

ficantly. "Get back and tell your Numbers One, and be ready for quick moving."

Immediately they had fallen back the order was given to trot, and the battery commenced to bump and rumble rapidly over the rough road. As they neared the cross-roads they were halted a moment, and then the guns and their attendant ammunition wagons only went on, turned into the wood, and recommenced to trot.

#### Getting to It.

They jolted and swayed and slid over the rough, wet road, the gunners clinging fiercely to the hand-rails, the drivers picking a way as best they could over boulders and between ruts. They emerged on the far side of the wood, found themselves in an open field, turned sharply to the right, and kept on at a fast trot. A line of infantry were entrenched amongst the trees on the edge of the wood, but their shouted remarks were drowned in the clatter and rattle and jingle of wheels and harness. Out on their left the ground rose very gently, and far beyond a low crest could be seen clumps of trees, patches of fields, and a few scattered farmhouses. At several points on this distant slope the white smoke-clouds of bursting shells were puffing and breaking, but so far there was no sign to be seen of any man or of any gun. When they came to where the major was waiting he rode out from the trees, blew sharply on a whistle, and made a rapid signal with hand and arm. The guns and wagons had been moving along the edge of the wood in single file, but now at the shouted order each team swung abruptly to its left and commenced to move in a long line out from the wood towards the low crest, the whole movement being performed neatly and cleanly and still at a trot. The major rode to his place in the centre of the line, and the battery, keeping its place close on his heels, steadily increased its pace almost to a canter. The major's whistle screamed again, and at another signal and the shouted orders the battery dropped to a walk. Every man could see now over the crest and into the shallow valley that fell away from it and rose again in gentle folds and slopes. At first they could see nothing of the gun against which they had expected to be brought into action, but presently someone discovered a string of tiny black dots that told of the long team and heavy gun it drew. Another sharp whistle and the major's signal brought the battery to with a jerk.

"Halt, action front!" The shouted order rang hoarsely along the line. For a moment there was wild commotion; a seething chaos, a swirl of bobbing heads and plunging horses.