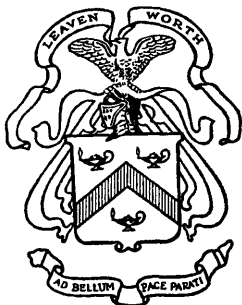


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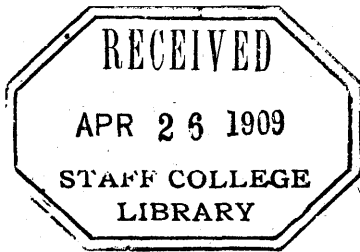
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RECONNAISSANCE

IN THE

RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR

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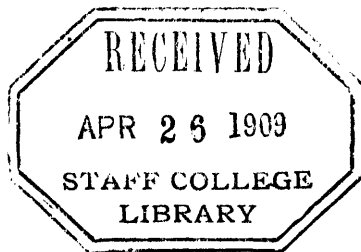
“ASIATICUS”

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

BY

J. MONTGOMERY

3rd Hussars



London

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PREFACE

As no detailed account of the Reconnaissances in the Russo-Japanese War has, up to the present, been published in English, it is hoped that the present translation from the German may prove useful.

J. M.

WEST CAVALRY BARRACKS,
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CONTENTS

CHAP.	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION	7
II. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TWO CAVALRIES .	11
III. SYSTEM OF ESPIONAGE	17
IV. MISCHTSCHENKO'S COSSACK BRIGADE IN NORTHERN KOREA	23
V. RENNENKAMPF'S RECONNOITRING ACTIVITY ROUND SAIMATSE	47
VI. RECONNAISSANCE TOWARDS HAIGUMONTSI .	68
VII. THE SECOND RECONNAISSANCE TOWARDS KUANTIENCHEN	84
VIII. RENNENKAMPF'S ACTIVITY TILL THE FINAL RETREAT TO CHIENCHANG	89
IX. THE 1ST JAPANESE CAVALRY BRIGADE UNDER MAJOR-GENERAL AKIYAMA FROM MAY 30 TO JUNE 16, 1904	94
X. MISCHTSCHENKO'S RAID TO YINGKOU . .	114
XI. SUMMARY	127
XII. NEW FEATURES APPLICABLE TO A EUROPEAN THEATRE OF WAR	142

SKETCH PLAN No.	1	FACING PAGE	24
"	2	"	30
"	3	"	47
"	4	"	56
"	5	"	96
"	6	"	101
"	7	"	105
"	8	"	107
"	9	"	109
"	10	"	116
"	11	"	145

RECONNAISSANCE IN THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR

I

INTRODUCTION

THE collection of information about the enemy, which is obtained by efficient reconnaissance, ensures not only an essential part of the protection of an army, but forms also the foundation of all ideas and actions in war. Reconnaissances which are neglected or wrongly initiated are, on the other hand, productive of unforeseen situations, the results of which can never be retrieved, or at any rate only by means of great sacrifices. We are obliged to seek out our opponent in order continually to know where he is and what he is doing; for only by constant touch with the enemy can we incessantly observe him.

As we must expect a similar activity from the enemy, the reconnoitring detachments have a second important duty to perform—the screen, which consists in making reconnaissance difficult or impossible to the enemy.

The late campaign has proved anew that reconnaissance and screening, which are intimately connected, remain the principal duties of those detachments which have been sent forward to maintain touch with the enemy.

In order to be able to judge correctly whether cavalry, infantry, or mixed detachments are most apt to carry out the necessary reconnaissance of the enemy, it is necessary to know the ground, available cover, and other peculiarities of the theatre of war. It will depend not only on the ground, but also on what may be expected from the enemy, or on what is already known about his dispositions, in what strength and formation these detachments must be sent forward, in order to bring their task to a successful termination.

At the same time it must be borne in mind that small parties are more difficult to discover, and are best adapted for reconnaissance and scouting, while larger detachments should be in reserve to support them and to complete the screen. While larger (independent) bodies of cavalry, with an offensive or defensive rôle, are used chiefly for strategical reconnaissance and at great distances in advance to provide for both reconnaissance and screen, it is the duty of the cavalry allotted to the infantry divisions to provide for reconnoitring in detail in close vicinity of their own force. To what distance independent or larger bodies of cavalry should be sent forward,

depends on the task that is given them, having settled which, it is necessary to decide whether they are to operate independently or in conjunction with a part of the army.

Should an independent body of cavalry act or operate in conjunction with its own army—*i.e.* so that the information collected may have in the closest sense a decisive influence on the further activity of the army—then the principle holds good that the distance between the army and the body of cavalry should not be a hindrance to daily communication between the army headquarters and its dependent cavalry. In short, information concerning the enemy, which arrives too late, is overtaken by events, and is therefore useless. Much more precise is the system of transmitting news in tactical reconnaissances, carried out by the divisional cavalry, since here we are concerned with very short periods of time, sometimes minutes only.

Thus in the course of active operations a commander can only expect exhaustive written reports from the bodies of advanced cavalry and from independent patrols; while in the supplemental reconnaissance simple sketches, but generally only verbal reports, must satisfy him. As a rule, only by clear, short orders, given in definite terms, can he expect to obtain the information required.

The measure in which the cavalry succeeded in

these tasks during the Russo-Japanese War will be discussed in this study on the basis of already published accounts, which we do not, however, propose to criticise; we shall simply endeavour to turn the events narrated to some use, in order to enlarge our store of experience, and perhaps also to deduce a goodly number of lessons for the future.

II

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TWO CAVALRIES

IN order to lighten the task of the reader in judging of the work of both cavalries, we will attempt first of all to describe their characteristics in order to arrive at the military qualities of both nations, especially so far as concerns their special adaptability for cavalry.

