

THE GREAT BATTLE OF GALICIA (1914):¹

A STUDY IN STRATEGY.

Tactics is the art of conducting a battle.
Strategy is the art of applying a battle.

The Russian forces that were intended to operate against Austria-Hungary formed the four armies of the South-west Front. The G.O.C. of the Front was General Ivanov, and his Chief of Staff, General Alexeyev. The composition of the several armies during the first period² is given in the following table, and the concentration points in fig. No. 1:

No. of Army.	G.O.C. Army.	Army Corps.	No. of Divisions.	
			Infantry	Cavalry
4 th	General Baron Saltz, afterwards Gen.	Grenadiers, XIV., XVI.	6½	3½
5 th	Ewarth.	V., XVII., XIX., XXV.	10	5
3 rd	General Plehve	IX., X., XI., XXI.	12	4
8 th	General Ruzsky General Brusilov	VII., VIII., XII., XXIV.	10	5
Total - - -			38½ ³	17½

The Russian plan of campaign provided for an immediate general offensive, without waiting for the arrival of belated troops from the interior of the country. This was a striking expression of the strategical fallacy then in vogue in the general staffs of Russia and France that the offensive was the only way of conducting war. The result was the decision to attack the armies of the Central Powers at all points, without waiting for the complete concentration of the Russian forces. The task detailed to the armies of the South-western Front was "to defeat the Austro-Hungarian armies, with a view to preventing the retreat of any considerable number of the enemy southwards, over the Dniester, or westwards, towards Cracow." Thus we see that the plan made a maximum demand on the South-western Front. The task was not only to rout, but to surround the Austro-Hungarian armies in Galicia.

The experience of military history shows that for an operation of this kind to be successful, either an immense superiority in quality or technique is required, or a

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² Up to 30 August (all dates New Style).

³ Including seven reserve (second-line) divisions and three rifle brigades.

considerable superiority of numbers (in the practice of Napoleon and Moltke, one and half and twofold that of the enemy). We had no grounds, before the war, to count on any enormous superiority of quality or technique of the Russian over the Austro-Hungarian army. So there was only one way out - to secure a great superiority of numbers. Meanwhile, according to the Russian General Staff's own calculation, Austria-Hungary by the fifteenth day of mobilization would concentrate in Galicia from 43 to 47 divisions of infantry. It is evident that the task allotted to the South-western Front did not correspond with the relative forces of the opposing sides.

The disproportion of forces to tasks was a characteristic feature of the Russian and French plans of campaign. This defect was already apparent in the strategical deployment of the South-western Front, which presented a "cordon" 450 km. long. The chief striking wing was the right, as the main lines of communication of the Austro-Hungarian armies concentrated in Galicia went westwards, to Cracow; besides, the operative union of the Austro-Hungarians with the Germans was most easily achieved along the routes going westwards. Meanwhile, the above table shows that the right flank of the Russian Army, the 4th, was precisely the weakest.

In 1909-12 the Russian secret intelligence had succeeded in obtaining documentary data concerning the points of concentration proposed by the Austro-Hungarian plan of campaign. These documents indicated that all the forces detailed against Russia were to be deployed east of the San. The possession of this information tempted the Russian Minister of War, Sukhomlinov, and his colleagues, to draw up his plan so as to aim all the Armies of the South-western Front on a concentric offensive against Lvov. The best appreciation of such a decision is to be found in Napoleon's remarks on Weirother's plan for the battle of Austerlitz. Weirother's plan, says Napoleon, may have been excellent, only Weirother supposed that Napoleon's army would remain as motionless as mile-posts on a highway. Sukhomlinov and his collaborators had no grounds whatever to suppose that the initiative would remain in the hands of the Russians; the Austro-Hungarians would be ready first, and would thus have the "choice of the field of battle". Besides, the Austro-Hungarian General Staff might change the points of concentration; and then the Russian plan would fall flat.

So, indeed, it turned out. In the summer of 1914 the Chief of the Austro-Hungarian General Staff, General Conrad v Hötendorf, foreseeing a war with Serbia, made considerable changes in the plan of development of his armies. Intending to begin his operations by a decisive offensive in a northern

direction between the San and the Bug, he concentrated the main mass of the Austro-Hungarian forces along the San – that is to say, much further west than the Russians expected. These were the 1st and 4th Armies. To cover them from the Russians advancing from Dubno, the 3rd Army was located about Lvov and Sambor. The Army group of Kövesz was deployed still further east, with the task of covering the deeper rear from the Russians advancing from Proskurov and further south. Finally, to secure the left wing of the main forces at Cracow, was to be Assembled the Army group of General Kummer. His task was to form an operative link with the German corps of General Woyrsch, who was advancing from Posen in the direction of the Vistula.

The composition of the Austro-Hungarian armies in the first period of the battle of Galicia is shown in the following table:

No. of Army.	G.O.C. Army.	Army Corps.	No. of Divisions.	
			Infantry.	Cavalry.
(Army Group) 1 st 4 th 3 rd	General Kummer	-	2	1
	General Dankl	I., V., X.	10½	2
	General Auffenberg	II., VI., XVII.	9	2
	General Brudermann	III., XI., XIV.	}18 ⁴	4
General Kövesz	XII.			
(Army Group)		Total - - -	39½ ⁵	9

This table shows that the Austro-Hungarian forces were somewhat inferior to what had been expected by our General Staff. The reason for this was the war with Serbia, which also caused a delay of several days in the concentration in Galicia. Thus the conditions turned out to be more favorable for the Russian Command than had been presumed in the Russian plan of campaign. But the advantage was not sufficient to ensure the fulfillment of the enormous task assigned by this plan of campaign to the South-western Front.

