

The Battle of Courcellette.

THE Second Division had not long to wait for action after re-aching the Somme. The four Canadian divisions were given the line in front of Courcellette on the afternoon of September 15th 1916. An eastern Ontario Battalion (the number has not yet been given us) was given a sugar refinery in the outskirts of Courcellette as an objective for attack. They carried it with such facility that the divisional commander decided it was a good time to gather in the village. The 5th Brigade was in reserve two miles behind the line. At noon nothing was further from the thought of officers and men than a sustained charge in the open against the enemy. But unexpectedly the opportunity came and every man was ready. The plan was for the entire brigade to advance a mile behind the sugar refinery, penetrate the village as far as possible and hold on. Counting on the French to attack, were the 22nd Battalion placed in front for the attack on the right half of the village; the 25th Battalion on the left. The 26th followed closely on the heels of the 22nd; and for this reason, it was pointed out, suffered more heavily from the shell fire of the enemy. The 24th Battalion was given a similar position in supporting the 25th. It was a day of record breaking. It was said afterward that the G. O. C. on the Somme declared that the Second Canadian Division that day had accomplished more than any other division since