(a) THE JAPANESE CAVALRY

The purpose of the lengthy preparations for this war—for their future existence and power—had been inculcated into the lowest strata of the population, and it was consequently quite clear to every one why they were shedding their blood so readily.

Heart and soul a soldier, the Japanese is inspired with boundless love for his Fatherland, is devoted to his Monarch with an unassailable love, is endowed with an unexampled self-control, and devoid of the fear of death. He is educated in the firm belief that only through the co-operation of each individual person can the goal be attained. On this basis is founded the discipline

of their army, which does not rest according to the European idea on an implicit obedience, but on mutual confidence; the man recognises in his officer the qualities of a leader, while the officer is convinced that the man will try to the best of his ability to carry out his duty to the utmost. As a consequence, punishments are rare.

The officers, for the most part recruited from the warlike caste of the Samuraj, are thoroughly imbued with the idea that they represent in the country the foremost class, and thus embody all knightly qualities. Every one of them devotedly endeavours to perfect himself as far as possible in the military art; for this reason it is seldom that one finds an officer who is not perfectly schooled theoretically, and who is not completely trained in the smallest practical detail. The enormous losses among the officers speaks for their exemplary bravery, fitness, and tenacity, as well as for their disregard of their own persons, in that they attempted the utmost in the attack, and in defence persevered even to destruction. The men, who are relatively well educated, receive a very complete military training, while their independence, modesty, sobriety, frugality, cleanliness, and the careful carrying out of all medical instructions made it possible to keep them always in fighting trim.

In consequence of the sameness of their food, viz. rice, and habitual squatting on the ground,

and because the greater proportion of the population earn their livelihood by physical labour, the Japanese are, as a rule, of small stature, with very stout legs and well-developed thighs; for this reason little adapted to riding. The cavalry, divided into regiments of 3 and 4 squadrons, had formed but two independent cavalry brigades, each of 8 squadrons, and consisted altogether of 66 squadrons (including the reserve and landwehr formations). As the horse (a cross between English and native) showed a want of speed and endurance, little result was to be expected from them, in spite of the splendid training of both man and horse, in the face of the far superior numbers of the Cossacks. But we shall see that a people so richly endowed with military virtues, even in the absence of the true cavalry spirit, did not lag behind their comrades of the infantry in their contempt for death, and in sacrificing their last drop of blood, if it was necessary for the purpose of carrying out their allotted task.

(b) THE RUSSIAN CAVALRY, THE COSSACKS IN PARTICULAR

Whilst the Japanese possess innate military virtues, these had to be inculcated into the Russians, and could often only be kept awake under the most difficult conditions, for even the

essentially necessary military qualities disappear gradually in soldiers after leaving the ranks, and are quite absent in the older reservists.

In spite of this the pious Russians see in their emperor not only the supreme war lord, but also the head of the Church, and at the bottom of their hearts they are true to him and love their Fatherland, the old holy Russia, even if agitators, owing to a long servitude, find a ready credence. For the most part poor, consequently of small education, the idea of a policy of expansion is strange to them, and they feel no enthusiasm to fight for a cause which cannot be brought home to them sufficiently near. Of the officers who will be portrayed here, the Guard officers were excellently trained, and represented what a cavalryman should be, and have proved their zeal by their deeds of daring. The Dragoon officer, recruited from the middle classes, hard worked and unspoilt, bore the greater share of duty and responsibility. The Cossack officer, who was of a lower social status, was for the most part a narrow-minded person, and was, as a rule, fit for independent duties in the higher ranks only (from Captain's rank upwards).

As all these three types of officers were represented in the cavalry corps formed out of the reserve, and were often antagonistic to one another, it was impossible to reckon on any

sort of co-operation and mutual support; not only here, but also in the other arms, as well as on the staff, jealousies played a great part, to the disadvantage of the army. The men, brave, steady, tough, and contented, bore all fatigues and privations with patience, but had little initiative, and required leading. They recognised in their sotnia, squadron, company, and battery commanders, not only their superior officers, *i.e.* men naturally entitled to give them orders, but also the foster-fathers of the sections, and they followed them blindly.

Should a detachment lose its commander or the firing-line its leader, co-operation and united action could no longer be expected from them. The men collect in a mob together, and select from the assembled group the cleverest or bravest, whom they recognise as leader and follow willingly.

Though in possession of excellent horses, accustomed to fatigues and hardships, and led by officers partly well trained (Guards and Dragoons), partly brought up with the men (Cossacks), the men failed to answer to the necessary demands made on them; as the Cossacks in peace were little trained for reconnaissance, and were devoted to shooting in civil life, on the appearance of the enemy they sought their highest salvation in instinctive recourse to their rifles.

Their immense superiority in numbers in comparison with the numerically weak Japanese the Russians hoped to turn to their advantage by appearing everywhere in strength, thus overwhelming the Japanese.

In cavalry the Russians placed in the field 225 squadrons and sotnias, comprising :

	18	squadrons	of	Dragoons
	59	sotnias	of	1st Reserves
107	„	„	2nd	„
29	„	„	3rd	„
12	„	„	Militia	

Already before the outbreak of the war opinions were rife that the Cossack organisation was on the decline, that neither in horses nor men would they be able to perform what they had done previously. The proof is before us; these opinions voiced the truth.