A comparison of the new grouping of the Austro-Hungarian armies with that which had been imposed on the Russian Forces by Sukhomlinov's plan of campaign, comes out as very disadvantageous to the Russians.

In the first place it becomes strikingly apparent that the concentric manoeuvre against Lvov, fixed by our plan, would be a

⁴ Also troops south of the Dniester

⁵ Included in these 39½ divisions are 2 divisions and 1 brigade of Landsturm.

blow in the void for three Armies (5th, 3rd and 8th), while the weakest of the four, the 4th Army, on the right, was exposed to the full shock of the main mass of the Austro-Hungarian forces. This main mass consisted at the outset of the 1st and 4th Armies; but in the course of their advance on a front of 150 km. between the Vistula and the Bug they could be strengthened by the addition, on the right, of a part of the 3rd Army (viz., the group of Archduke Joseph Ferdinand, concentrated at Sambor), and on the left by that of the group of General Kummer, to say nothing of the German Corps of Woyrsch (two divisions) which might also be drawn closer. Thus the Austro-Hungarians were prepared to concentrate for operations on the chief sector of their front, 26 Austrian and two German divisions, making an average of one division to each 6 km. of front.

The Russian strategic deployment extended, as we have said, over 450 km. The 4th and 5th Armies formed as it were a Northern group with a front of 175 km.; the 3rd and 8th, which were to advance from the East, deployed on a front of 200 km. Between the flanks of the 3rd and 5th Armies, in their initial positions, there was left a gap of 75 km. which was gradually to diminish in the course of the concentric advance on Lvov. But, as we have pointed out, the fact of the Austro-Hungarian armies being ready at an earlier date secured them the initiative of operations, and consequently the choice of ground for the decisive battle. General v. Hötendorf proposed to fight it North of the Tanew Woods; there, on the roads to Lublin and Kholm (Helm), the main forces of the Austro-Hungarians were to meet the 16½ infantry divisions of the 4th and 5th Armies, scattered over a front of 175 km. The chances of success of the Austro-Hungarian armies were greatly increased by the fact that the Russian plan of campaign exposed the right flank of the 4th Army to the attack of the enemy.

It was a hard legacy that the Grand Duke Nicholas and General Ivanov received from Sukhomlinov and his collaborators.⁶

In order to lessen the gap between the 8th and 3rd Armies on the one side, and the 4th and 5th on the other, General Ivanov ordered the first two to begin their advance a little before the other two, viz. 8th Army, 19 August; 3rd, 20 August; 4th and 5th, on the 23 August. This delay saved the 4th and 5th Armies from disaster, but did not prevent the initial discomfiture of the 4th Army.

Only by 22 August did the Russian Staffs become aware of the fact that the Austro-Hungarian concentration had taken place much further West than had been supposed by the plan of

⁶ The Grand Duke had been ever since 1908 deprived of any part in the preparation of the plan of campaign; his appointment as Commander-in-Chief took place on the second day of the war, and contrary to previous intentions.

campaign. On 23 August, General Alexeyev sent instructions changing the direction of the march-route of the 4th and 5th Armies. They were instructed to swing round their lefts, and advance towards the San by a frontal movement, having the right flank along the Vistula.

No doubt these orders warded off the enemy's blow in the flank, resulting, as they did, in a frontal clash with the main Austro-Hungarian forces. But the change was too late.

On 23 August the 1st and 4th Austro-Hungarian Armies debouched from the Tanew Woods. In consequence of the flanking position of the 1st and 4th Austro-Hungarian armies in respect of the Russian 4th and 5th, the action to the North of the Tanew Woods did not begin at the same time along the whole line, but was engaged at first on the right of the Russian 4th Army, spreading afterwards to its whole front. The struggle on the front of the 4th Army lasted without interruption till 9 September. We shall designate all these engagements on the front of the 4th army by the name of the Battle of Lublin.

The result of the first days of the battle was predetermined by the great superiority of numbers of the 1st Austro-Hungarian Army over the 4th Russian Army (10 divisions against 6½), and especially by the former's advantageous flanking position. The right flank army corps of the Russian 4th Army (XIV) was at once thrown into confusion and began to retreat on Lublin, losing touch with the Vistula. The gap was filled by the cavalry of Prince Tumanov, which up to the arrival of the XVIII Army Corps (30 August) frustrated all attempts of the Austro-Hungarians to break through between Lublin and Ivangorod for a deep turning movement of our right. Having routed the right wing of our 4th Army, General Dankl launched a vigorous offensive, against its centre and left flank, which were forced on to the defensive. The reverse on the right wing and its initial scattered disposition compelled our 4th Army, in retiring, to compress towards Lublin. This, increased the distance between it and the 5th Army, and made it easier for the Austro-Hungarians to break through between the Russian armies in the direction of Trawniki and Krasnostaw.

