

THE AUTUMN MANOEUVRES.

THE SCENE OF OPERATIONS.

(From the Broad Arrow, August 21.)

(Continued from Page 510.)

WEDNESDAY AUG. 21.

The troops composing the northern army corps assembled at Aldershot, under the command of Lieutenant General Sir Robert Walpole, K. C. B., and went through a very interesting sham fight to day in the vicinity of the camp. One division, the 3rd noted as an attacking force, under the direction of Major General Sir Charles Staveley, K. C.B. whilst the other the 4th, acted as a defending force, under the command of Major General Lord Mark Kerr, C. B. The various corps paraded in review order, without knapsacks, about eight o'clock, and were served out with fifteen rounds of ammunition per man. Sir Charles Staveley's force included the 1st and 2nd Life Guards and the Royal Horse Guards, under the command of Col. Marshall; the 2nd Infantry Brigade, consisting of the 2nd Battalion 15th, and 1st Battalion 22nd Regiments, under the command of Col. Anderson; the 1st Brigade commanded by Major General Parke, C. B., with Captain His Royal Highness Prince Arthur, Rifle Brigade, as brigade major, consisting of the 2nd Battalion, 22nd and 100th Regiments, and the 2nd Stafford Militia; the 3rd Brigade, including the 90th Light Infantry, 99th Regiment, and Aberdeen Militia, under Col. Erskine. These four brigades marched from camp between eight and nine o'clock, and proceeded to the vicinity of Knapp Hill and Pirbright. Lord Mark Kerr's force comprised the 9th Lancers, 13th and 19th Hussars, under the command of Major General Shute, C. B.; the 1st Infantry Brigade, under the command of Major General Maxwell, C. B., consisting of the 46th Regiment, 102nd Fusiliers, and 2nd Royal Middlesex Militia; the 2nd Brigade under Col. Pakenham, 30th Regiment, comprising the 2nd Battalion 4th and 27th Regiment, and the South Gloucester Militia, the 3rd Brigade, consisting of the 30th Regiment, and 2nd Battalion Rifle Brigade, under the command of Col. Stephenson, C. B. Two batteries of Horse Artillery were attached to each cavalry Brigade, and two field batteries to each division. Lord Mark Kerr's force marched to Fox Hill, and took up a line of strong defensive positions. The general intention of the sham fight was that Sir Charles Staveley's force was supposed to be marching from the direction of Woking, towards Alton. On reaching the neighborhood of Fox Hill he found his progress arrested by Lord Mark Kerr's division in position there. This division was supposed to have come up from Farnham. By 10.30 the whole were in their respective positions, with strong lines of cavalry and infantry in skirmishing order covering their fronts. Lieutenant General Sir Robert Walpole, K. C. B., accompanied by Sir A. Alison, C. B., assistant adjutant general; Col. Gamble, C. B. assistant quarter master general; Captain Crenock, deputy assistant adjutant general; Captain the Hon. G. E. Edwades, deputy assistant quarter master general, and his aides de camp, came on the ground shortly after ten o'clock, and inspected the positions taken up by both commanders. At eleven o'clock the fight commenced. About twelve o'clock the battle was raging all along the right and centre. The guns of the defenders kept up a terrific cannonade from commanding positions on the infantry of the attacking party. A direct attack by the road

from Pirbright was successfully resisted by Col. Pakenham's brigade and some guns of the Horse Artillery. Whilst this was taking place, General Staveley's troops, on the right, were moving rapidly forward in order to turn the left of Lord Mark Kerr's position. About 12.30 the appearance of General Staveley's right brigade, with some guns and cavalry in the plain, made it evident that the flank attack was successful. Sir R. Walpole, as chief umpire, having observed this ordered firing to cease. The commanders of divisions and brigades were then assembled and addressed on the movements as carried out. It was said that the final decision was given in favor of Sir Charles Staveley. The troops after partaking of some bread, cheese and beer, commenced their homeward march, arriving at their quarters between three and four o'clock.

Many of the infantry regiments in the camp at Blandford, tried their hand this morning at a comparatively new system of skirmishing on Prussian principles. This system, says the *Post*, has been adopted by some regiments under Sir Charles Staveley's command in the western district for some time, but we believe that even he has not yet been able to explain the advantage of it. This morning the 4th Battalion of the 60th Rifles, the 4th Battalion Rifle Brigade, and the 7th Fusiliers practised the drill. These regiments worked, as they always do, with wonderful smartness, but still even the manner in which they executed the movements, failed to convince our contemporary's correspondent of their great utility. A distinguished officer of one of the rifle regiments named, expressed an opinion that they were only calculated to distress the men; but it is possible that the advantages of the system may become more apparent when operations against the enemy have actually commenced. The 50th Regiment was out on outpost duty to day.

