

## THE AUTUMN MANOEUVRES.

## THE SCENE OF OPERATIONS.

(From the Broad Arrow, Sept. 7.

(Continued from Page 531.)

MONDAY SEPT. 2ND.

*Northern Army.*—The rain caused such general discomfort on Saturday and Sunday, did not cease until late this afternoon, by which time the camping ground of both divisions had become moist and sloppy to a most disagreeable extent, and in places the roads were little better than mud ponds. The cavalry of the 4th Division had a rough time of it, the 19th Hussars having to shift their quarters twice in consequence of the sloppy nature of the ground. A dry night, and the warm sun today considerably improved matters, and it was generally thought that today would have been one of entire rest, and that it would be devoted to bur-nishing up and putting things in order after the march from Aldershot. Both Sir Chms., Staveley and Lord Mark Kerr were, however, anxious to be certain how their brigades could handle the Militia and Volunteer regiments which joined their commands on Saturday; and consequently, at about nine o'clock Staveley had his division in full march for Pewsey Hill. Marshall's cavalry were first away, and after cresting the hill, turned off to the left for the enemy, who were supposed to be advancing from that direction. We saw here some very pretty manoeuvring take place, and it was surprising to notice the ease with which the heavy brigade was handled, and the promptness and precision with which they performed their duty. In the infantry camp, although Erskine was the first to get his men in motion, owing to the larger distance they had to march, Anderson's Brigade was the first in position. It was very picturesque to see his column advance up the hill, the red jackets in front and rear, and the dark uniform of the 2nd Battalion of Volunteers in the centre. On arriving on the plateau, General Parke's brigade took ground to the right, Anderson's Brigade was posted in the centre, and Erskine's on the left. General Staveley then directed several brigade movements to be performed, and while this was going on sent a battery of artillery well to the front and just in rear of the further ridge of Pewsey Hill. In the meantime the Guards discovered their opponents somewhere near Verley, and soon the battery of Horse Artillery they had with them opened on the enemy's right. The Guards were thrown well forward, but their advance was soon driven in, and although the main body retained its ground for a considerable time, it was ultimately compelled to retire under cover of Erskine's Brigade who still formed the extreme left. At this juncture, the 90th was deployed in open order, and received the order to advance. Nos. 2 and 3 Companies extended as skirmishers, rushed thirty paces to the front, and were supposed to deliver their fire. These were followed by Nos. 4, 5, and 6 Companies in this order supported by the two remaining regiments of the brigade. They advanced over the brow of the first hill, but their left was for a few seconds thrown into disorder, owing to two companies having to advance in file on either side of a turnip field, the crop being regarded as too expensive to be trodden upon by a skirmish line. The supports, in consequence of this obstruction, had also to work their way further to the left than would be actually prudent in real warfare. On reforming, the 90th, working their way

steadily up the hill, got upon the enemy's left, and compelled a change of front to the right. General Parke's Brigade was thrown forward in force, and the guns on our right opening, our opponents were compelled to retire. The movement was one of a very simple character, and it might be easily understood by the officers and privates of the Militia and Volunteer regiments engaged against the imaginary foe. Anderson's brigade which was kept in reserve, and to which the volunteers are attached, had an excellent opportunity of seeing what was going on in front, and great pains were taken to instruct the men in the nature of the movement. The 2nd Staffordshire Militia were handled very cleverly by their noble colonel and while everyone was pleased with the excellent manner in which the Royal Aberdeenshire men performed every movement they were called upon to execute, there was so much confusion caused by officers repeating in a loud and noisy manner the leading word of command, that Brigadier Erskine had in a very summary manner to check it. With regard to the Volunteer battalions present, as they were kept in reserve, no opportunity was afforded them of displaying their good qualities. After the engagement Anderson's Brigade marched past General Staveley, and the style in which the 2nd Battalion of Volunteers (the Post Officers) swept by the saluting post was much admired by the staff, and won a very justly deserved word of praise from Sir Charles. The remaining two brigades, before they were taken off the ground, marched past their respective brigadiers.

Hardly had the 3rd Division reached camp, when cannon, heard in the direction of Upavon, told us that Lord Mark Kerr had his division out. Both cavalry and infantry were knocked about a good deal, but as the operations were merely intended to get the brigade commanders accustomed to their commands, the manoeuvring was not of a very complicated description.

