

broken ground, sending forward a strong picket nearly to the Cocked Hat public house, on the main road, with videttes disposed along the whole of the right front of the brigade. In this position they and the artillery halted, and remained at ease while the infantry gradually came up on to Whitehill.

It seems that the defending force had a strategic plan of some ingenuity. It must be understood that the ground of the day's fighting was very diversified. In the intermediate space between Whitehill and the Brimstone Wood it was roughly level, with eminences here and there crowned with wood, the chief of which bore the name of Holy Water Clump. There was marsh gravel, heather, fern, scrub, and felled forest up to the edge of the wood, which on the west fell back, leaving open the Woolmer ponds—a considerable expanse of water. Brimstone Wood is full of rough ground, but has little underbrush, and beyond it to the south are the Weavers' Downs with on the edge of the latter, a little way to the westward, another wood, known as Longmore Wood. Now for the bit of strategy alluded to. The attacking force having occupied Brimstone and Longmore Woods, and seeing the videttes of the defence, was supposed to ask himself the question how strong might be the defence. Not being able to answer this query by intuition, he was to throw forces to his front out of the woods strong and enterprising enough to compel the defence to show his hand. The defence so compelled was to assume the defensive, and act vigorously against the attack. On this basis then grew the strategic plan, alluded to above. The defence was to push the attack vigorously all along his front, so as to puzzle the latter as to his intentions. Then a feigned attack by the cavalry and artillery was to be made on the left of the defence, the real attack in force being on the right, with intent to drive the attack off the main road, cut him off from his reinforcements, throw him back on the ridges, and if not actually turn his flank, at least open up the possibility of such an operation. But the fulfilment of this programme was prevented by circumstances.

Soon after half-past ten the Bays and Artillery were in position above described, with their front covered by videttes. The two on the open road by the Cocked Hat were so exposed that in actual warfare, were they married men, there would have been two more widows in the world in a very few minutes, with an enemy in the wood. A couple of eleven videttes begin to circle right. Then they must be seeing cavalry. In a few minutes cavalry was visible from the main body, a few videttes of the enemy on the top of Brimstone Ridge. Now the videttes were circling left. Where, then, were the enemy's infantry? Look among the trees in the wood over there. See man after man, scarlet clad, dodging from tree to tree, till the edge of the wood is lined. Is the enemy, then, in force in the wood? It may be so, and he may be contemplating a sudden quick advance out of it. Up with the guns on to the slope, so that their muzzles are just under its cover, ready when need calls to be pushed over and brought into fire. But in that event, or at least in the event of a reply from an enemy's artillery, it would be bad times for the Bays, massed as they are in the rear of the battery. A message to Colonel Hawley in the rear that the enemy's infantry are seen in the wood brings back a reply from that able officer that he has seen them already; and here are his riflemen coming up at the double, covering the right centre and the right.

How nimbly they come through the broken country, splashing through the marsh, scrambling over fences, and through gorse, even at the top of their speed, but, when the end of their tether is reached, judiciously lying down and catching their wind to steady their nerves for straight shooting after the excitement of the run. They do not get the chance to be still long, for the enemy's skirmishers are swarming out of the wood. There is the first shot. Soon there is a vicious pattering all along the front, both sides being warmly engaged with their skirmishers. General Brownrigg never gave the attack an opportunity of carrying out the programme by forcing him to show his hand. So to speak, he threw it down on the table. Regiment after Regiment came up in columns, in support of the skirmishers of the defence, while the attack never were able to get anything out of the wood save skirmishers. On the right of the attack, or the left of the defence, it is difficult to say which artillery is at work. The umpire staff are visible on a knoll. On a higher knoll, further to the rear—speaking from the defence side—are to be seen the plumes, the aiguillettes, the slung jackets, and the rich uniforms of the foreign visitors. The defence, pressing its offensive, is inside the wood, disregarding a few salvoes of volley-firing, which meet the skirmishers in the teeth as they swarm over the sunk fence. There is a general advance. The Duke of Cambridge comes up at a canter over the rough ground, with princess Alice by his side, riding like an Amazon, her brown hair streaming out on the wind, and Austrians, French, Germans, Turks and Americans, in the oddest and most picturesque manner, madly careering behind, the wind wafting from them a chaos of tongues such as might have bothered any philologist who happened to have been in the vicinity of the tower of Babel when the confusion of tongues occurred. The forest fighting was very warm all through. At times the opposing skirmishers got far too close together—nearly, indeed face to face. There was a good deal of confusion, occasional overlappings taken place. The Volunteers were extremely zealous, but their discretion was not always equal to their zeal. One Volunteer regiment was metaphorically crunched up utterly. The 94th engaged it in front while the 60th worked round its flank, and suddenly bursting on it almost from the rear, astonished it with an exceeding great astonishment. The Volunteers require to study cover a good deal more than they seem to do. On the other hand, nothing could be more splendid than the skirmishing advance of the Regulars. It was good to see the intelligence and pains with which, while ever pressing on rapidly, the 94th and 60th utilized every scrap of cover. "The perfection of skirmishing," said a foreign critic. Other regiments he found fault with in that they ran too much for good shooting, contending that with the pulses all throbbing with excitement accuracy of aim must be seriously impaired.