From the outset the G.O.C. 4th Army began to request the Staff of the Front to strengthen his right, and that he should receive support from the 5th Army. But the position, of the latter was made difficult by there being already a big gap between its left wing and the right wing of the 3rd Army, which every movement westwards would increase.

On the evening of 23 August the 5th Army was located in two groups: a left group of three army corps (XIX, V, XVII) on the Bug between Hrubieszów and Vladimir-Volynsk, and a right group of one corps (XXV) in the direction of Krasnostaw. The latter's

task was to assure the operative union with the left wing of the 4th Army. Immediately on receiving the request for help of his left-hand neighbor, General Plehve gave orders to the XXV Corps actively to co-operate with the left of the 4th Army, and at the same time to detail off one brigade of infantry to Lublin, to be at the disposal of G.O.C., 4th Army.

The Headquarters of the South-western Front (as we have seen) had been too late in their first attempt to counteract the errors of the plan of campaign, but at this juncture it acted with great rapidity. As early as 24 August, i.e., on the first news of the defeat of the XIV Army Corps, it gave the order to the 5th Army "to deal a blow against the flank and rear of the enemy's forces that are attacking the 4th Army, and that have appeared in the direction of Tomaszów - Zamosc." With this object it was ordered, "while keeping back the right wing of the army north of Zamosc, and, while giving assistance to the army of General Saltz (4th) with a part of its forces, to place the remaining corps in echelon from the right on the line Tyszczewce - Laszczow - Sokal, in order then to attack the enemy in his right flank and rear." In this decision it is impossible not to recognize the fine idea of helping the 4th Army by a manoeuvre of the whole neighboring 5th Army. As this flanking movement of the 5th Army would result in its displacement further west, it became imperative to bring the 3rd Army nearer. So, on 24 August, the 3rd Army was ordered to extend its right wing to Mosty-Wielkie. On the 25th the order was confirmed, and the explanation was given that this displacement of the 3rd Army northwards was intended to make it form a common front with the 4th and 5th Armies, in view of subsequent operations towards the San.

At the same time the 4th Army was ordered to defend desperately the positions now occupied by it; as to the strengthening of its right wing, General Headquarters were directing thither the XVIII and III Caucasian Army Corps. Which were arriving by rail.

Thus we see that Generals Ivanov and Alexeyev understood at once that the initiative having been seized by the enemy, the decision of the whole operation lay in the outcome of the battle that was being engaged north of the Tanew Woods on the roads to Lublin and Kholm. The plan of the battle, then, was conceived as follows: the 4th Army was to hold the enemy back south of Lublin; the 5th Army was to turn the right wing of the Austro-Hungarian main forces, advancing on Lublin and Kholm; the 3rd Army was to turn the same wing by a deeper enveloping movement; the 8th Army was to move in echelons behind the left wing of the 3rd, thus covering it.

The plan answered perfectly to the circumstances. At the same time, it is obvious that it gave up the chief idea of the

plan of campaign, which was to outflank the enemy on both sides. The first contact with facts showed Generals Ivanov and Alexeyev how fantastic was the plan that proposed to attempt a Cannæ with an enemy equal in strength and ready earlier. "To command success one must be able to set oneself limits," says Ludendorff, in explaining the plan adopted by him against Samsonov. This ability to limit oneself in proportion to the means at one's disposal was a quality we rarely possessed. Imagination too often triumphed over the sober calculation of realities. Generals Ivanov and Alexeyev were happy exceptions.

On same days, 23-24 August, General Conrad v. Hötzendorf took his measures for the concentration of his forces on the "field of battle" north of the Tanew Woods. To this end he draws the army group of Kummer nearer to the left, and that of Archduke Joseph Ferdinand (4 Divisions) to the right. The latter, forming an echelon behind the right of the 4th Army (Auffenberg) in the direction of Zólkiew, was to cover it from an enveloping of the Russians from Vladimir-Volynsk. General Brudermann, with the remainder of the 3rd Army, received the order to advance to meet the Russians advancing from Dubno, so as more widely to cover the right flank of the Archduke Joseph Ferdinand. The army group of Kövesz was ordered to continue covering the right from the Russians advancing from Proskurov.

If we compare the plans and groupings contemplated by both sides, we shall see that both, by means of echelons, were endeavoring to turn the eastern flanks of the forces fighting on the "field of battle" north of the Tanew Woods. It must be conceded that both High Commands displayed a profound understanding of the situation in directing their extreme echelons through the region of Rawa-Ruska (the group of Archduke Joseph Ferdinand was to move via Zólkiew; the right wing of the Russian 3rd Army via Mosty-Wielkie).

The 4th Army, after falling back and compressing towards Lublin, carried on an obstinate fight with the advancing army of Dankl. On 26 August the 5th Army joined the struggle. The engagement on its front fell into two sections: (a) towards Krasnostaw, and (b) towards Tomaszów.

In the direction of Krasnostaw the XXV Army Corps found itself obliged to fight on a front of over 30 km., being forced on the one hand to support the left of the 4th Army, which was constantly falling back, and on the other to maintain fighting contact with the other corps of the 5th Army that were working on the Tomaszów direction. The XXV Army Corps had to face the right wing divisions of the X, and the left wing divisions of the II Austrian Army Corps. It succeeded in pushing its front as far as Zamosc. But the pressure of superior numbers of the enemy and the retreat of the left wing of the 4th Army obliged the XXV Army

Corps to withdraw on Krasnostaw.

