

THE BATTLE OF SOLFERINO

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The Austrian army passed the Mincio on the night of the 23^d, at four different points. The right wing occupied Pozzolongo, Solferino, and Cavriana; the left wing advanced on the 24th to Guidizzolo and Castelgaffredo, and forced back on every point the enemy who opposed it. While the Austrian army was continuing its forward movement toward the Chiese, the enemy, who had in their turn assumed the offensive with all their forces, brought so considerable a number of troops that at about ten in the morning the two principal armies came into collision. The second Austrian corps, forming the right wing under the command of General Count Schlick, defended vigorously until two o'clock the points occupied on the principal line; and the first corps, commanded by General Count Wimpffen, gained ground continually on the left, toward the Chiese. About three o'clock the French directed their principal attack against Solferino, and after a combat of several hours seized that position, although heroically defended by the fifth corps d'armée.

Immediately after the French advanced again and attacked Cavriana, which was also valiantly defended until evening by the first corps, supported by the seventh; but eventually it was necessary to abandon that point to the French. While the engagements were going on for the possession of Solferino and Cavriana, the eighth corps advanced from Pozzolengo on the extremity of the right wing and forced back the Piedmontese troops, which it found before it; but that movement could not contribute in a decisive manner to enable us to rejoin the positions which we had lost in the centre.

On the left wing the third and ninth corps were fighting firmly, supported by the eleventh. The cavalry of reserve, collected on this wing, executed several charges with great bravery, but exceedingly heavy losses and the circumstance that, on the left wing, the first army, in consequence of an enormous display of French troops, had been stopped in its attack against the left wing of the Allies, who, with the bulk of their forces, were advancing on the centre from the neighborhood of Volta, forced the Austrian army to retreat, which movement commenced at an advanced hour in the evening, in the midst of a tremendous storm. Yesterday, during the night, Pozzolengo, Mozambano, Volta, and Goito were still occupied by the Austrian troops.

General Urban, who, both in the Hungarian campaign and in these latter times, distinguished himself as a leader of flying corps, having been appointed to the command of the fortress of Verona, has already entered on his functions.

Harper's Weekly (23 July 1859), pp. 470-471.