THURSDAY, AUG. 22ND.

To day all arms in camp were up and doing. The heavy cavalry brigade under Col. Towers started about seven o'clock, rode out and had a brisk morning's work. Vedettes of the 3rd Dragoon Guards were thrown out in the direction of Shaftsbury to protect the advancing line, the Carbineers proceeding to Fontmell Magna, which is fully five miles from the cavalry camp, and the Bays to Ashmoor Down, stretching away to the right. The Horse Artillery and the remainder of the 3rd Dragoon Guards acted as reserves. They did not return to camp till one o'clock. The Foot Guards marched out at seven o'clock this morning to Critchill Down, a distance of some eight miles. Learning that the regiment was so near his family sent, Mr. Gerard Sturt invited the regiment, men as well as officers to luncheon. On their way back they took a longer route, making the entire march nearly twenty miles. The men did not seem overdone on their return, but complained much of dust and heat in the narrow country lanes, which hardly admit of four men walking abreast, and allow no circulation of air to blow the dust away. The remainder of the first division, under Sir A. Horsford, and the whole of the second division, under General Brownrigg, with the exception of the Militia regiments, marched out of camp at two o'clock, and had separate field days in different directions, the first division at Launceston Heath, to the right of the camp, and the 2nd division at Pimperne and Gunville Heaths, to the left. The first division confined itself to drill movements; the second fired away several rounds, but the point to which it mainly devoted its attention was the prac-

tising of the new skirmishing and advancing drill in open order. In this drill front and rear rank are abolished, and the men march in extended order in as loose a formation as possible, correct distance being kept by a separate line of officers or guides. Gunville Down is almost a level grass plain, so that cover was out of the question, but when a hedge did present itself, a rush was made for it at once. The 7th and 23rd Fusiliers, with the 4th Battalion 60th Foot, were the troops mainly exercised in this new drill. On their way back to camp the Division marched past General Brownrigg, the 7th Fusiliers acquitting itself particularly well. In pursuance of the determination already alluded to, Col. Baker has sent out eight officers on expeditions of sketching and observation, and the result of these excursions will, no doubt, have an important bearing on the movements of next week. Patrolling parties of the light cavalry brigade were also to be met on the road in various directions.

The special correspondent of the *Daily News* wrote on Wednesday night "The increasing heat of the weather seems to have inflamed the military ardour of those who preside over the destinies and direct the movements of the southern army corps, and no more must now be said about the 'great Blandford picnic' for we are now regularly in for hard work." After sketching the divisional movements, he added, "It was difficult to distinguish the skirmishing of the 1st West York Militia from that of their comrades of the Line. As a proof that this is not a partial or merely personal opinion, I may mention that I accidentally overheard a group of 'Liners' discussing the question as to whether the men from West Yorkshire were Militia or not. As the skirmishers began to advance from the crown of Rea course Down across the level ground which slopes gently down towards a large wood on Salisbury Road, which was held by the enemy, the artillery on our right got into position on the high ground just to the north of the Guard Camp, and soon the bang of a 16 pounder made the untired horses of some of the civilian riders rear and plunge in such a way which was keenly relished by those on foot. The battery on the left was not long in following suit, opening fire very steadily, the officer hollering out to the men, 'Don't go blazing away there over the head of the enemy, but fire steadily,' a hint which painfully reminded us that we were having a very sham fight indeed, as our foe was wholly imaginary. Soon the skirmishers got near enough to be allowed to open fire, which they did quite quick enough, for they must have been nearly one thousand yards from the wood which was supposed to contain an enemy, when they commenced firing. After about a quarter of an hour's steady advance, the 'Look out for cavalry' was sounded, and rallying squares were formed. The movements continued with little variation until five p. m., when the division marched back to camp. It was evident that great attention was being paid to the manner in which the skirmishing was done, General Brownrigg and staff riding forward to the centre of the line of skirmishers in order to see for themselves how the men were working. Unfortunately the ground selected was nearly as bare if not quite so, of cover as a barrack, and with the exception of a hedge separating the Down from the enclosed land there was little to call forth whatever aptitude the men of the different regiments may, and doubtless do, possess for taking advantage of cover."

"Riding back through the camp and across the Tarrant, which, by the way, is be