*Southern Army.*—The presence of the Prince of Wales at Mr. Sturt's, only a few miles from Blandford, added to the attractions of the Camp, and the show of troops, would seem to have made the people boil over with enthusiasm. Blandford Downs to day resembles Brighton Downs on the occasion of a review. The spectators began to assemble before nine o'clock, and at one o'clock when the march past occurred, the ranks of horsemen and carriages near the saluting base were eight or ten deep, and from this point the lines of spectators extended for more than a mile in either direction. The military authorities, inspired, no doubt by the Duke of Cambridge, were equal to the occasion; they quite understood the national sentiment, and fell in with it. This was no occasion for deep laid plans of operations, for nice calculations of distance and the marching powers of troops, for hiding lines of skirmishers and whole regiments of cavalry four deep in ditches. What was wanted was the British uniform and plenty of it, combined with the presence in health and happiness of the heir to the Throne. These sights seen, and a little gunpowder burnt into the bargain, Blandford will feel itself more than repaid for what must have been the extreme disturbance of its social, commercial, and agricultural system caused by the presence this year of an army of occupation. The general orders issued in reference to today's movements provided that the force should turn out as numerously as possible. The troops were to parade not later than nine o'clock, and to be in the positions assigned to them by half

past ten, the Duke of Cambridge with his staff, arriving shortly before eleven. An enemy in outline was constructed from the 12th Lancers, one of the strongest and smartest of the cavalry regiments in camp, and the whole of the engineers in the corps d'armee, and was placed under the command of Col. Herbert O. B. Six guns were placed at the disposal of this force, and each of them was to be considered equivalent to a battery. The whole of the army with these exceptions, was constituted a rival and attacking force, coming from the direction of Cranborne, and marching upon the Racecourse Down which covers the town of Blandford. The 1st Division (Sir A. Horsford's) was posted on the right, nearest to the Salisbury Road, the left (General Brownrigg's) across the Valley of the Tarrant, which lends its name to several hamlets along its course—as, for instance—Tarrant Monkton, Tarrant Hatch, Tarrant Gunville. The movements of today, mainly consisted in a forward movement of the left flank, so as to turn the enemy's right, and drive him back on the Racecourse Down. The skirmishing on both sides was for a time well sustained, the widely scattered Lancers and Sappers working together, so as to produce an appearance of considerable strength; but there was an amount of cultivated ground which it was necessary to traverse, and numbers of spectators accompanied such regiments as the umpires could be called upon to criticize, so after about an hour and a half's marching, skirmishing, and distant artillery duelling, the order to "cease firing" was sounded by order of the lieutenant general commanding, whereupon the various regiments drew together previous to the march past, and the enemy, relinquishing their character of a separate army, dispersed into their natural places in the brigades.

The march past was really a brilliant spectacle. The old Blandford Racecourse, now disused, lies along the crest of a perfect circular ridge of turf, two or three times the length of the Epsom Racecourse, with a deep sloping valley in the midst. Within this hollow the whole of the Southern army was formed, by regiments and brigades, the lines of spectators occupying the highest ground on the ridge; and from this, in all directions, a wide, swelling panorama extended of hill and valley, of open, rolling downs, with patches of cultivation here and there, and on the summits of many of the hills thick bush like woods and plantations. There was little temptation, however, for the eye to wander over the landscape. It was fixed either on the large and gawking staff which surrounded the Prince of Wales, or else on the masses of life and colour, which were approaching the Commander in Chief. One march past is so like another, that the attempts to describe what has been seen on any of these occasions reads like a page from some very old book, and yet the scene is one which is always animated, always fresh, and full of interest, spectators and horsemen alike entranced by the spectacle, and never think of moving however long the procession endures, until the last man has passed the flagstaff. It was so today. The least demonstrative of the foreigners upon the ground, and there were many, could not help watching at the sleeve of his neighbor, and exchanging glances at the beauty of the horses, the perfection of equipments, the matchless accuracy of the drill—in a word, the sense of power which went along with the march past of the gha's. The cavalry, notwithstanding what one has heard of the condition