

summer months, improve the communication, and perhaps construct a light railway from Fusan to Soul, they would indefinitely strengthen their hold upon the country. Again, if they propose to carry on operations against the Chinese in the northern part of Korea, the port of Gensan would be much more available than either of the others. They may be only strengthening it with a view to the future. If they feel themselves strong enough to advance against the Chinese before the latter can effect their concentration on the frontier, they may have arranged to combine their operations from Chemulpho and Gensan with the advantage of the greater facilities for rapid disembarkation supplied by two harbors.

A report from the "general commanding in Korea" was published by the Japanese government which spoke of a victory at "Chan Hon" and of the Chinese retreating on "Hong Chow," "probably with a view to taking advantage of the Korean boats in the neighborhood of Gunsan" (no doubt our Gensan). The *Times* subsequently announced that they had received information that these were only the Japanese names for Seikwan and Koshiu. That may be so. In that case it would imply that the general considered that the retreating Chinese had no choice but to attempt to cross the mountains to the eastern coast where they would probably be anticipated by the Japanese from sea. On the other hand near the harbor of Fusan there is a place spelled in the German map Tschang-won which looks very much like the same place as Chanhon, and to the north of this there is a place spelled Jong-tschon which may be Hong-Chow. I am not, therefore, altogether convinced that this may not refer to an altogether different series of operations. It is not impossible that some Chinese troops were landed at Fusan for the suppression of the rebellion in the South, or may have landed from some transports which escaped after the disaster to the *Kowung*. In any case none of these are operations against any but detached and isolated Chinese. The main army may possibly have pushed a few detachments across the northern frontier, but it can as yet be in no condition to invade Korea in any serious force and equipped for a campaign.

POSTSCRIPT (*Wednesday, Aug. 12, afternoon*).—The above was in print prior to the reception of the news of Wednesday afternoon. It will be seen that the news confirms my impression as to the nature of the movement of the Chinese from Asan. I imagine that the report of the present engagement represents a skirmish of no very considerable importance between an advanced post of Japanese pushed forward to occupy an advantageous post and a force of Chinese similarly pushed forward to seize it. In any case it does not represent a "battle" between the two armies, which for the reasons assigned in the article cannot yet have taken place. It is exceedingly possible that a portion of the force which was at Asan has made good its retreat in the way I have suggested in the summary that they would probably attempt. Getting into the mountain region and slipping round the Japanese would probably be all the more feasible, because the Japanese force from Soul seems to have turned off at once towards Asan to seize the post. If it be true that the Chinese have succeeded in enlisting Korean support, that fact would also help to explain their escape round the Japanese position. In all probability the Japanese commander had calculated upon the assumption that the rebels, whose insurrection the Chinese had come to suppress, repre-

sented the general feeling of the Korean peasantry. If that has not proved to be the case, but on the contrary, whilst some have certainly enlisted with the Japanese, others have joined the Chinese, it is obvious that in a mountainous district the extent to which their movement northward would be facilitated can hardly be exaggerated. In that event it is exceedingly probable that the Chinese from Asan have succeeded in joining some better equipped portion of the Chinese army from the north, pushed forward expressly in order to give them a chance of escaping.

That they should in that case have fallen with great advantage upon the Japanese outposts seems exceedingly likely. More than that I do not think we have reason to assume. It is to be noticed, however, that the Japanese are said to be re-embarking from Fusan. That rather confirms my impression that some of the operations mentioned in the early telegrams, as of July 29th, may have taken place on that side. They may be now re-embarking because they have cleared out of that region the Chinese force against which they were engaged, so that any operations for improving communications with Soul for the time when Chemulpho is closed, may now be safely guarded with smaller numbers.

F. M.

(We will continue the publication of this series of letters as they appear.)

## CAMPS.

BY CAPTAIN MERRY.

No part of the training necessary to make the the volunteer a soldier interests me so much as the annual camp. And I am disposed to think that it is a good thing to be interested in that portion of your work—whether voluntary or otherwise—that is of most service to you.

But I am afraid that I cannot lay claim to a disinterested desire to excel in military accomplishment when I make my annual pilgrimage to camp and earn for my battalion that two shillings per day which an extravagant Government recklessly squanders in the belief that it is justified in playing ducks and drakes with the public money. The admission must be made, though I hope my Commanding Officer will not take official cognizance of it, that in going to camp I am actuated by a large per centage of personal motive.

I first went to camp in 1881. The corps I belonged to used then, and I believe does now, pay an annual visit to Sandown Park. I remember my first night under canvas, or rather, my first reveille. In my ignorance, I had the previous night folded up and placed my uniform on the nice dry grass beside my bed. During the night an unusually heavy thunderstorm came on, there was no trench round the tent and the rest may be left to the imagination of the reader. I cheerfully wore that uniform during the whole day that followed and by evening thanks to a hot sun, it was, when I took it off, considerably drier than when I donned it. And

after I had worn it for three days it was not what might be described as appreciably damp.

Since then I have attended many camps, and, all adverse circumstances notwithstanding, have enjoyed them. I have, with the good old Queen's Westminsters done a forty night hour's continuous guard at Aldershot, at the expiration of which the doctor had to sew up the cracks in my cheeks caused by sun and wind; I have experienced the pleasure of a field day with the commissariat all at sea and nothing to eat for a round dozen hours; I have been rudely awakened by a smack across the face with a tent pole, followed the next moment by a falling mass of wet canvas and ropes; and I have—though not in this country—been awakened out of a sound sleep by a jackal who, so far I could judge, desired to have a tasting acquaintance with me. In a dozen other ways I have experienced what some fellows would look upon as the discomforts of a life under canvas, and yet I am foolish enough to wish at the end of each camp that I could induce a Rip Van Winkle-like sleep that would last until the beginning of the following August.

This year I encamped once more with the Essex Brigade at Lowestoft, and a better place for a Brigade Camp it would be difficult to find. There is perhaps a trifle too much "forbidden ground" for field day purposes, but as a camping ground generally the Denes at Lowestoft are unsurpassed. A good quarter of an hour from the town, and therefore out of reach of the rag, tag, and bobtail, with the sea on one side and a miniature mountain range on the other, the situation is most picturesque. I induced the local photographer to take a photograph of the camp for me from the heights at the back of the camp. He has been fairly successful, but seems to have been troubled with that excessive zeal which over reaches itself. In the background are a number of yachts and something that bears a resemblance to one of Nelson's warships with a funnel equipment. They are, this zealous photographer explained to me, a number yachts and the Koh-i-Noor. I ventured to wonder how such a large fleet could be manoeuvring in the vicinity without my knowledge, and he explained that he had taken the liberty of giving "life" to the photograph by painting these craft into his negative.

I give all my friends to understand that I am no party to this deception. The explanation is, necessary in my opinion, because anybody who knows Lowestoft will come to the conclusion that the yachtsmen of this county have gone stark staring mad. If I owned a yacht and had to pass Lowestoft I should put out to sea ten miles or so