The invader had the worst of it all through the wood, notwithstanding several desperate stands. He was driven through it, and out at the other side on to the open of Weaver's Down. Here the defending force made an inexplicable pause in the pertinacity of its attack. The invader must have been somewhat disorganized after the hurling back on him of his light troops. He was in retreat on level ground, which intervened between the Brimstone Wood and Bridger's Hill. But they lunged, and allowed the attack to fall back leisurely and in good order upon the lower brow of Bridger's Hill, and actually

to get guns into position on his left flank, which had the sweep of the whole space between the Longmore Wood and the beginning of the rise. Particularly unenterprising were the guns of the field artillery on the right of the defence. They might have cut the guns of the attack, retiring through the interval between the woods; but they remained supine, although they might have been of great service. The artillery are not to blame—the cause for any slowness in the working of field artillery was more patent than usual to day, in the broken rugged ground, and in the heather in which men sunk to the knees. The gunners on foot could not keep up with their pieces, and panted throbbingly after them, perspiring, and blowing like grampuses. They have reason to pray fervently for the day when the new carriages with the seats on the gun-axle shall be served out.

As soon as the attack had got comfortably into position on the brow of Bridger's Hill, the defence proceeded to debouch from the woods. It had occupied Frogmore Wood as its right flank, and opened an artillery fire from it in reply to the pounding of the guns of the left flank of the attack. Its columns meanwhile deployed into line, and pushed across the level intervening open. It struck observers as a movement which would have resulted in decimation, beautiful as it was. Of course it was to be done—it was nothing more than was done at Alma—but the alternative of an effort to turn the left flank of the attack, while its front was kept in play by a show of force about the verges of the wood, and by an artillery fire from the same quarter, seemed preferable to the direct attack, and quite practicable. The movement was, however, a striking one, and carried out with the most perfect order. It was at this crisis that an unfortunate Militia regiment, belonging to the attack, found itself in a bad way. It had remained on the level intervening ground, while the regiments right and left of it had fallen back on to the brow of the hill. So far as could be judged by the glass, it had its arms piled and was taking it sublimely easy. At last the skirmishers of the attack overlapped it right and left. Just as the Duke of Cambridge, with something that looked like horror noted the position of the unlucky Militia regiment, it seemed to discover its danger, and started at a frantic double to get into safety. But it was not to escape. A corps of regulars chased it at the double, blazing into the fugitive Militiamen, and did not desist till the runaways, blowing and panting, and shamefaced, had scrambled behind the skirmishers of a friendly regiment, who with seeming disgust, blazed into its teeth as it approached them. With a little more promptitude, the regular regiment would have bagged the Militia regiment bodily; as it was, the experience will teach the latter to keep his eyes a little opener for the future.

Just as the defending force was coming to close quarters with the attack, stationary on the brow of the hill, the "cease firing" sounded, and there were observers who came to the conclusion that it was a drawn battle. Colonel Stephenson's position on the summit of Bridger's Hill was seemingly so strong to be forced by any direct attack, and so he may be held not to have been beaten. On the other hand, the defence had done all that it could have hoped for. It had frustrated the enemy's advance; it had converted a defence into an energetic attack; it had hurled the invader backward; it had pressed his left back off the roads by which alone he could advance; and had cleared to all appearances, the obstacles