

first," and before he had recognized me, he was knocked down. I must admit a sense of relief came over me; I felt my responsibility was gone, as even the most enthusiastic commander could scarcely expect me to carry the only remaining ladder, eighteen feet in length, by myself. It was now lying within thirty yards of the abatis, under the slight shelter of which scattered soldiers were crouching; some were firing, and a great many shouting, while above us on the parapet stood Russians four and, in places, six deep, firing at us and calling sarcastically to us to come in. There appeared very little chance of our being able to take advantage of this invitation; the abatis was about one hundred yards from the ditch at the salient, and where I was then standing, some seventy yards outside it. The obstacle was in itself about four feet thick and from four to five feet high, the stoutest portions of the wood being from six to eight inches in diameter. There were one or two places where we could have pushed through one man at a time, but even then, after crossing the open space intervening between the abatis and the ditch, there was a still more serious obstacle. The ditch, eleven feet deep and about twenty feet broad, was in itself a difficulty to overcome; but twenty-six feet above the bottom of the ditch, there was the huge earthen rampart, on which the Russians were standing ready for us. I realized immediately that any attempt was hopeless unless the remainder of the assaulting column came on, for our storming party of four hundred had dwindled down to something between one hundred and two hundred. Lieutenant Graves, Royal Engineers, coming up to me, asked if I had seen Captain Peel. I said, "Not since we crossed the parapet," and he passed on, being killed almost immediately. He was as calm and collected in manner during these trying moments as he showed himself on the 10th April, when, as I described in the previous paper, a round shot scooped the ground from under his feet.

Just then an officer seizing a bough from the abatis, waved it over his head, and cheerily called on the men to follow, but he was at the same moment pierced by several bullets, and fell lifeless. While looking round, I was struck by the burning courage of a young sergeant who was

trying to induce men to accompany him over the abatis. After calling in vain on the men immediately round him to follow, waxing wroth, he said, "I'll tel my right-hand man to follow, and if he fails I'll shoot him." Bringing his rifle to the "ready," he said: "Private —, will you follow me?" I saw by the sergeant's eye that he was in earnest and stood for a few seconds as if spell-bound. The man looked deliberately up at the hundreds of Russians above us, then to his comrades, as if reckoning the numbers (those near at hand were certainly under one hundred), and replied quietly, "No, I won't." The sergeant threw his rifle into his shoulder with the apparent intention of shooting the man, but in the act of taking aim, struck by a grape-shot, he fell dead.

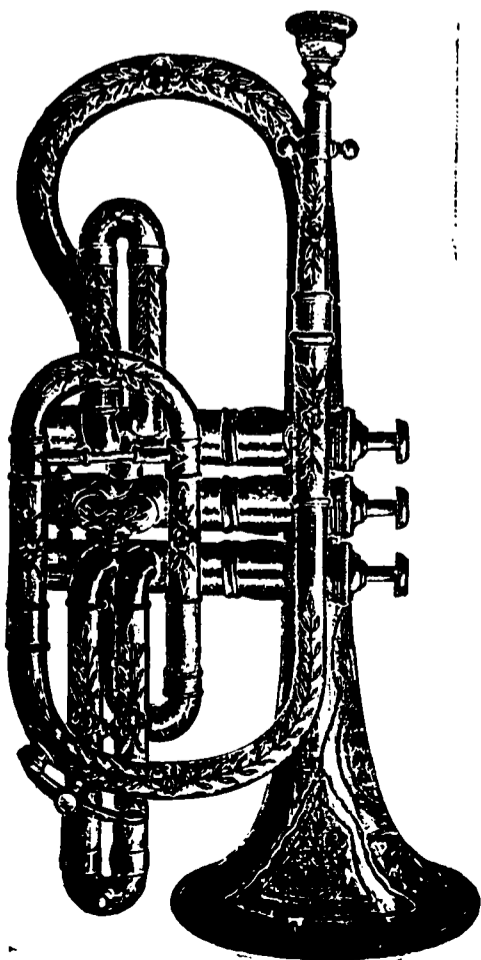
I now knelt on one knee alongside an officer, and was speaking to him as to our chances of succeeding, when he was pierced just above the waist-belt by a bullet. As he tossed about in pain, calling on the Almighty, I was somewhat perturbed, but I had seen too much bloodshed to be seriously affected, until he called on his mother. This allusion distressed me so much that I got up and walked away along the abatis northward, looking if there were any weaker spot in the obstacle. While doing so, I saw four Russians above me, apparently "following" me with their rifles. Instinctively throwing up my left arm to save my face, I was strolling slowly along when a gun was fired with case shot close to me. The shots came crashing through the abatis, and one, weighing five and a half ounces, struck me just below the sunny-bone. This knocked me over, and sent me rolling down the slope of the hill, where I lay insensible.

Just after this moment, Colonel Yea, the acting brigadier-general of the Light Division Brigade, which had furnished the assaulting column, came up to the abatis, and Lieutenant A'Court Fisher, reporting himself, asked, "Shall I advance, sir?" but before Colonel Yea could reply he fell dead. Fisher then turned to Captain Jesse, Royal Engineers, asking "What's to be done?" but he was also killed ere he could reply. Lieutenant Fisher, who was reported to have shown "great coolness, judgment, and decision" being unable to find any officers senior to him, then ordered all who

could hear him to retire, and a bugler repeated the command. Just at the same moment the reserve eight hundred men, under Colonel D. Lysons, advancing, left our trenches, but seeing the survivors of the storming party retiring, conformed to the movement.

How long I remained unconscious I cannot tell, but I was aroused by an Irish sergeant shaking me by the wounded arm, which was uppermost, and saying, "Matey, if you are going in, you had better go at once, or you'll get bageneted." My strongly worded reply showed him that I was an officer, which he might well be excused having failed to perceive, for I had little or nothing about me characteristic of the rank. My gold-band cap was lying under my body; a blue monkey-jacket much worn and dirty, a red shirt, and pair of blue trousers, with red silk waist scarf, were all that I had on, having, as I described above, thrown away my sword scabbard when I lost my sword, almost immediately after leaving our trenches. The sergeant informed me that the "retire" had sounded some minutes previously, and that all our people had gone back. He then, in spite of a shower of bullets fired at less than a hundred yards' distance, helped me up tenderly, taking great care this time not to hurt my wounded arm. Then, having put me on my feet, he, bending down his head, ran as fast as he could back towards our trenches. I followed him, but very slowly, heading for the 8-gun battery, for, although I had not felt any weakness since the moment we left the trench on the flag going up, I had now become faint, and could walk only with difficulty, although grape, case, and bullets crashed about me. When I had got about half-way down, I saw several men running, with bodies bent, in a ditch, into which I stepped. This trench had been advanced about a hundred yards towards the Redan in the past week. It was but a foot or so deep, but with the rank grass three feet high gave some slight shelter. I had gone only a few yards down it when the screams of wounded men who had crawled into the shelter, and who were further injured by the soldiers running over them, caused me to get out of the trench and walk away from it.

(To be Continued.)



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