

In many cases, if a battalion succeeded in establishing itself on a line about 150 yards from the enemy the affair would soon virtually come to an end without a further advance. Either the assailants or the defenders would be crushed by the volume of fire poured in at such a close range. Assuming, however, that the loss was not so great as to induce the assailants either to remain halted or to retreat, or to compel the defenders to quit their position, it is evident that a very critical and dangerous piece of work devolves on the attacking party. How is the deadly zone of 100 or 150 yards to be passed over? The ranks of the enemy may be much thinned and their courage greatly shaken. In that case the assailants may, without danger, make a rush over the intervening space. What, however, if the enemy, partially covered by, say, the brow of a hill, should not have suffered heavy loss and be evidently determined to stand their ground? In that case a rush over 150 or even 100 yards would bring the assailants up breathless, in disorder and thinned by the last few shots, to cross bayonets with a halted, regularly formed, perfectly fresh line. It seems, therefore, that the former method of gaining ground by degrees should be prolonged till the attacking line is within 50 or 60 yards. As a matter of fact, however, a front attack on a fairly good position, occupied by resolute troops, would have few chances of success unless the foe were previously shaken by a fire of artillery, or simultaneously threatened on the flank. The advance of Infantry should always be preceded by a concentrated fire of Artillery on the point selected for attack.

In order to minimize the loss inseparable from a front attack, even when the latter has been fully prepared by Artillery, the assailants must have recourse to three expedients—*i.e.*, the nature of formation, quickness of movement, and the taking advantage of cover.

The flank formation is the same as the front formation,