

along the ground southward behind them. Our position was then shelled with high explosives until 8 P.M. On Friday also it was bombarded for some hours, the Germans firing poison shells for one hour. Their infantry, who were intrenched about 120 yards away, evidently expected some result from their use of the latter, for they put their heads above the parapets, as if to see what the effect had been on our men, and at intervals opened rapid rifle fire. The wind, however, was strong and dissipated the fumes quickly, our troops did not suffer seriously from their noxious effect, and the enemy did not attempt any advance.

On Saturday morning, just about dawn, an airship appeared in the sky to the east of our line at this point, and dropped four red stars, which floated downward slowly for some distance before they died out. When our men, whose eyes had not unnaturally been fixed on this display of pyrotechnics again turned to their front it was to find the German trenches rendered invisible by a wall of greenish-yellow vapor, similar to that observed on the Thursday afternoon, which was bearing down on them on the breeze. Through this the Germans started shooting. During Saturday they employed stupefying gas on several occasions in this quarter, but did not press on very quickly. One reason for this, given by a German prisoner, is that many of the enemy's infantry were so affected by the fumes that they could not advance.

To continue the narrative from the night of Sunday, April 25th. At 12.30 A.M., in face of repeated attacks, our infantry fell back from a part of the Grafenstafel Ridge, northwest of Zonnebeke, and the line then ran for some distance along the south bank of the little Haanebeek stream. The situation along the Yperlee Canal remained practically unchanged.

When the morning of the 26th dawned the Germans, who had been seen massing in St. Julien, and to the east of the village on the previous evening, made several assaults, which grew more and more fierce as the hours passed, but reinforcements were sent up and the position was secured. Further east, however, our line was pierced near Broodseinde, and a small body of the enemy established themselves in a portion of our trenches. In the afternoon a strong combined counter-attack was delivered by the French and British along the whole front from Steenstraete to the east of St. Julien, accompanied by a violent bombardment. This moment, so far as can be judged at present, marked the turning point of the battle, for, although it effected no great change in the situation, it caused a definite check to the enemy's offensive, relieved the pressure, and gained a certain amount of ground.

During this counter-attack the guns concentrated by both sides of this comparatively narrow front poured in a great volume of fire. From the right came the roar of the British batteries, from the left the rolling thunder of the soixante-quinze, and every now and then above the turmoil rose a dull boom as a huge howitzer shell burst in the vicinity of Ypres. On the right our infantry stormed the German trenches close to St. Julien, and in the evening gained the southern outskirts of the village. In the centre they captured the trenches a little to the south of the Bois des Cuisinirs, west of St. Julien, and still further west more trenches were taken. This represented an advance of some 600 or 700 yards, but the gain in ground could not at all points be maintained. Opposite St. Julien we fell back from the village to a position just south of the place, and in front of the Bois des Cuisinirs and on the left of the line a similar retirement took place, the enemy making extensive use of his gas cylinders and of machine guns placed in farms at or other points of vantage. None the less, the situation at nightfall was more satisfactory than it had been. We were holding our own well all along the line and had made progress at some points. On the right the enemy's attacks on the front of the Grafenstafel Ridge had all been repulsed.