with great discharges of musketry, upon which they made haste to get out of the way again.

We were at this time 370 men in all, divided into fourteen companies. Each company had its assigned post, more or less dangerous according to the strength of the company. There were two stationed at one point, which was the most exposed of all, but they did not amount together to more than ninety men. M. De La Parat, lieutenant-colonel of the regiment of Artois, having been commanded to carry this position by force, advanced at the head of 700 grenadiers, and taking advantage of a thick fog, he was not discovered till he was close to the sentry, who had scarcely time to cry "To arms." Our men, promptly seizing their arms, and rushing from their barracks, were the first to fire, and having discharged their pieces, they dashed forward sword in hand. This movement was executed so rapidly, and was attended with such success, that the enemy were seized with a panic and took to flight, and not knowing how to find the gorge by which they had come, many of them flung themselves headlong over the rocks. Besides these, however, seventy were left upon the ground where the action took place. M. De Parat being wounded in the thigh, we made him prisoner, along with two serjeants who were attempting to bear him off. There was also a captain of grenadiers found amongst the slain. Our people were in too great haste to take the

spoils of the slain; had this not been the case, only a very small number of the enemy would have escaped, unequal as was the force opposed to them. We saw their extreme disorder without being able to aid our comrades, because the French were within a short distance of all our posts, and would not have failed to embrace the opportunity of entering if we had left any of them unguarded. The most remarkable thing in this action was that none of our people received any injury, except one man whose musket burst and slightly wounded him in the hand. This was all that we suffered from an army which ought to have exterminated us at once. And, indeed, it was not their fault that they did not. They had the best possible intention of doing so, but God being for us, all their efforts were necessarily fruitless, and turned to their own disadvantage. Behold another manifest proof of this.

We had neglected a place where the hill sloped suddenly away from the very centre of our fort, because of the extreme difficulty of ascending there. The French, perceiving this, caused a detachment to advance upon this point, whilst M. Parat made his assault. This design succeeded so well, that they had reached the base of a poor entrenchment of dry stones which we had made there. There was no guard there, for the reason which I have already stated; and they were on the point of entering, when a woman prevented them. She had gone for water and was returning by this place, and perceiving the enemy, she began to roll down the stones of the fortification upon them. They had no opportunity of firing at her; and she ceased not from her efforts till they were constrained to retire, which was very soon the case, as they were upon a very steep slope, where the stones that were thrown down produced an extraordinary effect.

But for this opposition which Providence seemed to have prepared against the enemy, there can be no doubt that we were in great danger of utter destruction. The good woman to whom, under God, our preservation was to be ascribed, was a Savoyard, whom we had found in the country, and who had always followed us, taking great care of our wounded. We became the objects of this affection to her, because she embraced our religion.

About an hour before the enemy attacked us, we had sung, at the post where my company was stationed, the sixty-eighth psalm, which the enemy might well enough hear. When we brought in the lieutenant-colonel, he told us that when he was ordered upon that duty, and had made himself acquainted with the place, he had sworn an oath that he would sleep that night in our barracks. But he did not think that it was to be as a prisoner. Next day, our people cut off the heads of all the dead, and fixed them upon the points of the palisades where they had entered. This was done in sight of the enemy. They sent us a surgeon to heal M. De La Parat, with a ridiculous stipulation, that we were to get no benefit of his medicines. However, we paid no attention to this, but kept them carefully because we had none ourselves. And here I ought to mention that after we lost our own, we had nothing to apply to our wounds, but a composition which the Vaudois make, and of which human fat is an ingredient. Every kind of sore was bathed, not with spirits, but with cold water. Notwithstanding all this, almost none died. So true it is that he whom God keeps is well kept.

The enemy having intimated to us that they would give us what ransom we wished for the lieutenant-colonel, we replied that we could not think of selling the blood of our brethren, and that if they would give us prisoners in exchange, we would be very happy to give him into their hands. But they would do nothing. We said to them that they could not wonder if we made reprisals. Our mode of proceeding seemed very strange to them, and great exaggerations were published by them on this subject, as that when we took prisoners we put them to cruel deaths, flaying them alive, or subjecting them to other torments equally terrible. I was present when the greatest numbers of prisoners were taken, and can protest that I never saw anything of the kind and that when the prisoners were put to death, it was from mere necessity, because of the injury which we might have sustained from letting them escape, or to try if there was no way of putting a stop to that barbarity which the enemy had always shown, both in this war and the preceding ones, sparing neither men, women, nor children. The story current amongst the enemy that we flayed the prisoners alive, may have arisen from the circumstance already mentioned, that the Vaudois made use of human fat in preparing a salve for wounds. When, therefore, they found a fat corpse, they opened it to take out the fat, and the enemy, finding the bodies in this condition, were apt to imagine what I have above

stated, their own treatment of us tending to confirm them in such an opinion. But this error was advantageous to us: for they conceived at last a notion of this thing so terrible, that they no sooner saw us appear than they became completely panic stricken. The following circumstance I saw with my own eyes, and could not have well believed it otherwise. Two of our people, creeping along to surprise an advanced sentry of that regiment of dragoons which I have already had occasion to mention, and being discovered, the regiment quitted its post and ascended a height, from which they began to roll down stones upon the two men.