III

SYSTEM OF ESPIONAGE

IN none of the later campaigns did the uses of espionage find such wide ramifications as in this one. It is worthy of notice that a third, in fact, a fourth nation (Koreans and Chinese), were recruited, and indeed forced into this service, after a part of their country had been laid waste by two foreign powers at war. Such results could only be obtained with a beaten, downtrodden, and timid population, greedy of gain, such as the wearers of the pigtail in the Far East were. Prepared for this campaign down to the smallest detail, the Japanese had taken equal care for the efficient organisation of their system of espionage. The Japanese obtained the necessary individuals by the following means :

1. As it was a question in the first place of obtaining a nucleus of reliable spies, such men had first to be enrolled and properly trained. For this purpose a course of espionage was undergone in Tsindju, in which thoroughly reliable persons were prepared for this service. They

were entrusted close to the enemy with the collection, the sifting, and the despatch of news, were chiefs of offices, and served in special expeditions as guides.

2. Through the above-mentioned persons the Japanese were able even before the outbreak of the war to register all the Chinese and Koreans who were in the Russian service; these were classed in the category of suspects. They were watched most carefully, and where necessary prosecuted. In this way many such people were compelled to leave their own farms and lands, when once within the area of Japanese occupation, and seek protection with the Russians. It would be explained to these individuals by the Japanese agents, that should they undertake espionage for them, they would be struck off the list of suspects. This notification had a success scarcely to be expected, for many Koreans and Chinese were quite prepared to undertake this dangerous duty for the smallest remuneration.

The Japanese, who knew that the Chinese were given to double dealing, always gave them shadowers who never let them out of their sight. Should their information be false, or should they be caught at serving two masters, they were shot without mercy. These people were the true spies; they were known to the Russians, and associated with them, without causing any suspicion. They received their orders and instruc-

tions from their leaders and office chiefs referred to under 1, to whom they reported their information in person, or by written reports. Three to five such spies, when within the enemy's area, worked under a leader, and within their own zone they were placed under an information bureau for each division, the whole thus forming a section of spies.

3. The most difficult part of the system of information consisted in transmitting the news round the flanks of the enemy. For this service the beggar class, which in China is so numerous, was impressed, for they were readily lost sight of amongst the great mass of the population, and single individuals could easily attach themselves to a party of day labourers seeking work. The payment of the agents took place monthly, while the beggars employed as messengers were paid by the job.

Before we start to discuss the manner of carrying out this system of espionage, we will mention two kinds of developments which this campaign produced, during which the service of information had to overcome exceptionally great difficulties. In the first period from the landing of the Japanese army corps, during their advances and smaller fights, until the final concentration of the three armies at Liaoyang—that is, in the marching stage of the war—spying was a most difficult task. Most of the sections

of spies were stationary and remained sometimes in the neighbourhood of portions of the Russian army or on the railway line, making their observations ; some were serving as workmen in the building of the Russian field works, in order to be able to supply data concerning them. Although the collection of information was easy then, its transmission produced almost insuperable difficulties.

The cause was to be sought for in the manner of forwarding the reports. This was carried out mostly on foot, and at best on horseback ; and as in the first period of the war great distances had to be covered between the combatants, it often happened that the information which had been collected with such difficulty and trouble arrived too late to be of any use. At the commencement of the war the spies lacked the necessary cunningness to conceal their reports, with the result that on their being searched the same fell into the hands of the enemy, or had to be destroyed. With increasing cleverness and experience, their plan of secretion was changed, and despatches were carried in the pigtail and the soles of their shoes, and were sewn into the clothes in the most varying manner.

In the second stage—that is, from the arrival of the army before Liaoyang until the commencement of the pursuit after the battle of Mukden, the Japanese had a considerably lighter task.

The hostile armies faced each other for weeks, and indeed months, and made it possible for them to establish offices wherever they chose in rear of the enemy, for which the corresponding receiving stations were placed behind the Japanese line. Thus it was often possible to keep up daily communication between two stations, and round the flanks of the armies this traffic in despatches was particularly brisk. In order to illustrate more clearly the extraordinary results of the Japanese system of espionage, we will give two examples :

1. After the fight at Sandepu, on a fallen Japanese was found a paper (*Japan Times*) which reported that, if Kuropatkin did not support the attack of Grippenbergr against the Japanese west wing, the latter would leave the army.

2. Before Mischtschenko's raid on Yingkou it was well known on this line of communication which regiments formed Mischtschenko's corps. These facts prove that the spies in every respect performed excellent service, and were familiar with the most secret plans and orders of the Russians. That these spies considerably lightened the duty of the Japanese cavalry and often took the place of the strategical reconnaissance is quite clear from the foregoing. We have only tried to describe the spying on the Japanese side where it produced positive results, while the Russians, who did not

understand how to handle the Chinese, often accepted exaggerated reports from treacherous Chinamen, and thereupon issued unnecessary orders, tiring out the troops. The watchfulness of the Japanese rarely allowed the Russian cavalry to verify the reports from Chinese sources.

IV

MISCHTSCHENKO'S COSSACK BRIGADE IN NORTHERN KOREA

1. BEFORE AND AT THE BEGINNING OF THE WAR

ON January 6, 1904, Admiral Alexieff telegraphed to the Czar and proposed the mobilisation of the Russian troops in the Far East; at the same time the occupation of the mouth of the Yalu. The mobilisation was sanctioned, the occupation of the mouth of the Yalu "was to be deferred to the last extremity."

On February 8 the Czar telegraphed to Alexieff: "It is desirable that not we but the Japanese should start hostilities. Should the Japanese not actually commence warlike operations, you may not prevent their landing on the south and east coasts of Korea, up to Gensan; but should the Japanese fleet, irrespective whether landings take place or not, pass the 38th meridian, then you have full leave to attack without awaiting their first shot."

When this telegram arrived, the attack of the Japanese on Port Arthur was already an

accomplished fact, therefore it was permissible to attack and occupy the mouth of the Yalu.