In the direction of Krasnostaw our several army corps engaged battle in succession (beginning with the XIX Army Corps on the right wing) as they emerged successively from behind the left wing of their neighbors. This resulted in our seven divisions engaging with eight divisions of the Army of General Auffenberg. One of the latter (15th Honvéd) was utterly routed and taken prisoner near Laszczow by the gallant troops of our V Army Corps, which came up in its rear. But at the same time the XVII Corps on the left wing of the 5th army was defeated. It was attacked in the flank and rear by superior forces of the enemy. These were the four divisions of the group of Archduke Joseph Ferdinand, who had emerged from his position in echelon behind the right wing of Auffenberg's army. In spite of this, General Plehve ordered the group of corps on his left wing to hold their positions and called on them to put up an obstinate resistance. Units of the XIX, V and XVII Army Corps occupied positions in a semicircle round Komarow and Laszczow, and in spite of the enemy's almost twofold superiority of numbers (12 divisions against 7) repulsed his frontal attacks, as well as his attempt to turn both their flanks.

On 30 August the XXV Army Corps was forced to retreat from Krasnostaw. General Plehve gave the order to recapture that town; with his other corps he decided to continue the unequal struggle. "We shall fight to the last extremity" he reported to General Ivanov "but it is desirable that the 3rd Army should draw closer as soon as possible."

But the 3rd Army did not draw closer, and on 31 August General Plehve, in accordance with the directions of Headquarters of the South-western Front, gave the order to his army to retreat to the line Krasnostaw - Vladimir-Volynsk.

Thus, after six days, ended the heroic fight of the left wing corps of the Russian 5th Army. The Austro-Hungarian Command named these actions "the victory of Komarow," and attributed General Plehve's retreat to the complete defeat of his army.

However, the enemy's optimistic interpretation of his success did not correspond to the facts; and, as we shall see later on, General Auffenberg was destined before long to learn by experience whether General Plehve's army was really routed.

What, then, was happening all this time to the Russian 3rd Army? How was it that the group of Archduke Joseph Ferdinand had managed to advance northwards unhindered, and why did not G.O.C. 3rd Army, General Ruzsky, give any support to his neighbor, General Plehve, during the latter's titanic struggle?

The 3rd and 8th Armies had begun their movement in the

directions prescribed by the plan of campaign: the former on Lvov, the latter further south. At all points they forced the covering troops of the enemy to recede; the cavalry of Generals Kaledin, Count Keller and Pavlov everywhere showed the highest gallantry and initiative. On 26, 27, and 28 August, there was hard fighting round Zloczów and on the Zlota Lipa, due to the forward movement of the 3rd Austro-Hungarian Army of General Brudermann, supported by General Kövesz. As we, have said, General v. Hötzen Dorf had ordered General Brudermann to gain room towards the east, so as to cover the manoeuvre of Archduke Joseph Ferdinand against the Russian 5th Army. In the actions round Zloczów and on the Zlota Lipa, we had a large superiority of numbers on our side (22 Russian infantry divisions against 13 Austro-Hungarian). These engagements ended in victory for us. But the strategic result was not proportioned to the measure of the tactical success. General Ruzsky, in spite of General Ivanov's orders to transfer the centre of gravity of his operations further north, obstinately continued to press straight on to Lvov. This may be seen, if we examine the grouping of his forces in the battle of Zloczów. He conducted this action as though it were a perfectly independent operation, without any connection with the battle that at the same time was turning to our disadvantage north of the Tanew Woods. He limited himself to a slight outflanking of Brudermann's left, while the Higher Command demanded of him a much more considerable forward movement to the north, into the gap between the 3rd and 4th Austro-Hungarian Armies. The G.O.C. 3rd Army so far misunderstood the situation that, instead of having his cavalry in front of his right wing, he kept it all on his left. Meanwhile, on 26 August, General Ivanov confirmed to General Ruzsky his orders of the 24th and 25th, to the effect that he should transfer the 3rd Army to the front Mosty-Wielkie - Kurowice, explaining this time that the transfer was called for by the necessity of forming a continuous front of the 3rd, 4th and 5th Armies for subsequent action in the direction of the San. How well this demand answered to the end in view, can be gathered from the fact that Austro-Hungarian sources speak of the anxiety with which the Austrians kept looking towards Mosty-Wielkie, to cover which they had sent all their available cavalry. If the Russians had there emerged on the flank of the group of Archduke Joseph Ferdinand, it must have had serious results.

On 28 August General Ivanov repeated his order: "At once to transfer the Army to the right; this is dictated by the situation of the 4th and 5th Armies." But General Ruzsky continued to take no notice of the Commander-in-Chief's orders; he kept his right within one day's march of the road to Lvov. His attention was wholly absorbed by the capital of Galicia, and

by the 3rd Austro-Hungarian Army, which had now assumed the offensive. Thus General Brudermann, though tactically defeated, was strategically successful, as he kept Ruzsky from turning northward.