The enemy, seeing how little success had attended all their enterprises, and distressed by the continuous snow and hail, were compelled to decamp. As this movement took place entirely under our eyes, we waited until they had all defiled, to make an attack upon them, which we did at the descent of a hill. They did not perceive us till we were upon them. They fell into confusion and fled, without having time even to form a rear-guard. We pursued them for a league and a half, firing upon them continually, whilst they never fired a single shot. The most remarkable thing was that the weather became fine as soon as they were gone.

It was not long, however, till they came back, with a reinforcement of 3000 men of the troops of His Royal Highness, making, with the French troops, a total of 13,000 men. They brought with them two cannons, and with great difficulty dragged them to a height from which they might act against our fortifications. As we had always a detachment out somewhere, and it so happened that we had then one of forty men in Pragela, we numbered in fact only 330 men. They invested us again on all sides. They then sent several communications to us, promising to give us good terms if we would surrender, but declaring that if we waited till the first cannon was fired we should have no quarter. We having rejected this proposal, they afterwards added, that if we would retire into Switzerland they would send hostages whom the Swiss should keep till we were all arrived there, and that the king would give each of us 900 louis d'or. As these were mere Machiavellian proposals, the whole object of which was that they might have us without peril to themselves, we replied that they must fire their cannon and we would find means to answer them. They again demanded the lieutenant-colonel, offering us whatever money we might wish for his ransom. We made them the same answer as before, that we wished only to get other prisoners in exchange; and at the same time we gave orders to the man who kept ward over him, to kill him in the event of our fort being stormed, which he did. We also intimated to the enemy that we wished to have no more conferences with them. They continued, however, whilst they laboured at their battery, to call to us very often through a speaking trumpet, to surrender before the cannon began to fire, if we would save our lives, to which we replied only by discharging our muskets.

The battery having begun to fire, made terrible havoc of our entrenchments, which consisted only of dry stones, and it became impossible to remain behind them. A sufficient breach having been made, the enemy divided themselves into several bodies, in order to attack us on all sides. We were thus obliged to retire to our innermost stronghold; and to do this we were under the necessity of exposing ourselves to the fire of more than 3000 men, who kept up an incessant fire on the points against which they had been led, whilst the rest pursued us. Yet we had none killed, although many were wounded. Being no longer able either to advance or retreat, we arrested the enemy by musket shots, and by rolling down stones upon them. However, we could not have continued our resistance much longer, if the night had not come on, when the enemy relaxed their efforts; but keeping us shut in upon all sides, and doubling their guard, which was now limited to a much narrower space than before, they had no thought that we could escape from them. Thus were we reduced to a most deplorable condition, and to all appearance it was a thousand to one that we should all perish. But God yet once more displayed his power in our behalf, employing as his instrument for our deliverance an old Vaudois captain called A'Polet. This good man, who had been a great hunter of roebucks, and knew all the paths, encouraged us, and promised that with the help of God he would extricate us from the midst of our enemies. As the first step towards the execution of his plan, we kindled a number of fires, as if we had intended to pass the night where we were. Then we moved off in single file, each man holding by the coat of the man before him, for the night was so dark that if any one let go the coat of his comrade, it was necessary to cause the head of the file to halt. We were often compelled to hold by the brambles and bushes to keep

ourselves from falling down the steep. Besides all the other risks which we ran, we passed close by several of the enemies' posts, so near, that to avoid being heard, we all put off our shoes. At last, after having marched all night, with extreme toil and incredible danger, we found ourselves at daybreak out of danger. Of course the enemy did not fail to attack our fortress, as they were commanded, and it is easy to imagine how great must have been their surprise. The greater part of them believed that our minister was a magician, and that he had transported us from thence in the clouds. We continued to march all day without finding anything to eat. Next day we arrived at Rodore, where we found herbs beginning to grow in some of the meadows, and halted to gather them; but as we were going to cook them, the enemy, who had come by a shorter road in order to cut us off, appearing at hand, we were compelled to decamp in haste. We did not fail, however, to carry with us our pots, and some as they ran ate the half-cooked vegetables without any seasoning. We succeeded in increasing our distance from the French on paths which we knew much better than they. And having passed over the mountain, we arrived at Pramort, where there were four companies of Piedmontese. On our arrival, two of them threw themselves into a church, and the other two into a house. There we besieged them, and some of our people having found means of mounting on the roof of the house, made an opening in it by which we entered, and were hand to hand with these two companies. We gave quarter for the first time to a captain, two lieutenants, and a surgeon. We would have dealt as tenderly with the other captain, but he was too aged to be able to follow us, which cost him his life. As for the soldiers who were in the church, we had already applied fire to the door, which was burning satisfactorily, when the French made their appearance, and we were obliged to relinquish this enterprise. Having sent our prisoners on before us, and also some cows which we had found at this place, under the care of our wounded men, we amused the enemy for some time until they should reach a sufficient distance; after which we retired to a place called Les Clots, a narrow pass at the base of a mountain bordering on the valley of Lucerna.