Accordingly, on February 9 the 3rd East Siberian Rifle Division received orders to occupy the mouth of the Yalu, while the combined cavalry brigade of Mischtschenko was to advance into Northern Korea, in order to reconnoitre in front of this division.

To this brigade belonged :

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. Ussuri Cossack Regiment . . . | 6 sotnias |
| 2. 1st Argunski Regiment . . . | 6 sotnias |
| 3. 1st Tschitinski Regiment . . . | 6 sotnias |
| 4. 1st Transbaikal Cossack Battery . | 6 guns |
| Total, 18 sotnias, 6 guns (H.A.). | |

The regiments first formed belonged to the 1st reserves, and consisted of old soldiers, who, during the disturbances of 1900 in China, were under arms, and who were acquainted with the ground and local conditions in Southern Manchuria. The regiments quartered in the different cantonments in Southern Manchuria assembled at Antung, where they arrived complete on February 15.

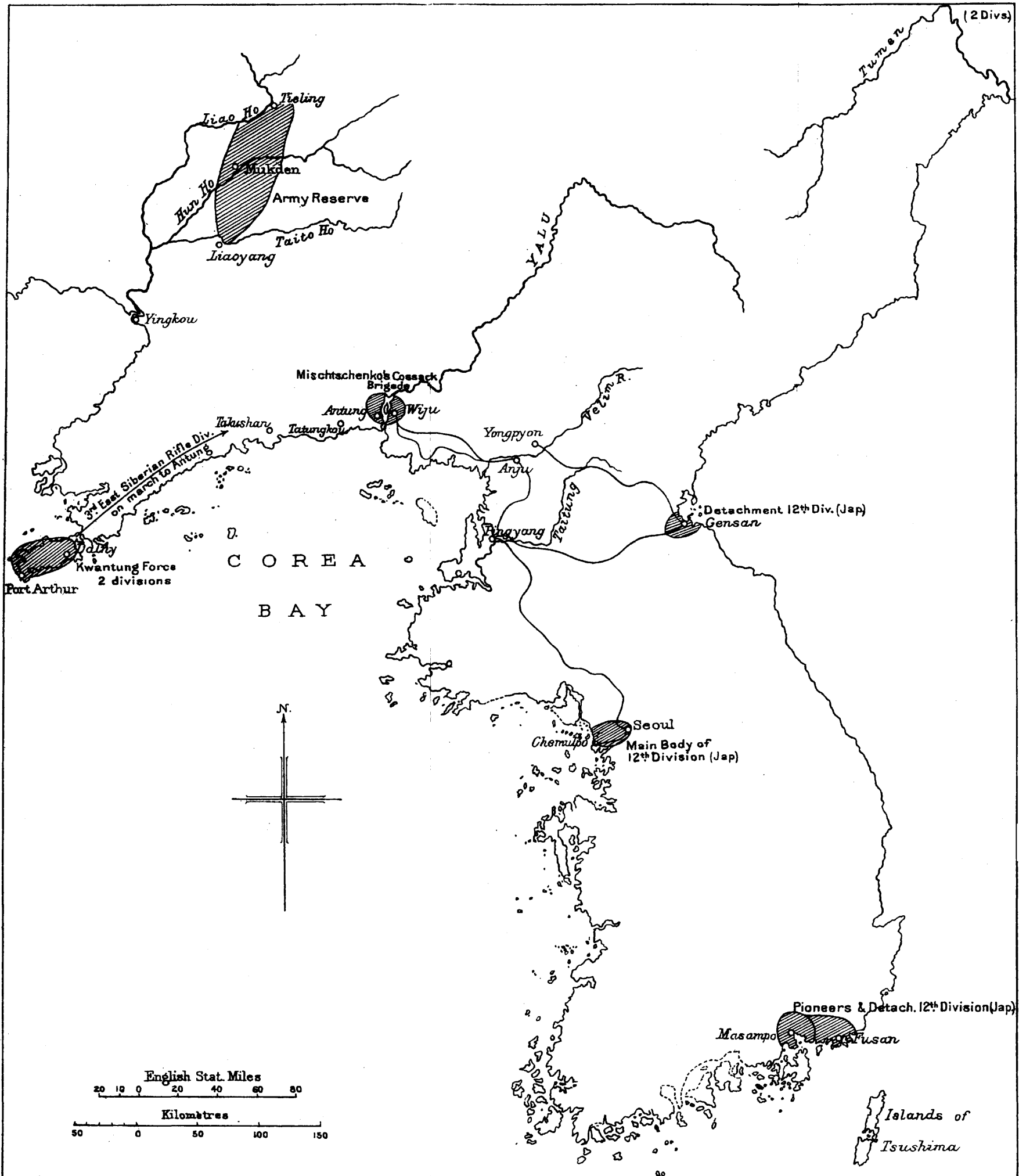
2. GENERAL SITUATION OF BOTH COMBATANTS AS FAR AS KNOWN TO MISCHTSCHENKO ON FEBRUARY 16. (See Sketch 1.)

(a) *Information concerning the enemy*

1. On February 5 landing of a detachment (several battalions of infantry and technical troops

SITUATION AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF MISCHTSCHENKO'S ACTIVITY
 In Northern Korea.

Sketch 1.



of 12th Japanese Division on a peace footing) in Masampo and Fusan.

2. On February 9 landing of about 4 battalions of infantry on a peace footing, in Chemulpo, and the occupation the next day of Seoul, the capital of Korea, after the destruction of the detachment of the Russian fleet which was there.

3. On February 10 landing of a detachment of about 3 infantry battalions, 1 squadron, and 1 battery in Gensan (12th Infantry Division). With this the three best, and at that time ice-free harbours of Korea were in the hands of the Japanese.

