

by the parapet, my breath coming in long gasps. "Lord, have mercy on my soul." I rushed a few yards madly, up, down, over; another pause, while the shells pounded the earth, and great splinters droned. I dared not move, and I dared not stay. Every shadow of the trenches loomed over me like the menacing memory of some past unforgettable misdeed. Looking down I saw a blood-stained bandage in a pool of blood at my side, and I could smell that indescribable, fœtid smell of blood, bandages, and death. As I went round a traverse, speeding like a hunted hare, I stumbled over a man. He groaned deeply as I fell on him. It was one of my best N.C.O.'s, mortally wounded. An eternity passed before I could find his water-bottle. His face was a yellow mask, his teeth chattered against the lip of the water-bottle, his lips were swollen and dreadful. He lay gasping. "Can I do anything for you, old man?" With a tremendous effort he raised his head a little, and opened wide his glazing eyes. "Write . . . sir . . . to my . . . mother." Then, his head on my arm, he died.

On, on, on, the sweat streaming from me,