

should not have been promptly suppressed.

The life of an infantry soldier belonging to a battalion in the front was thus spent: The men were mustered, carrying great-coat and blanket, just before dusk, and marched through a sea of mud into the trenches, which were full of deep holes from which boulders and stones had been taken; into these holes, owing to darkness, the men often fell. When the soldier reached his position, he had to sit with his back to the parapet, and his feet drawn up close to allow others to pass along the four feet wide trench. If he was not for picquet, in the advanced trenches, he could lie down, hoping that his comrades out in the front would, by keeping awake, give sufficient warning in the event of an attack. Assuming the soldier was not on picquet and there was no alarm, and these were of frequent occurrence, he could lie down till daylight, when he marched back to camp. In the early part of the winter he was generally on duty two nights out of three, and later, every other night.

This applied, however, to those men who were required only as a guard or reserve in the trenches, and not to the condition of those who were employed from two to three hundred yards in advance, often within conversational distance of the opposing sentries. The reliefs of the sentries could snatch a dog's sleep, four hours out of six, hoping their comrades would, by remaining on the alert, give them time to jump up ere the enemy was on them; but for the two hours each man was out near the enemy, the strain on the nervous system would have been great even to a robust well-fed man. These sentries had necessarily to stand absolutely still, silent, and watchful, and as the severity of the weather became more and more marked, numbers of men, whose frames were weakened by want of adequate nutritious food, were found in the morning frost-bitten and unable to move. One battalion which landed nearly nine hundred strong, early in November was actually in the trenches six nights out of seven, and then became so reduced, not only in numbers, but also in the men's bodily strength, that it was unable to go on duty again.

When the soldier got back to camp, he used to lie under a worn out tent, through which the rain beat, often in a puddle which chilled his bones. The less robust would fall asleep completely worn out, to awake shivering, and in many cases to be carried to a hospital scarcely more comfortable than the tent which they had left, and thence to a grave in two or three days. Those who were stronger, went out and collected roots of brushwood, or of vine, and roasted the green coffee ration in the tin of the canteen; then, as already described, pounding in it a fragment of shell with a stone, ere they boiled it for use. Others unequal to this laborious process, would drink their rum with a piece of biscuit and lie down in the great-coat and blanket which they had brought, often wet through from the trenches.

In the afternoon the soldier was sent on fatigue from five to seven miles, according to the position of his camp, usually to Balaklava, to bring up rations. On his return he had again to gather fuel to boil the salt beef or salt pork in his mess tin, which did not hold water enough to abstract the salt. A portion of it therefore only was consumed, and it was necessary from time to time to tell off men to bury the quantities thrown away. Salt pork, which was issued two days out of seven, was frequently eaten by the men in its raw state, from the difficulties of finding fuel to cook it.

Shortly before the dusk the soldier either marched back to the trenches, or lay down to sleep, if he was not on picquet in front of the camp. Many men, disliking to report themselves sick, were carried back from the trenches in the morning, and died a few hours afterwards; those who reported sick were taken to hospital, in many cases a bell tent; here the men lay often in mud on the ground, and in many instances their food was only salt meat and biscuit, and they were so crowded together that the medical officer could scarcely pass between the patients.

The regimental medical officers, unable to procure medical comforts, medicine, or proper housing, were eager to send down their patients, even in storm and rain, to Balaklava, as the best chance of saving their lives. As we had no transport, and the French could not al-

ways lend us mule litter-transport, many were necessarily carried on cavalry horses, which, slipping up on the hill beside Balaklava, often caused the further injury or death of the patient. As I was returning from Balaklava, on more than one occasion I met a party of sick, mainly frost bitten, riding cavalry horses, the troopers leading them and holding men on, but the ground was covered with snow and very slippery and on the hill above Kadikoi, I once saw every man have a fall from the horses slipping, and sometimes falling.

On the 22nd March, the Russians attacked the French near the Mamelon early in the evening, and later got into an advanced battery, a small bugler about sixteen years of age sounding the advance on our parapet until he fell, from a volley, pierced by seven bullets. The Russians, led by a Circassian chief, were for some minutes in the battery, and the Circassian not knowing any one was in the magazine tried to explode it, but was shot by the gunner, who had slept soundly till it was too late for him to retire with his comrades. A working party of two hundred and fifty men of the 80th Light Infantry was at hand, and the Russians were driven back with loss.

Next day a flag of truce was arranged to bury the dead, and I was sent to the battery with a large piece of calico, which I handed over to the senior officer, with the order to hoist it at 12.30 p. m., and then hurried on to our most advanced trench to try to reach the Mamelon before sentries were posted. While waiting, I amused myself by shouting and throwing stones at five of our soldiers, who, not having been relieved at daylight, had remained out in front, and had made themselves as small as possible in the grass. They were so sound asleep that they never awoke until I shook them. I ran on to the front, and after picking up and sending back a wounded Russian from the northern side of the ravine, I got on to the ridge connecting the Mamelon and Malakoff, when I was stopped by a Russian officer; not, however, before I had time to look at the fall of the ground to the north of the ridge, which was my main object, since it was there the Russians would inevitably form up