

The Battle and the Triumph.

Large masses of cavalry, principally Lancers and heavy Dragoons, manoeuvred on the hills on the right of the Russians, and at last descended the hills, crossed the stream, and threatened our left and rear. As we came near the river our left wing was thrown back, in order to support our small force of cavalry, and a portion of our artillery was pushed forward in the same direction. Our danger in this respect was detected by the quick eye of Sir George Brown, and I heard him give the order for the movement of the artillery almost as soon as he caught sight of the enemy's cavalry, and just as we were coming to the village. As I have already said, our plan of operations was that the French should establish themselves under the fire of the guns on the heights on the extreme of the enemy's left. When the attack was sufficiently developed, and had met with success, the British army was to force the right and part of the centre of the Russian position, and the day was gained. When we were about three miles from the village, the French steamers ran in as close as they could to the bluff of the shore at the south side of the Alma, and presently we saw them shelling the heights in splendid style, the shells bursting over the enemy's squares and batteries, and finally driving them from their position on the right, within 2,000 yards of the sea. The French practice commenced about 12 1/2 o'clock, and lasted for about an hour and a half. We could see the shells falling over the batteries of the enemy, and bursting right into them; and then the black masses inside the works broke into little specks, which flew about in all directions, and when the smoke cleared there were some to be seen strewn over the ground. The Russians answered the ships from the heights, but without effect. A powder tumbril was blown up by a French shell, another shell fell by accident into an ambulance which the Russians had prepared for the advancing French, and at first they drew off from the sea-side, and confined their efforts to the defence of the gullies and heights beyond the fire of the heavy guns of the steamer. At 1 o'clock we saw the French columns struggling up the hills, covered by a cloud of skirmishers, whose fire seemed most deadly. Once, at sight of threatening mass of Russian infantry, in a commanding position above them, who fired rapid volleys among them, the French paused, but it was only to collect their skirmishers, for as soon as they had formed they ran up the hill at the *pas de charge*, and broke the Russians at once, who fell in disorder with loss up the hill. We could see men dropping on both sides, and the wounded rolling down the steep. At 1.50, our line of skirmishers got within range of the battery on the hill, and immediately the Russians opened fire at 1,200 yards with effect, the shot ploughing through the open lines of the Riflemen, and falling into the advancing column behind.—Shortly ere this dense volumes of smoke rose from the river, and drifted along to the eastward, rather interfering with the view of the enemy on the left of our position. The Russians had set the village on fire. Our troops halted when they neared this village, their left extending beyond it by the verge of the stream; our right behind the burning cottages, and within range of the batteries. It is said the Russians had taken the range of all the principal points in their front, and placed twigs and sticks to mark them. In this they were assisted by the post signposts on the road. The Russians opened a furious fire on the whole of our lines, but the French had not yet made progress enough to justify us in advancing. The round shot whizzed in every direction, dashing up the dirt and sand into the faces of the staff of Lord Raglan, who were also shelled severely, and attracted much of the enemy's fire. Still Lord Raglan waited patiently for the development of the French attack. At length an aide-de-camp came to him and reported the French had crossed the Alma, but they had not established themselves sufficiently to justify us in an attack.—The infantry were, therefore, ordered to lie down, and the army for a short time was quite passive, only that our artillery peared forth an unceasing fire of shell, rockets, and round shot, which ploughed through the Russians, and caused them great loss. They did not waver, however, and

