

Passchendaele has been lost to the enemy to-day, and if we have any fortune in war, it will not be retaken.

The Canadians have had more luck than the English, New Zealand and Australian troops who fought the battles on the way up with most heroic endeavour, and not a man in the Army will begrudge them the honour which they have gained, not easily, not without the usual price of victory, which is some men's death and many men's pain. For several days the enemy has endeavoured to thrust us back from the positions held round Crest Farm and on the left beyond the Paddebeek, where all the ground is a morass. The Artists and Bedfords who fought there on the left on the last days of last month had a very hard and tragic time, but it was their grim stoicism in holding on to exposed outposts—small groups of men under great shell-fire—which enabled the Canadians this morning to attack from a good position. A special tribute is due to two companies of Shropshires who, with Canadian guides, worked through a woodland plantation, drove a wedge into enemy territory, and held it against all attempts to dislodge them.

Heavy German counter-attacks were made during the past few days to drive us off Crest Farm and the Meetscheele spur, but they only made a slight lodgment near Crest Farm and were thrust back with great loss to themselves. Meanwhile there was the usual vast activity on our side in making tracks and carrying railroads a few hundred yards nearer, and hauling forward heavy guns out of the slough in which they were deeply sunk, and carrying up stores of ammunition and supplies for men and guns, and all this work by pioneers and engineers and transport men and infantry was done under infernal fire and in deep mud and filth. Last night the enemy increased his fire as though he guessed his was at hand, and all night he flung down harassing rages and scattered shells from his heavies and used gas-shells to search and dope our batteries, and tried hard by every devilish thing in war to prevent the assembly of troops. The Canadians assembled—lying out in shell-craters and in the deep slime of the mud, and under this fire, and though there were anxious hours and a great strain upon officers and men, and many casualties, the spirit of the men was not broken, and in a wonderful way they escaped great losses. It was a moist, soft night, with a stiff wind blowing. The weather prophets in the evening had shaken their heads gloomily and said, "It will rain, beyond all doubt." But luck was with our