

On the morning of the 22nd the enemy made a very determined attack on the 5th Division, who were driven out of the village of Violaines, but they were sharply counter-attacked by the Worcesters and Manchesters, and prevented from coming on.

The left of the Second Corps being now somewhat exposed, Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien withdrew the line during the night to a position he had previously prepared, running generally from the eastern side of Givenchy, east of Neuve Chapelle to Fauquissart.

On the 24th October the Lahore Division of the Indian Army Corps, under Major General Watkis, having arrived, I sent them to the neighbourhood of Lacon to support the Second Corps.

Very early on this morning the enemy commenced a heavy attack, but, owing to the skilful manner in which the artillery was handled and the targets presented by the enemy's infantry as it approached, they were unable to come to close quarters. Towards the evening a heavy attack developed against the 7th Brigade, which was repulsed, with very heavy loss to the enemy, by the Wiltshires and the Royal West Kents. Later, a determined attack on the 18th Infantry Brigade drove the Gordon Highlanders out of their trenches, which were retaken by the Middlesex Regiment, gallantly led by Lieutenant-Colonel Hull.

The 8th Infantry Brigade (which had come into line on the left of the Second Corps) was also heavily attacked, but the enemy was driven off.

In both these cases the Germans lost very heavily, and left large numbers of dead and prisoners behind them.

The Second Corps was now becoming exhausted, owing to the constant reinforcements of the enemy, the length of line which it had to defend and the enormous losses which it had suffered.

3. By the evening of the 11th October the Third Corps had practically completed its detainment at St. Omer, and was moved east to Hazebrouck, where the Corps remained throughout the 12th.

On the morning of the 13th the advanced guard of the Corps, consisting of the 19th Infantry Brigade and a Brigade of Field Artillery, occupied the position of the line Strazeele Station-Caestre-St. Sylvestre.

On this day I directed General Pulteney to move towards the line Armentières-Wyt-schaete; warning him, however, that should the Second Corps require his aid he must be prepared to move South-East to support it.

A French Cavalry Corps under General Conneau was operating between the Second and Third Corps.

The Fourth German Cavalry Corps, supported by some Jaeger Battalions, was known to be occupying the position in the neighbourhood of Meteren; and they were believed to be further supported by the advanced guard of another German Army Corps.

In pursuance of his orders, General Pulteney proceeded to attack the enemy in his front.

The rain and fog which prevailed prevented full advantage being derived from our much superior artillery. The country was very much enclosed and rendered difficult by heavy rain.

The enemy were, however, routed: and the

position taken at dark, several prisoners being captured.

During the night the Third Corps made good the attacked position and entrenched it.

As Bailleul was known to be occupied by the enemy, arrangements were made during the night to attack it; but reconnaissances sent out on the morning of the 14th showed that they had withdrawn, and the town was taken by our troops at 10 a.m. on that day, many wounded Germans being found and taken in it.

The Corps then occupied the line St. Jans Cappel-Bailleul.

On the morning of the 15th the Third Corps were ordered to make good the line of the Lys from Armentières to Saily, which, in the face of considerable opposition and very foggy weather, they succeeded in doing, the 6th Division at Saily-Bac St. Maur and the 4th Division at Nieppe.

The enemy in its front having retired, the Third Corps on the night of the 17th occupied the line Bois Grenier-Le Gheir.

On the 18th the enemy were holding a line from Radinghem on the south, through Perenchies and Frelinghien on the north, whence the German troops which were opposing the Cavalry Corps occupied the east bank of the river as far as Wervick.

On this day I directed the Third Corps to move down the valley of the Lys and endeavour to assist the Cavalry Corps in making good its position on the right bank. To do this it was necessary first to drive the enemy eastward towards Lille. A vigorous offensive in the direction of Lille was assumed, but the enemy was found to have been considerably reinforced, and but little progress was made.

The situation of the Third Corps on the night of the 18th was as follows:—

The 6th Division was holding the line Radinghem - La Vallée - Emnetières - Capinghem-Prèmesques-Railway Line 300 yards east of Halte. The 4th Division were holding the line from L'Épinette to the river at a point 400 yards south of Frelinghien, and thence to a point half a mile south-east of Le Gheir. The Corps Reserve was at Armentières Station, with right and left flanks of Corps in close touch with French Cavalry and the Cavalry Corps.

Since the advance from Bailleul the enemy's forces in front of the Cavalry and Third Corps had been strongly reinforced, and on the night of the 17th they were opposed by three or four divisions of the enemy's cavalry, the 19th Saxon Corps and at least one division of the 7th Corps. Reinforcements for the enemy were known to be coming up from the direction of Lille.

4. Following the movements completed on the 11th October, the 2nd Cavalry Division pushed the enemy back through Flêtre and Le Coq de Paille, and took Mont des Cats, just before dark, after stiff fighting.

On the 14th the 1st Cavalry Division joined up, and the whole Cavalry Corps under General Allenby, moving north, secured the high ground above Berthen, overcoming considerable opposition.

With a view to a further advance east, I ordered General Allenby, on the 15th, to reconnoitre the line of the River Lys, and endeavour to secure the passages on the opposite bank, pending the arrival of the Third and Fourth Corps.