replied to our artillery manfully, their shot falling among our men as they lay, and carrying off legs and arms at every round. Lord Raglan at last became weary of this inactivity—his spirit was up—he looked around, and saw men on whom he knew he might stake the honour and fate of Great Britain by his side, and anticipating a little in a military point of view the crisis of action, he gave orders for our whole line to advance. Up rose these selected masses, and passing through a fearful shower of round, case shot, and shell they dashed into the Alma, and "sundered" through its waters, which were literally torn into foam by the deadly hail. At the other side of the river were a number of vineyards, and to our surprise they were occupied by Russian riflemen. Three of the staff were here shot down, but led by Lord Raglan in person, they advanced cheering on the men. And now came the turning point of the battle, in which Lord Raglan, by his sagacity and military skill, probably secured the victory at a smaller sacrifice than would have been otherwise the case. He dashed over the bridge, followed by his staff. From the road over it, under the Russian guns, he saw the state of the action. The British line, which he had ordered to advance, was struggling through the river and up the heights in masses, fire indeed, but mowed down by the murderous fire of the batteries, and by grape, round shot, shell, canister, case shot, and musketry, from some of the guns of the central battery, and from an immense and compact mass of Russian infantry. Then commenced one of the most bloody and determined struggles in the annals of war. The 2nd Division, led by Sir D. Lacy Evans in the most dashing manner, crossed the stream on the right. The 7th Fusiliers, led by Colonel Yca, were swept down by shells. The 55th, 30th, and 95th, led by Brigadier Pennefather, who was in the thickest of the fight, cheering on his men, again and again were checked indeed, but never drew back in their onward progress, which was marked by a fierce roll of Minie musketry, and Brigadier Adams, with the 41st, 47th, and 49th, bravely charged up the hill, and aided them in the battle. Sir George Brown, conspicuous on a gray horse, rode in front of his Light Division, urging them with voice and gesture. Gallant fellows! they were worthy of such a gallant chief. The 7th, diminished by one-half, fell back to reform their columns lost for the time; the 23rd, with eight officers dead and four wounded, were still rushing to the front, aided by the 15th, 33d, 77th and 88th. Down went Sir George in a cloud of dust in front of the battery. He was soon up, and shouted, "23d, I'm all right. Be sure I'll remember this day," and led them on again, but in the shock produced by the fall of their chief, the gallant regiment suffered terribly while paralyzed for a moment. Meantime the Guards on the right of the Light Division, and the Brigade of Highlanders, were storming the heights on the left. Their line was almost as regular as though they were in Hyde-park. Suddenly a tornado of round and grape rushed through from the terrible battery, and a roar of musketry from behind thinned their front ranks by dozens. It was evident that we were just able to contend against the Russians, favoured as they were by a great position. At this very time an immense mass of Russian infantry were seen moving down towards the battery. They halted. It was the crisis of the day. Sharp, angular, and solid, they looked as if they were cut out of the solid rock. It was beyond all doubt that if our infantry, harassed and thinned as they were got into the battery they would have to encounter again a formidable fire, which they were but ill calculated to bear. Lord Raglan saw the difficulties of the position. He asked if it would be possible to get a couple of guns to bear on these masses. The reply was "Yes," and an artillery officer, whose name I do not now know, brought up two guns to fire on the Russian squares. The first shot missed, but the next, and next, and the next cut through the ranks so cleanly, and so keenly, that a clear lane could be seen for a moment through the square. After a few rounds the columns of the square became broken, wavered to and fro, broke, and fled over the brow of the hill, leaving behind them six or seven distinct lines of dead, lying as close as possible to each other,

marking the passage of the fatal messengers. This act relieved our infantry of a deadly incubus, and they continued their magnificent and fearful progress up the hill. The Duke encouraged his men by voice and example, and proved himself worthy of his proud command, and of the Royal race from which he comes. "Highlanders," said Sir C. Campbell, ere they came to the charge, "I am going to ask a favour of you; it is, that you will not so as to justify me in asking permission of the Queen for you to wear a bonnet! Don't put a trigger till you're within a yard of the Russians!" They charged, and well they obeyed their chief's wish: Sir Colin had his horse shot under him, but his men took the battery at a bound. The Russians rushed out, and left multitudes of dead behind them. The Guards had stormed the right of the battery ere the Highlanders got into the left—and it is said the Scots Fusilier Guards were the first to enter. The Second and Light Division crowned the heights. The French turned the guns on the hill against the flying masses, which the cavalry in vain tried to cover. A few faint struggles from the scattered infantry, a few rods of cannon and musketry, and the enemy fled to the south-east, leaving three generals, drums, three guns, 700 prisoners, and 4,000 wounded behind them. **THE BATTLE OF ALMA WAS WON!**

The English bore the Brunt of the Battle.

People have felt rather puzzled to understand how the English troops should have failed in turning the right wing while the French troops turned the left. True, it was perfectly understood that the English carried by downright pluck the heights they might have turned, but why prefer the direct and costly attack to the artful strategy by which life might have been saved? We see in some journals' attempts to answer such questions by remarks on the comparative boldness of English movements? We are told with expressions of admiration that the English were quickened their step in advancing, but marveled as if on parade, whilst the balls fell in showers about them, while the more impressionable French rushed against their adversary, and so lost fewer. This we find to be a gratuitous, however commendatory assumption. The French turned the left with the aid of Admiral Hamelin's war steamers, which moreover were the cause of throwing towards the right the cavalry which could not advance on the left; and thus of presenting to the English gross masses, which, having little cavalry themselves, they could meet in no other way than the old-fashioned fashion of going up directly to the mark. This shows, too, that the English bore the brunt of the battle.

The French had crossed in the Battle.

It so happened that twice or thrice during the action the French were so hardly pressed that they sent urgent messages to us for aid; and our guns were directed with such good effect on a mass of infantry which threatened their left that they were relieved from all embarrassment, and enabled to gain a position from which they rendered us material aid in return, by directing their guns against the Russian reserves above the battery.

Fearful Casualties under the Enemy's Fire.

The Rifles got over the stream in such loose order that they were wondrously preserved, in spite of the tremendous storm of shot which rattled over them. Col. Lawrence had his horse killed under him. Major Norcott's charger received no less than five mortal wounds. When the 7th got out of the stream Col. Yes found himself and his men at once under range of the battery before they could form, and were obliged to advance pell-mell against the guns. Poor Monck and Hare soon fell! The colours were lost for a time, for three of the enemy's shot strike down the officers who carried them; but Capt. Pearson, Aide-de-Camp to Sir G. Brown, passed the last poor fellow who bore them, and he was enabled to restore them to the gallant colonel. They are torn to pieces with shot.

The Retreat and Revenge on the Hill.

The 30th, 55th, and 95th left long lines of dead behind them, and just as the