How far the staff of the 3rd Army misunderstood the general situation becomes evident from the following fact: On 28 August, after the battle of Zloczów, it decided to hold up its advance for 2-3 days, in order to reconnoitre the fortified position before Lvov and to await drafts and supplies. Knowing as we now do the whole development of the battle of Galicia, we may safely say that it would have been lost by us if this delay had actually taken place.

How then, is to be explained the obstinate disobedience of the G.O.C., 3rd Army? In one of the issues of the *Voenny Sbornik (Military Collection)*, published in Belgrade (No. 2, 1922), the sometime Chief of Staff of the 3rd Army, General V. M. Dragomirov, gives his explanations. From them it appears that the staff of the 3rd Army was not in agreement with the ruling ideas evolved by General Alexeyev, in accordance with General Ivanov's instructions. So they considered themselves entitled not to obey them, and to act according to their own considerations. "But the realization of these considerations," writes General Dragomirov, "met with resistance on the part of the Higher Command, which under the impression of the critical situation of the neighboring armies, demanded our immediate support of the army next to us. The G.O.C. 3rd Army had to compromise, and even directly to disobey instructions from above, but still he did not give up the object which he had set himself."

In the same article General Dragomirov formulates the object of the Staff of the Army in the following way: "to endeavor to destroy the screen left by the Austro-Hungarians in front of our 3rd and 8th Armies." But even this task, by itself, could only be accomplished by a deep outflanking movement, as the firing conditions of modern war have greatly increased the power of frontal resistance, and also make it very much easier for an enemy who wants to go, to "walk out of the battle." An almost twofold superiority in numbers allowed us to make a deep outflanking movement. On our left this was not feasible, as it would meet with a succession of lines of defense, in the left affluents of the Dniester, of which the most important were the Zlota Lipa, the Gnila Lipa and, chief of all, the Wereszyca. But it was easy to outflank the Austro-Hungarian left by moving two or three army corps on Mosty-Wielkie and further on Rawa-Ruska. The protrusion of such a strategical menace simultaneously with frontal fighting at Zloczów and on the Gnila Lipa, would have

placed Brudermann's Army in a situation of extreme danger. Even the strong position of Gródek, which formed the northern continuation of the defensive line of the Wereszyca, was threatened by a turning movement from Rawa-Ruska. The chance of "destroying" the eastern Austro-Hungarian screen by action on these lines was far greater than by a frontal offensive, accompanied by outflanking movements of only tactical importance. Thus, even within the narrow limits of the special interests of the 3rd and 8th Armies, General Alexeyev's brain worked much more profoundly and saw much further ahead, than did that of the Staff of the 3rd Army. The chief consideration, however, was that the Battle of Galicia was being fought on a front of several armies, so that even such apparently attractive tasks as the complete destruction of opposing forces by one of the armies led to a general victory only if this success was obtained on the principal line of operations. Otherwise, even a considerable local success on a secondary line would be ineffective. That General Alexeyev (who inspired General Ivanov in his orders to the 3rd Army) was governed by these considerations, is shown by his telegram to the Staff of the 3rd Army of 2 September. The telegram says: "At the present moment the outcome of the first period of the campaign does not depend on your operations against Lvov and the Dniester, but on the issue of the battle on the front Lublin - Kholm - Hrubieszów. Even the taking of Lvov would not compensate us for the loss of the battle in the north."

Events proved to what an extent General Alexeyev's point of view was right, and that of the Staff of the 3rd Army wrong. But while the Battle of Galicia was in progress, General Ivanov had to deal with a subordinate command which thought it understood things better, and declined to obey. The conflict with the 3rd Army went so far that on 29 August, General Ivanov, in repeating his demand that the centre of operations of that army should be transferred to the north of Lvov, found himself obliged to remind General Ruzsky of discipline. "It is my business," he telegraphed, "to fix the tasks of the individual armies."

On 30 August the Chief of Staff of General Headquarters informed General Alexeyev that the Guard Corps was being directed to the South-western Front, and at the same time stated that the Grand Duke had not hesitated to sacrifice all his original intentions in order to secure a complete success over the Austrians. We regard this decision of the Grand Duke as the most important stage in the strategical direction on the

Russian theatre. It meant the abandonment of the scattering of forces on three lines of operations, as imposed by the plan of campaign. Now the South-western Front became really the chief front.

In consequence of the considerable reinforcement of the 4th Army, the troops that formed the right wing of the South-western Front were, on 4 September, divided into two armies, 4th and 9th. The latter, under the command of General Lechitsky, was formed of the XIV Corps, on the right wing of the 4th Army, and of the XVIII Corps, which had arrived on 30 August; together with the Guards Rifle Brigade.

The Russian troops that took part in the second period of battle of Galicia (after 30 August) is shown in the following table:

No. of Army.	G.O.C. Army.	Army Corps.	No. of Divisions.	
			Infantry.	Cavalry.
9 th	Lt.-Gen.	XVIII., XIV.	7	3
4 th	Lechitsky	Guards, Grenadiers,	10	2½
	General Ewarth	XVI., III.		
5 th		Caucasian.	10	5
3 rd	General Plehve	V., XVII., XIX., XV.	12	4
8 th	General Ruzsky	IX., X., XI., XXI.	10	5
	General Brusilov	VII., VIII., XII.		
		Total - - -	49 ⁷	19½

The table shows that the Russian troops north of the Tanew Woods had increased from 16½ to 27 divisions. The total number of infantry divisions concentrated here by the enemy was, we have seen, 28. Thus on this most important sector of the battlefield, with the arrival of reinforcements, equality of numbers was reached.