(b) Information concerning their own forces

1. A strong force of their own troops, about 2 divisions, was in and around Vladivostock and Port Arthur, protected by the two fortresses.

2. One brigade (the 3rd East Siberian Rifles), by the addition of a third battalion per regiment, was in the act of being reorganised into a division, and was marching from Port Arthur towards the mouth of the Yalu.

3. The mobilised forces in Siberia were on rail in movement to the neighbourhood around Liaoyang.

*(c) Reasons for the choice of the direction taken
for reconnaissance*

1. The hostile forces in Fusan and Masampo had not to be considered at this time, as—

(i) About 750 kilometres separated them from the mouth of the Yalu ;

(ii) A more defensive rôle was assigned to them, which consisted not only in barring the road from Korea in communication with the island of Tsushima and the fortress of Shimonoseki by establishing fortified positions, but eventually in protecting the disembarkation of the Japanese troops, and, in case of a reverse, to serve as the last support of the retreating Japanese on the mainland.

2. (a) Far greater importance attached to the forces landed at Chemulpo and Gensan. These seaport towns represented the most northerly, most accessible and already ice-free harbours, and were about the same distance (450 nautical miles) from Sasebo, Nagasaki, Shimonoseki, the greatest naval bases of Japan, and the fortified basin between the islands of Hondo (Nippon) and Shikoku.

(b) Both being only 300–350 nautical miles distant from the naval bases of Russia, Vladivostok and Port Arthur, were at the disadvantage of being liable to be cut off by the enemy's fleet.

(c) Chemulpo had momentarily the advantage in that the Russian fleet, owing to the attack on February 8 and 9, was condemned to inactivity and blockaded by the main body of the Japanese squadron, and so could not interrupt their landing.

On the other hand, the Russian cruiser division in Vladivostock had succeeded as early as February 10, with the help of an ice-breaker, in carrying out an effective raid in the Sea of Japan. Therefore, in spite of the observation of Admiral Kamimura, it formed a danger for the transport of troops on a large scale generally, but especially towards Gensan.

(d) As the Japanese, in view of their probable goal, Mukden, had seized the most northern harbours in order to secure safe landings, it was to be expected that with the break-up of the ice more northerly harbours still would be selected for further disembarkations. While the harbours on the east coast of Korea (Hamheung, Chestakow, Paskin Bay) were still farther distant from the assumed principal line of operations, or lay within reach of the fortress of Vladivostock, the harbours of the west coast were nearer to the mouth of the Yalu, always the goal aimed at, and shortened considerably the line of communication of the Japanese on land.

(e) In favour of further landings in Chemulpo one must remember the fact that from there starts the Mandarin Road, the only high-road from Seoul *viâ* Antung to Mukden, whilst all other roads are simply mountain tracks, and for that reason greatly inferior to the afore-mentioned. If one still further remembers that all roads leading from Gensan to Antung, as well as *viâ* Anju and

Pingyang, had to be prepared for the army corps with great loss of time, and districts without resources passed through, it will be seen that Chemulpo was the one harbour where the landing of larger forces was to be expected. Against the formation of a line of communication from Gensan to Antung was the length of the road, difficult country for a field railway, and the susceptibility to attack of the northern flank against undertakings from the direction of Vladivostock. All these reasons must have influenced the choice of Mischtschenko's line of advance *viâ* Sengyeng towards Anju, since the closest possible watch on events at Chemulpo seemed requisite.

(d) *Execution of the orders received*

On February 17 Mischtschenko commenced his advance from Wiju *viâ* Sengyeng towards Anju on the Velim River. In consequence of the thaw which had set in, the roads were extremely unfavourable, and the country generally did not allow of any forward movement; in places indeed it was impossible to set foot, the smallest rivers became considerable obstacles, and the deep mire on the unmetalled road entailed both on man and horse great exertions and fatigues, which necessitated a number of rest days. In spite of this the leading reconnoitring sotnias had by February 24 reached Kasan, by the 25th

crossed the Velim, and appeared by the 27th before Pingyang.

If we keep these obstacles before our eyes, and remember that these detachments, often dismounted and leading their horses, in a completely strange country, without maps and with unreliable guides, marched on terrible roads, and at the same time did 15 to 20 kilometres daily, then only shall we know how to estimate truly the capabilities of these new formations.

The main body marched considerably slower, and arrived at Anju by a daily average march of from 12 to 15 kilometres between February 28 and 30.

Given that large detachments march at a somewhat slower rate, the more rapid advance of the brigade was further impeded by the accompanying Cossack battery, which often stuck in the mud, and eventually had to be sent back from Sengyeng.

On February 28 the distance between the squadrons sent in a southerly direction (Pingyang) and the main body of the brigade was 60 to 70 kilometres. This start of the reconnoitring sotnias, which by a possible daily march of 20 km., and at the most 25 km., required three days to send back despatches, must decidedly be considered too long. Even should the enemy have had to overcome similar obstacles, perhaps advance even slower, still three days is a period

of time during which the dispositions of the enemy could have undergone a material change. Reconnoitring patrols were sent forward, some at Wiju, some only during the advance.

Smaller detachments were sent forward for the observation of the several harbours on the right flank on the west coast of Korea, including the mouth of the Velim; one sotnia to Nokang; two sotnias to Pingyang, and the observation of Chinampo (ice free at the end of February); and a sotnia each to Yongpyon and Kitschou.

