

Interesting Field Operation.

Severe Criticism by the Duke of Cambridge.

H. R. H. the Duke of Cambridge, Field Marshal Commanding-in-Chief, June 19th witnessed some exceedingly interesting and, in certain respects, novel field movements by the troops of the Aldershot division. As a matter of fact, the Duke acted as chief umpire, and he did not appear to be particularly well pleased with some of the things he saw.

The idea governing the fight was that a southern force was pursuing a northern one much inferior in strength. Major-Gen. Gregorie, who had command of the pursuers, had at his disposal two divisions of field artillery, two regiments of cavalry (4th Dragoon Guards and 4th Hussars), two regular brigades of infantry, a volunteer battalion, and the mounted engineers. General Butler commanded the northern or retreating force, which consisted of the Royal Scots, two brigades of Royal Horse and Field Artillery, Mounted Infantry, four battalions of Regular Infantry, and a strong cadet battalion from the Royal Military College. The Commander-in-Chief was accompanied by Sir Redvers Buller, Sir Evelyn Wood, Sir R. Gipps, and many other officers of the head-quarter staff, and was met at the station by the Duke of Connaught, Prince Christian of Denmark, and all the chief members of the Aldershot staff. The operations were deferred for about an hour, owing to the duke deciding to inspect the whole of the positions.

The battle began in the usual manner, cavalry scouts searching on both sides for the enemy, the Greys, on the northern side, making themselves rather too conspicuous, for which they dearly paid a little later on, when three squadrons were put out of action. The fighting line on Gregorie's side was composed of Utterson's second brigade being in reserve. The troops came into collision about 11.30. Butler's outpost's pluckily held their own for fully an hour, when they were compelled to fall back on the steeplechase course. The work of Gregorie's field artillery on the rough ground was remarkably smart, the dash with which they went earning the commendation of the Duke's staff.

A remarkably clever bit of work came off just under the eyes of the Duke, when the 4th Dragoon Guards, and the 4th Hussars crossed the Long Valley, and, by a brilliant uphill charge, and a clever flank movement on the right of Cocked hat Wood, completely surrounded the Royal Horse Artillery, a circumstance specially referred to by the Commander-in-Chief later on at the conference, when an umpire-in-chief, he received the reports. The Duke complained in no measured terms of the immobility of an arm which should have been the first to shew how quickly it could get out of danger, and in turn assume the offensive. "I like," he said, "to see a man caught in a trap, and I am better pleased when I see him get cleverly out of it; but I hate to see a man do

nothing. Better die fighting or give him the slip than be taken without an effort." The Duke went so far as to add that some of the work he had seen that day was "quite idiotic." On the other hand, he considered the generals on both sides skilfully conducted the operations.

Throughout the day, a bearer company and a field hospital was attached to each force, and the system of casualties being adopted, the operations were rendered very realistic, a prettier battlefield scene at Aldershot having been rarely witnessed.

The Oldest Survivor of the Grande Armee.

Nowadays the claims of bona fide centenarians are so fully acknowledged that it is only occasionally that a special "record" is worth chronicling. Such a case is assuredly that of Lieut. Nikola Andrejevitch Sawin, now living at Saratoff in Russia, who is stated to have been born on April 17, 1768, and who is consequently in his 127th year. Lt. Sawin, or, more correctly, Savin, for he is a Frenchman, was born in Paris, his father, André Savin, being then colonel of the French Guards under Louis XV. When a youth, Nicholas was sent to the Jesuits' College at Tours, and after the execution of his father enlisted in Bonaparte's Army in 1798. In the same year he embarked with his regiment, the 2nd Hussars, at Toulon for Egypt, whence he returned to France in 1801. He subsequently fought at Austerlitz and Jena, and was nominated Chevalier of the Legion of Honour in 1809, after being severely wounded at Saragossa. Taken prisoner by the Spanish, he was sent to Seville, where he, with a dozen other compatriots, was imprisoned in a building which had formerly been used as a prison by the Inquisition. Here he and his companions luckily found some old instruments of torture, by the aid of which they were able to construct a mine and to make their escape, only, however, to become a prey to the most fearful hardships and hunger in a long month's wandering in the Sierra, where eight of his companions succumbed to their dreadful privations, and only three others with himself succeeded in eventually rejoining the French Army. In 1812 he served under Ney in the disastrous Russian campaign at the defeat of Krasnoi, he had several horses shot under him, and arrived some days later with a few hundred others almost without arms and nearly dead with cold and hunger before the Beresina. The following is the graphic description he furnishes of the passage of the river: "Before crossing over, the Marshall—Ney—ordered me to look after the waggons containing the treasure, which consisted of some four million francs in gold. The Marshal ordered these waggons to cross by the bridge destined for the passage of the Artillery and baggage, and in spite of my objections on the danger of such a proceeding, he refused to cancel the order, and I was therefore forced to y. My turn for passing was among

the last, with rear guard under Marshal Victor. All the commanding officers and Marshals were already on the other side, so that when it came there was no longer any semblance of order, no one obeyed orders. The Artillery began to cross over at the same time as we did. Suddenly the Cossack lances were seen, and the tumultuous clamour became terrible.

"Scarcely had our waggons reached the middle of the bridge than the bridge, yielding to the weight of the guns and ammunition waggons, broke down. In a moment men, guns, waggons, and caissons were struggling in a confused mass in the river. Having been thrown from my horse, I made superhuman efforts to avoid being crushed to pieces. The crowd prevented my advancing, and I was forced backwards; a few moments afterwards we were surrounded by Cossacks, and should have been unable to defend ourselves for any time if it had not been for the intervention of a Russian general, who kept off the Cossacks and proposed that we should surrender. This general was Count Platoff, to whom many of us, including myself, are indebted for having escaped with our lives."

Lieut. Savin was at first sent a prisoner to Jaroslav, and later on to Saratof, where up to his hundredth year he gained a scanty subsistence by teaching French. At present he and his daughter, an octogenarian, are living in very straitened circumstances in a modest cottage in the suburbs of Saratof.

General Wolfe's Sword.

A Precious Historical Relic—For Sale in England—Who Will Buy It?

Mr. Henry J. Morgan, of Ottawa, has been informed by Messrs. Southby, Wilkinson & Hodge, 13 Wellington street, Strand, London, England, that the sword carried by General Wolfe at the taking of Quebec is to be sold at auction. One of the owners of this interesting weapon was a citizen of Ottawa, the late Mr. Stewart Derbyshire, for many years Queen's Printer, and who had previously represented Bytown in the Legislative Assembly of Canada. Mr. Derbyshire gave it to Major Dunn, afterwards lieutenant-colonel, of the 100th Regiment, on his departure from Canada in 1858. Colonel Dunn who was a Canadian by birth was at Balaklava, and there won the Victoria Cross for being "the bravest of the brave" among the famous six hundred. From him it passed to his brother-in-law, the late Mr. Thurlow Dowling, of the War Office, whose son now offers, for private reasons, to dispose of it.

During the London Exhibition of 1862, we are informed in an article in Good Words, that the sword was displayed in the Canadian department, "where it was examined by thousands with that tender respect which everything connected with the young hero who fell on the Plains of Abraham ought ever to excite." It was surmounted by a scroll, with an imperial crown, having the inscription, "Sword of General Wolfe, who fell at Quebec, 13th September, 1759." In a letter written to Mr. Morgan, Colonel Dowling, the present possessor, relates that the hilt of the sword, which possesses a three cornered blade, is of silver.