The Commander-in-Chief did not limit himself to this. Having decided to force a victory on the South-west Front, he called on the Armies of that front for the greatest effort obtainable.

As soon as it became known in General Headquarters that after his success at Zloczów General Ruzsky intended to suspend his operations - on the same day followed the "categorical" order of the Grand Duke: "General Ruzsky's delay, whatever its causes is recognized as entirely inadmissible, as it gives the enemy a breathing space, and will allow him to transfer forces

⁷ Included 11 reserve divisions and rifle brigades.

from Lvov to the north. General Ruzsky must bold the enemy before him by the throat, pressing him incessantly, and developing turning movements with his right wing to the North of Lvov."

This intervention of the Grand Duke proved all the more necessary, as General Ivanov, apparently worn out by the obstinate resistance of the G.O.C. 3rd Army, had given way, and, though it is true with reservations, had agreed to the halt of this Army. Thus the faltering will of the G.O.C. Front was at the critical moment propped up by the will of the Commander-in-Chief.

On 31 August the Staff of the South-west Front received the following order of the Grand Duke: "In view of a great check in the 2nd Army,⁸ and of the necessity of finishing with the Austrians before the arrival from the west of German reinforcements, the Commander-in-Chief has ordered the Armies of the South-west Front to pass to the most decisive action against the Austrians on the whole of your front, expressing his firm will that the forces of General Ewarth and Lechitsky should advance wherever possible in the most determined way, so as to crush the enemy. In those sectors where the situation renders an offensive impossible, the troops must hold their positions to the last man. Tomorrow morning the Commander-in-Chief intends to be in Rovno to explain the present order."

This order of the Grand Duke was simultaneous with the beginning of the retreat of the 5th Army to the line Krasnostaw - Vladimir-Volynsk. The idea expressed in it was the best means of supporting the centre, which was beginning to give way, by means of an increased pressure of the wings (right wing, 4th Army, later, 9th and 4th; left wing, 3rd and 8th Armies). But just at this moment the situation of the left wing of the 4th Army became critical. On 1 September considerable forces of the Austrian X Corps broke through in the direction of Trawniki. Added to the retreat, on the day before, of the XXV Corps on the right wing of the 5th Army from Krasnostaw, this reverse produced a serious gap between the 4th and 5th Armies; this compelled the G.O.C. 4th Army, General Ewarth, to send all reinforcements, as they arrived to fill this gap. On the following day this was achieved: an amalgamated group, formed of various units of the Guards and the III Caucasian Army Corps, immediately on its detrainment, won a brilliant success at Suchodol. But the immediate effect of the break-through of the Austrians was the detrainment of the Guards and of the III Caucasian Army Corps on

⁸ The Army of General Samsonov. G.H.Q. had just received the news of the disaster of that army at Tannenberg.

the left instead of to the right of the 4th Army. Thus, on the right of the South-west Front arose a strategical grouping which made it inevitable that the striking wing would be the inner (i.e., the left wing of the 4th Army) and not the outer wing. In spite of the arrival of reinforcements on the right wing, the idea of fighting a battle on the model of Cannæ continued to remain impossible to carry out. "Errors in strategical deployment are irremediable," as Field-Marshal Moltke had insisted in his writings.

On our left wing (3rd and 8th Army) the impulse given by the Grand Duke took form earlier. Our double superiority of numbers enabled us to continue without loss of time a decisive offensive. On 29 and 30 August our troops again won a brilliant success on the Gnila Lipa. But General Ruzsky, in whose hands was the operative control of both the left wing armies, still did not follow out the ideas of Generals Ivanov and Alexeyev. His attention remained riveted on the enemy immediately in front of him, and the capital of Galicia, Lvov, which lay behind the enemy forces.

As to the movements of the centre (i.e., the 5th Army), the Grand Duke's orders had the following sequel: General Alexeyev, informing General Plehve of the offensive of all the other Armies of the Front, instructed him, in case of a relaxation of the enemy's pressure, at once to take the offensive.

The separate instructions issued by the Staff of the Front in execution of the Grand Duke's order of 31 August, culminated in a general order, dispatched in the morning of 3 September; but before 7 p.m. on the same evening came the report of the taking of Lvov. The order of that morning was replaced by another. But both contained the same fundamental idea of the battle which was expressed in General Ivanov's instruction of 24 August, namely, the outflanking and envelopment of the eastern flank of the Austro-Hungarian forces operating near Lublin. The attack of this flank of the enemy was to be carried out by a group of troops (Guards and III Caucasian Army Corps) concentrated on the left wing of the 4th Army. The nearer outflanking of this side of the enemy was assigned to the 5th Army, which was to assume the offensive in the general direction of Szebrszyn. Finally, the envelopment of that flank of the enemy was to be carried out by the 3rd Army, which, before the news of the capture of Lvov, was to be directed on the front Tomaszów - Bilgoraj, and after the news on the front Bilgoraj - Yaroslav. The 8th Army was to cover the left flank of the 3rd Army.

