

road, which shows how strongly this position was held by machine-gun defence. Yesterday there were more counter-attacks, but they had no success, and many lie on the ground.

The price of victory for the Canadians was heavy in physical suffering, and unwounded men as well as wounded had to endure agonies of wetness and coldness and thirst and exhaustion. It was only their hardness which enabled them to endure. They lay in cold slime, and a drop of rum would have been elixir vitae to them. Away behind, carrying parties were stuck in bogs as the fighting men had been stuck. Pack-mules were floundering in shell-craters. Men were rescuing their comrades out of pits and then sinking themselves and crying for help. At ten yards distance no shout was heard because of the roar of gun-fire and the howling of shells and the high wailing of the wind.

"I saw some fellows in front of me," said a wounded lad of the Devons, "and I halloed to them because I wanted company and a bit of help. But they didn't hear all my halloing, and they went faster than I could, and I could not catch up with them because my leg was bad."

"It was water we wanted most," said a young Canadian, "and some of us were four days thirsty in the front line. No blame to anybody. It was the state of the ground."

"I had a poisoned finger," said a young field-gunner, "and my arm swelled up, but I couldn't leave the battery before the show, as they were short-handed."

Sitting round after the battle these men out of the slime, these muddy, bloody men, spoke quietly and soberly about things they had seen and suffered, and the tales they told would freeze the blood of gentle souls who do not know even now, after three years of war, what war means to the fighting men. But as they listened to each other they nodded, as though to say, "Yes, that's how it was," and there was no consciousness among them of extraordinary adventures, and neither self-glory nor self-pity. They had just done their job, as when their wounds heal they will do it again, if fate so wills.

What I have written about the Canadians is true of all English battalions who were fighting on each side of them, and to whom I devoted most of my message on the day of the battle. Those London Territorials, Lancashire troops, Artists Rifles, Bedfords, and the old county regiments of the 5th and