When we were established in this stronghold, His Royal Highness sent us word by a special messenger, that he had entered into the grand alliance with England and Holland, and that he would soon give us proof of it. But seeing his troops acting against us in conjunction with those of the French, we supposed that this was merely a snare to entrap us, and accordingly this message produced no further effect. But whilst we were still in the same place, another message came to us to the same purpose, with the addition, that to prove the truth of it, we had only to fix a place where as much bread would be brought to us as we had need of. We fixed a place, and took all possible precautions against being surprised, if there should be any design of the kind. Finding that the promise which had been made to us was kept, we took as much bread as we could carry, and returned to the place from which we had come. On this and the cows which we had brought from Pramort we were able to subsist for some days.

The French did not now know where we were, till they were conducted to the spot by one of our detachments, which having attacked them, and having been repulsed, was pursued by the enemy to our very hold. This led us to send away our wounded men and our prisoners, with the surgeon, who had been sent for M. de Parat, into a hole of the rock upon the mountain.

The enemy having sent out a number of detachments with a view to cut us off, we did as much in the same way on our part against them as the disproportion of our forces would permit. We anticipated the design of a party of forty grenadiers, which was marching to intercept our passage by the summit of the mountain, and intercepted theirs. After we had thrown them into disorder, eighteen of our number pursued them, sword in hand, for half a league, till they reached their reserve, with which they took shelter. M. De Clerembeau was not more fortunate. For, having ascended in another place with a large detachment, he was attacked by our people, and so roughly handled, that such of his men as escaped slid down the mountain in a sitting posture to the base. The snow being frozen, was in excellent condition for such an amusement. But unfortunately, these fugitives came upon the place where our wounded men were, who, not being in general so severely wounded that they could do nothing to preserve themselves from capture, all contrived to make their escape except two. These two were captured, and the surgeon was recaptured, and the two Piedmontese officers set at liberty. Our two wounded men were tied together by the neck, and

so conducted, thinking that it would have been an act of kindness to have killed them on the spot, and their lives were prolonged only that they might die in public. Having passed through the valley of Lucerna, and arrived at Villarod, which was in their path, they thought it desirable to have some refreshment. There was there a Vaudois captain, with a detachment, who, having, abjured his religion, had entered into the service of His Royal Highness. M. De Clerembeau, not knowing that His Royal Highness had entered into the grand alliance, asked the captain if he would have the goodness to give some refreshment to the remains of his detachment, which had escaped from the fury of the barbas, saying that they had almost nothing to eat for some days. The Vaudois captain affected to sympathize very deeply in his misfortunes, and said that nothing could be more reasonable than his request; that he would go to give orders about everything, and that in the meantime he must cause his men to lay down their arms and go into a house where he would see that everything that was necessary should be brought to them. All this being done as the captain desired, he caused his own detachment, whom he had close at hand, to seize the arms of the enemy, after which he told M. De Clerembeau that he arrested him and all his men, in the name of His Royal Highness. This was cause of no little surprise, but at the same time of very great joy to our two wounded men, whom the captain ordered to be set at liberty. Those of our people who had so severely handled this detachment, returned to us laden with their spoils.

All this did not prevent the French from finding means of hemming us in. We were compelled to fight every day, and often in such close combat, that not having time to charge our muskets without giving our enemies opportunity of rushing upon us we made good use of part of the weapons with which David slew Goliath and drove them back with stones. At this crisis His Royal Highness sent a messenger to tell us to take courage, and that if we could contrive to get out of the dangerous place in which we were, and would come into the valley of Lucerne, we would find plenty of provisions for our use. He knew our malady; for hunger was the worst enemy with which we had to contend. He added also, that he had a regiment of French refugees on the march to join us. It was the regiment of Loche. All this gave us so much the more pleasure, because till this time we had still feared that His Royal Highness was against us. This good news being soon diffused, the courage of our men at all our posts was redoubled, and that very evening we found means of making our escape.

We reached Beubi, where the garrison had orders from His Royal Highness to yield that post to us, and to leave us some flour and some wine which they had. This order was executed even before our arrival for they got out of our way with as much haste, as if we had still been enemies. We, for our part, carried what we found there to a height at a small distance, where we resolved to remain until we should have a perfect certainty of the alliance of which we were still in doubt. But to put an end to all our suspicions, His Royal Highness sent us some convoys of ammunition and provisions, and caused those of our people that had been taken prisoners to be restored to us. The detachment which had gone to Pragela, before we were besieged in our fort, rejoined us now, and we received confirmation on all hands of the news that His Royal Highness was really our ally. Our wounded men, who had been dispersed by the fugitives of M. De Clerembeau's detachment, also returned. There was one of them who having wandered among the mountains and having nothing to eat, killed a young wolf which he came upon, and subsisted for some days upon its raw flesh. He rejoined us about the end of this time, his wound being healed, for which he had never done anything except to wash it with fresh water, which served him instead of spirits, and balsam.

Shortly after this, His Royal Highness sent the Chevalier Verceil to take command of us
...,&c.

The remainder of the memoir is chiefly filled with particulars already known, and which are related in the *Israel of the Alps*.