The change in the direction of the advance of the 3rd Army after the news of the taking of Lvov is very instructive. It shows with what close care, attention and detail the mind of

Alexeyev had worked. The moment he hears of the evacuation of Lvov by the Austro-Hungarians, he sets himself a more decisive strategical task - that is to say, the enveloping movement becomes deeper.

It is also interesting to note that the advance of the 3rd Army on the front Bilgoraj - Yaroslaw again brought it towards Rawa-Ruska, the very point at which, ever since 24 August, General Alexeyev had fruitlessly tried to bring out the right wing of that Army.

While the idea of the battle of Galicia was crystallizing at General Headquarters, and at the Headquarters of the South-west Front, the Austro-Hungarian General Headquarters was also taking decisions of prime importance. General Conrad v. Hötendorf begins to realize the enormous superiority of the Russian forces advancing from Dubno and Proskurov. But the battles round Komarow, ending in the retreat of Plehve northward, are taken by the Austro-Hungarians to be a great victory. General v. Hötendorf decides to withdraw the 3rd Army of Boroevic (who had replaced Brudermann) and the group of Kövesz to two or three marches behind the River Wereszyca and to the Gródek positions, abandoning Lvov without a fight. Reinforcements arriving from Serbia are directed to the right wing of this new front, thus transferring the group of Kövesz into the 2nd Army of General Boehm-Ermolli. The 4th Army (of Auffenberg) is to leave the pursuit of the defeated army of Plehve to Archduke Joseph Ferdinand and swing round at right angles on Rawa-Ruska in order to attack the flank of the Russian forces advancing from Lvov. Simultaneously with the advance of Auffenberg, the 3rd and 2nd Armies were to take the offensive with vigor, the latter receiving the task of turning the left of the advancing Russians. Thus we see that General Conrad v. Hötendorf was setting his enemy a strategical mousetrap, in case the latter's strategical ideas might not rise above the primitive conception of pursuing geographical object - in the present case, Lvov.

In accordance with the new decisions of General v. Hötendorf and taking into account the arrival of reinforcements, the Austro-Hungarian forces were distributed as follows:

No. of Army.	G.O.C. Army.	Army Corps.	No. of Divisions.	
			Infantry.	Cavalry.

1 st	General Dankl	I., V., X.	15	3
Group	Archduke Joseph-Ferdinand.	Kummer, Woyrsch II., XIV.	4	1
4 th	General	II., VI., XVII.,	9	3
3 rd	Auffenberg	IX.	7½	1
2 nd	General Boroevic	III., XI.	11	1
	Gen. Boehm-Ermolli	IV., VII., XII.		
		Total - - -	46½	9

Comparing the new distribution of the Austro-Hungarians and Russian forces, we find north of the Tanew Woods 19 Austro-Hungarian divisions opposed to 27 Russian; on the front Rawa-Ruska - Gródek - Wereszyca 27½ Austro-Hungarian divisions opposed to 22 Russian. One cannot refrain from emphasizing the skill with which General v. Hötendorf directs his battle and tries to keep the initiative in his hands.

To counteract this manoeuvre, the Headquarters of the South-west Front had to display an equal measure of strategical insight. Indeed, as we have seen, General Alexeyev directed the whole 3rd Army precisely on Rawa-Ruska, so that the flanking attack of the 4th Austro-Hungarian Army planned by General v. Hötendorf was turned into a frontal attack. The direction of the 3rd Army on Rawa-Ruska had another important operative effect: the gap between the 3rd and 5th Armies was diminished, and this made possible that co-operation of the two which General Alexeyev had all the time been trying to achieve.

The particular interest in the study of the battle of Galicia lies precisely in the fact that on both sides the operations were conducted by such great strategical intellects as General v. Hötendorf and General Alexeyev. This is why we have the rare spectacle of two hostile staffs simultaneously giving orders, as it were, in reply to each other. In the given case this is seen in the direction of both the Austrian 4th and the Russian 3rd Armies on Rawa-Ruska.

On 4 September, the very day of its formation, our 9th Army began a vigorous offensive. Compressed, as it was on its right by the Vistula, it had no choice but to make a frontal advance. In spite of successful attacks, on this and the following days, the advance was slow, and the form which the action took was pushing out the enemy from obstinately defended positions.

The right wing of the 4th Army was in the same position. Its left wing vigorously drove home its success of 2 September at Suchodole, and forced Dankl's Army to refuse its right wing. On

the front Kosarzew - Wysokie, a particularly hot action took place on 6, 7 and 8 September. Fearing the further development of the Russian turning movement, General Dankl reinforces the Austro-Hungarian units by the German Corps of Woyrsch. Only on 9 September did the combined efforts of the Guards, Grenadiers and III Caucasian Corps succeed in breaking the resistance of Dankl's right, and in starting the enveloping movement. To this victory contributed the appearance of the two right wing Army Corps of the 5th Army (XXV and XIX) near Turobin and Szebrszyn, which constituted a menace to Dankl's rear.

The reverse on his right wing forced General Dankl to begin to retreat on all his front. The battle of Lublin, which had lasted 18 days, after beginning unluckily for us, ended happily, and this decided our success over the whole battlefield of Galicia.