The situation on February 27 (see Sketch 2)

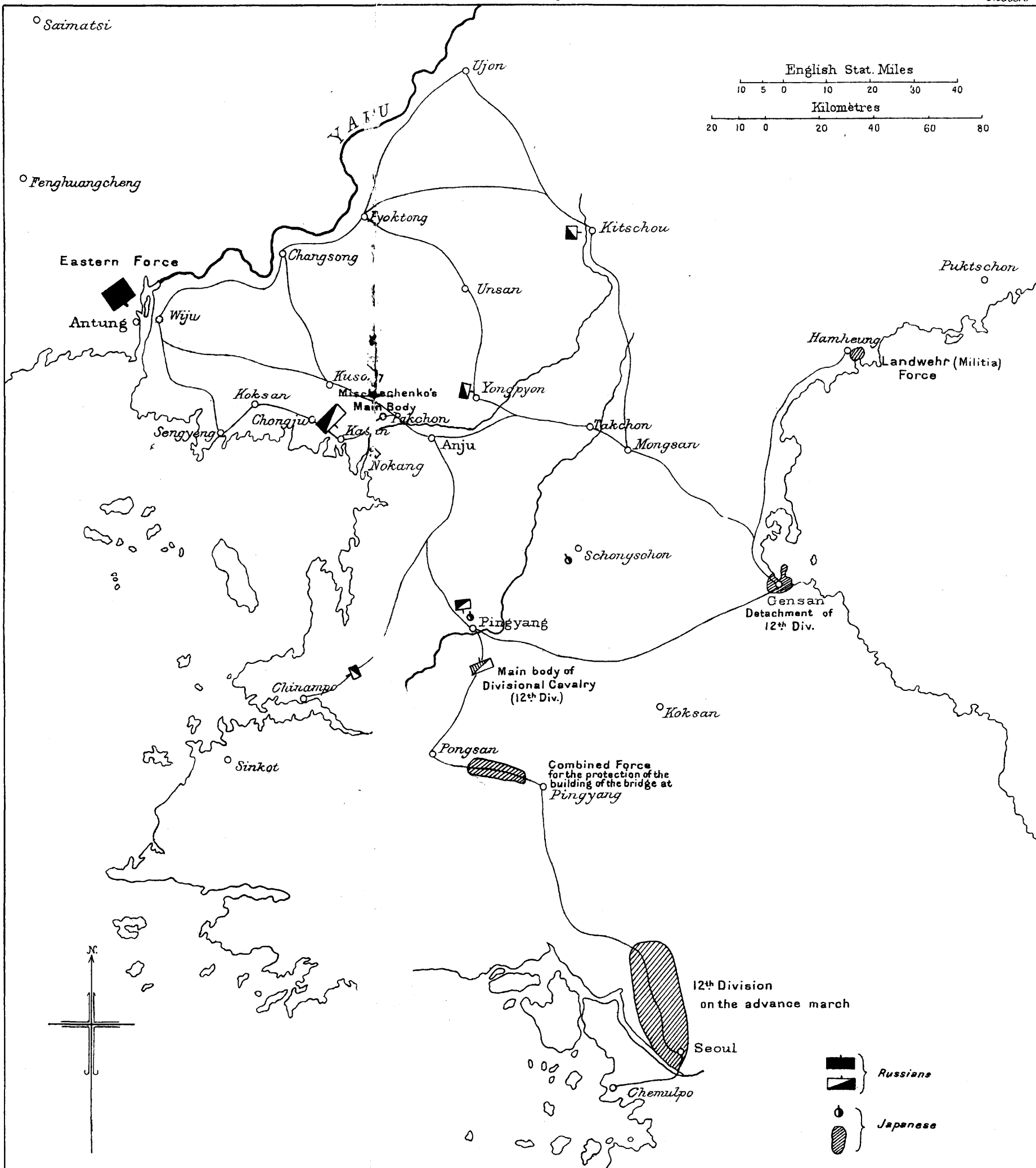
On this day the two hostile cavalries met each other for the first time in the neighbourhood of Pingyang. The Russian reconnoitring detachment, half to one sotnia strong, tried to destroy the Japanese patrols; but the Japanese avoided combat where possible. Only on March 15 did a conflict take place on the Velim, in which the Japanese cavalry were defeated. In spite of this they reached Pakchon on the 15th, and were only from here forced back again on the Velim. The Cossacks retired, as the continual appearance of Japanese cavalry was sufficient to impose a check on the Russian reconnoissance, and the latter did not again press across the Velim.

The result of the reconnoissance was nevertheless quite satisfactory, as will be seen from the following :

SITUATION IN NORTHERN COREA

On 27th February, 1904.

Sketch 2.



1. Japanese cavalry arrived with patrols on February 27 on the heights about Pingyang.

2. On March 5 a detachment of hostile infantry reached Anju. Whether they were an independent body, or the advance guard of a Japanese army corps, could not be ascertained. (Detachment from Gensan.)

3. On March 10 the disembarkation of a detachment of all arms at Nokang at the mouth of the River Velim was observed, which was followed by the landing of stronger forces at Chinampo.

4. On March 18 stronger forces arrived before Anju. On the 19th they commenced to build a bridge.

5. The troops which disembarked in Nokang marched, after a short halt at the landing-place, towards Anju, and joined on March 18 the detachment already there.

6. Since March 22 the Japanese had passed a part of their force at Anju across the Velim, and occupied Yongpyon, Pakchon, and Kasan. The Russians were only able to observe the head of the columns landing or on the march, as the Japanese closed all lines of approach and observation by covering troops, and prevented any view. In consequence of the landing of Japanese detachments at Nokang on March 10, and the appearance of stronger cavalry detachments north of the Velim on March 19, Mischtschenko saw his right flank threatened by the landing of

further Japanese forces in the more northerly harbours, and withdrew his main forces to Koksan, and his patrols to the Velim.