The 5th Army, which assumed the offensive on 4 September, again occupies Krasnostaw with its right wing (XXV Army Corps), and then, constantly threatening to turn Dankl's right, seconds the advance of the left wing of our 4th Army. The other Corps of Plehve's Army rout the group of Archduke Joseph Ferdinand, which was still in front of them; after which, the V and XVII Corps vigorously develop their success in the direction of Tomaszów, reaching that town on 9 September, while the XIX Corps moves on Szebrszyn, to cooperate with the XXV Corps against Dankl's rear.

As soon as the victorious issue of the battle of Lublin became clear, General Ivanov ordered the 9th and 4th Armies to pursue the enemy with energy. The G.O.C. 5th Army, is instructed "not to allow his two right wing Army Corps to go too far forward north-west, as their destination should be a strong offensive on the front Janów - Bilgoraj, leaving it to the troops of General Ewarth to drive the enemy off from the routes leading to the San, and to press him on to the Vistula, where he is to be met by General Lechitsky's Cavalry. Eventually these two Army Corps will have to operate in a southerly direction." Thus is planned the appearance of the whole of Plehve's Army in the rear of the Austro-Hungarian Armies concentrated about Rawa-Ruska and on the Gródek positions. This threatened Hötzenndorf with utter disaster on his eastern front.

While the last of the battle of Lublin was being played out, hard fighting had begun between the armies of Ruzsky and Auffenberg. Now at last our 3rd Army had observed the orders of General Ivanov, and turned in the direction of Rawa-Ruska. Thus it escaped the mouse-trap that had been so set for it round Lvov by General Hötzenndorf.

In the battle of Rawa-Ruska there was a frontal clash of 9 of our divisions against 9 Austro-Hungarian. But besides these,

General Ruzsky had three divisions of the XXI Corps, moving in echelon in front of the right wing of the 3rd Army. The XXI Corps came out on the rear of Archduke Joseph Ferdinand, and helped Plehve to rout that group. After this, it turned Auffenberg's left, while beyond its right the XXV and V Corps of Plehve's Army came forward in echelon.

At the same time an engagement took place along the whole front of our 8th Army, which was attacked by the 3rd and 2nd Austro-Hungarian Armies. General Brusilov's 10 divisions had to support the pressure of the enemy's 18. Brusilov's situation became difficult. On 9 September, after hard fighting with far superior numbers of the enemy, the left corps of the 8th Army was forced to fall back. This caused a general retirement of the rest of this Army. However, our troops fought obstinately, defending every height or wood. But the victory won by our 9th, 4th and 5th Armies over Dankl began to take effect. The fundamental law of strategy which lays down that ultimate success falls to the side which has been successful at the decisive place, once again came true. For a moment the Austro-Hungarian Headquarters entertained a hope of making good by a success over Brusilov, but this hope vanished as soon as it became clear that the whole front of Dankl was in full retreat and that Plehve's Army had appeared in Auffenberg's Rear.

On 11 September, General v. Hötendorf gave the order for a general retreat to the Wisloka. The 2nd, 3rd and 4th Armies were to begin the movement the same night.

The Battle of Galicia had been won by us. What did it give us? The tactical measure of its success is witnessed by more than 100,000 prisoners and numerous trophies. The strategical result was also great. It is true that the plan for a "Cannæ" had not succeeded. The Austro-Hungarian armies were not annihilated. Though badly shaken, they were brought back by General v. Hötendorf towards Cracow, had time to recover, and continued the struggle for another four years. The Russian Command cannot be made responsible for this failure. The plan was beyond the reach of the forces employed to achieve it. But the chief thing had been done: a victory had been won on the line that was decisive for the Russian theatre at the beginning of the campaign of 1914. The results of this decisive success were not slow to show themselves. The reverses of Samsonov and Rennenkampf were, strategically speaking, balanced.

Here is how the situation created by the victory of Galicia is estimated by the ally of the Austro-Hungarians, General Ludendorff: "The Austro-Hungarian Army had been completely beaten (*vollständig geschlagen*) and was retreating beyond the San, sustaining exceptionally heavy losses, and pursued by the Russians. It was necessary to help the Austro-

Hungarian Army if we did not want to see it destroyed ... It was necessary to give it immediate support, and no help could be too great. We were no longer in a position to send troops to the Western (French) Front."⁹

And, indeed, the morale of the Austro-Hungarian Army was broken, and never again to the end of the war did it get back to its previous level. This drew the Germans further into the Russian theatre, and finally led them to their greatest strategical error - the transfer of the centre of gravity of their operations in the campaign of 1915 from West to East. This gave respite to France, and Great Britain was allowed to complete the formation and creation of her armed millions. The war was lost to the Germans.

From the point of view of military theory the Battle of Galicia is of great interest. From beginning to end it is dominated by manoeuvring. Numerically, both sides are almost equal. Organization and technical equipment are alike. On both sides the troops fight gallantly. Thus, the skill of the respective Commands becomes the deciding element in the scales of victory. And the two principal directors of the battle are such big figures as General Alexeyev and General Conrad v. Hötzendorf. These two were enemies worthy of each other. This makes the story of the Battle of Galicia not only interesting, but highly instructive.

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⁹ Ludendorff, *Meine Kriegserinnerungen*, p.55.