On March 20 the Japanese cavalry so threatened the Cossacks who still remained on the Velim, that they were compelled to give way in three directions, *viá* Unsan towards Cheng-seng on the Yalu, *viá* Kusong, and towards Sengyeng.

On March 23 two sotnias attempted to press forward on the main line *viá* Pakchon, but were fired on by an infantry post about 5–6 km. from Pakchon, dismounted for fire action, and, after the Japanese had received reinforcements, retreated to Koksan. On March 24 the Russians were driven back towards Chongju, and on the road leading from Chongju to Unsan, and were unable in the succeeding patrol fights to gain ground to the front, because the Japanese cavalry avoided fighting, and the Cossacks came upon infantry everywhere, who prevented them from breaking through within a radius of 25–30 km. round Anju (extending from the coastline over Kasanyongpyon and to the Velim).

(e) *The Fight at Chongju on March 28*

As the Cossack patrols and sotnias did not succeed in breaking through the Japanese screen, Mischtschenko decided on a reconnaissance in

force in the direction of Anju, in order to ascertain what forces the Japanese had already passed across to the northern bank of the Velim. For this purpose there were employed :

4 sotnias of the 1st Tschilinski Cossack Regiment.

2 „ „ 1st Argunski „ „

Total 6 sotnias.

The eighteen sotnias under Mischtschenko at this time were employed as follows :

3 sotnias as communication posts between Wiju and the main body.

2 sotnias watching the coast.

2 sotnias as detachments in Yongpyon and Kitschou, already in retreat on Changsong and Pyoktong (Madritow's force).

2 sotnias towards Anju in touch with the enemy.

1 sotnia turned out of Nokang—whereabouts at this time unknown (probably in retreat *via* Kusong).

6 sotnias ready under Mischtschenko's command for reconnoitring.

Total 16 sotnias.

Of the remaining two sotnias nothing is known. They were put to an unknown use, for otherwise Mischtschenko would, without doubt, have taken them with him, for it was necessary to be as strong as possible for this operation.

On March 28 Mischtschenko marched from Koksan to Chongju, with 2 sotnias out of

the 6 as advance guard. For reconnaissance no further patrols were detached, as for this purpose it was considered the sotnias already in touch with the enemy were sufficient. So it happened that the advance guard sotnias about 11 a.m. were unexpectedly fired at from the town wall of Chongju, and compelled to retreat in a southerly direction to a hill about 600 metres from the town. The two advance squadrons dismounted there for action, and carried out a desultory fight against the garrison of Chongju (about 1 infantry company and 1 squadron).

The 4 sotnias of the main body crossed the road to the north and deployed against the Japanese right wing, with 3 sotnias dismounted in the first line, 1 sotnia mounted as reserve in the second line. At this moment the cavalry regiment of the Japanese Guard (3 squadrons) appeared on the battlefield, which, by dismounting two squadrons, extended their own right wing, while 1 squadron remained mounted, with a view to an enveloping movement along the road to the west and an attack on the Russian left. This squadron came under the flanking fire of the 3 sotnias of the Russian main body which were then pressing forward, and had to give up its intention. They retired and, dismounting, faced these sotnias with their carbines. In this manner the fight lasted till about 1 p.m., and already the Japanese line had begun to waver, when a

battalion of Japanese infantry came up at the double from Kasan.

As Mischtschenko recognised that to penetrate here was impossible, he broke off the fight and retreated, after resting a short time in Koksan, in the direction of Wiju, where he arrived on April 2, and at once commenced to cross the Yalu, the ice of which had started to thaw.

POINTS WORTHY OF NOTICE

(a) *On the Russian Side*

1. Marching too late from the night's camp, whereby the moment for surprise was completely lost in this operation.

2. Marching without pushing out fresh reconnoitring patrols because of undue reliance on the detachments in touch with the enemy; which had this result, that the Russians, instead of surprising, were themselves surprised.

3. Want of activity on the part of the Cossack sotnias in the neighbourhood of the enemy; for example, the Japanese, who had already arrived in Chongju the day before, had been observed insufficiently or not at all.

4. With the moment of being surprised and the deploying for dismounted action all offensive spirit tended to disappear. They all dismounted and allowed themselves to be held by a weak Japanese force, instead of pushing on the reconnaissance with

the main body, disregarding the Japanese forces in Chongju, which were sufficiently held fast by the two advance-guard sotnias.

5. In this fight the Cossack of to-day has shown that his offensive spirit only goes as far as undertaking an enterprise when success is apparent; that his favourite weapon is no longer the sword and dirk, but the rifle; and that it is easier to keep these unruly and feared hosts at arm's length than was generally thought possible.

6. During the fight no further reconnaissance was attempted, so that after the fight the same uncertainty as regards the situation of the enemy existed as before.

7. Already the Japanese cavalry had shown that they were superior to the Cossacks in reconnaissance, in screening, and in dismounted action.

(b) On the Japanese Side

1. The cavalry had conceived their task in quite a correct manner, for, being too weak to fight, they avoided it whenever possible, thereby attaining in the reconnaissance quite unexpected results.

2. Their cavalry were relieved from strategical reconnaissance by their spies.

3. The most essential support of the cavalry was formed by the infantry, who were always on the spot to help them. The Japanese cavalry have been reproached with the fact that they

stuck to the feet of the infantry. But the reason must be sought in their weak numbers. The Japanese knew exactly how to judge this inferiority, as they never sent their cavalry so far in advance as to be liable to become a sacrifice to the superior numbers of the Cossacks.

4. For scouting, the cavalry was sent on from stage to stage, where they awaited the arrival of their infantry and then moved on again.

5. In this country, so little favourable for the employment of cavalry, small detachments composed of infantry and cavalry were often used, and gave excellent results.

6. The protection and screening in this country, so favourable to infantry, was so excellent that the enemy never once were able to obtain an idea of the situation.

7. The Japanese did not avoid shock tactics, and, only yielding to the rifle fire of the Cossacks, ordered their squadron in reserve to dismount.

8. That the Japanese cavalry only arrived in Wiju two days after the crossing of the river by the Cossacks, is to be ascribed to their caution and the points mentioned under 3.

9. The landing of the 2nd and the Guards Divisions in Chinampo caused a shortening of the lines of communications by about 200 km., whilst the detachment pushed forward towards Anju and that landed at Nokang were of sufficient strength for the protection of the bridge which

was being built, for the safe concentration of the army at Anju, and to withstand any attack to be expected from the Cossacks. The result of these reconnoitring skirmishes was that the Russians located hostile forces of all arms on the march from Anju to Wiju, to which the forces landed at Chinampo were joined.

The Japanese, on the other hand, had ascertained that the hostile forces opposing them were comprised of Cossacks only, who could only expect the support of their infantry and artillery on the other bank of the Yalu.

The principal thing, however, was that the Japanese cavalry could already report by April 2nd that that part of Korea, which at this time was to be used by their 1st Army, was free of the enemy to the Yalu, and consequently the march from Anju to Wiju, about 150 km., could be undertaken undisturbed by the enemy.

(c) *Consideration of the Russian Measures*

Mischtschenko had correctly interpreted his orders, *i.e.* "To reconnoitre the expected landing of the Japanese forces in Korea," and he advanced in the proper direction, so as to watch the coast on his right flank, as well as the roads on his left flank leading from Gensan to Mukden.

The Velim segment was correctly recognised as that to which the reconnaissance of the main body of the brigade should be carried out, because the

Velim in the line from Kitschou to its mouth described that segment, to which all communications led from Seoul and Gensan towards Mukden; by holding this line the observation of the approach of any hostile forces was made possible.

Also, he did not separate himself too far from his own forces, which were concentrating on the mouth of the Yalu; but, at the same time, he allowed himself at the first reverse to be pushed back far too easily on the Yalu, without renewing his attempt to gain an insight into the dispositions of the enemy. He did not employ all available means for the reconnoissance in force, and also did not give the necessary instructions for this purpose to the detachments in touch with the enemy, otherwise it is inexplicable why the three sotnias in the neighbourhood did not join in the operations. The fact is, that a number of Japanese posts were sufficient to cause a Cossack brigade of eighteen sotnias to give up their task and retreat to the Yalu, and thereby leaving open to the enemy's advance a stretch of country about 150 km. in extent.

The other causes for this retreat were :

1. The break-up of the ice on the Yalu, whereby an unfordable obstacle was placed between Mischtschenko and the Russian forces at Antung, which would have compelled him to make a wide detour.

2. The left flank of Mischtschenko appeared to be endangered by the advance of the Japanese

forces from Gensan, while through the disappearance of the ice in the northern harbours on the east coast of Korea his right flank was threatened by the expected landings.

Threatened on three sides, there remained to Mischtschenko nothing but to retreat on his own main army on the Yalu, for only from there was he able to expect help, should the ice of the Yalu be already impassable. At any rate things were not so bad as Mischtschenko imagined, for the force from Gensan marched on Pingyang, and it was not the intention to land any further Japanese troops north of Chinampo. However, all this was due to the insufficient reconnoitring activity of the Cossacks, who should certainly have obtained more exact information concerning the direction of march taken by the Japanese from Gensan. Besides this, there arrived an order from the superior headquarters, which ordered Mischtschenko "to take over the protection of the right flank of the eastern force below Antung."

The only possible advantage of the retreat of Mischtschenko on the Yalu in the direction of Wiju, would have been the screening of the concentration of this eastern force, which object was defeated since the Russians not only did not keep secret their concentration, but even continued drill exercises on the north bank of the Yalu, when they knew the Japanese scouts were already on its southern bank.

The order to Mischtschenko, "to protect the right wing of the eastern force," emanated from the fear, always present for this flank, which appeared to be threatened by further landings of Japanese forces in the mouth of the Yalu, then already free of ice, or at Takushan.

Two regiments were now told off to reconnoitre by sotnias along the coast from Antung to Takushan; whilst the Ussuri horsemen were scattered to reconnoitre from Tjurentchon to Sandehkou.

Three Cossack regiments were thus employed to guard the coast, while hostile forces of still unknown strength and composition were advancing, cavalry was badly wanted for reconnoitring, and infantry detachments, supported by a necessary telegraph system (and this was available), would have answered the requirements of coast observation better.

Such usage robs cavalry of its whole mobility, reducing its value to the level of a body of orderlies. We will now approach closer the question as to what advantages army headquarters would have gained supposing Mischtschenko had retreated, not to Wiju, but *viâ* Kusong on Changsong?

1. If the Japanese had had to reconnoitre in this direction, they would have had to be distributed over a larger extent of country.

2. The Japanese would have been compelled to detach larger forces in this direction, for the

force, which was directed from Yongpyon direct on Changsong would not have sufficed.

3. On the other hand, the Russians would have had a deeper insight into the condition of the Japanese during their advance, which they could scarcely have prevented in spite of the difficult country.

4. It is certain by making the base of the brigade at Changsong, the situation of the enemy would certainly have been better cleared up, and the sending out of Rennenkampf's division later avoided.

5. At the very least, the commander of the eastern force would have been able to ascertain, before the battle of Wiju, that the whole Japanese army had stood for some time on the Yalu, and could either have taken the necessary measures for the defence of the Yalu, or avoided in time a battle against superior hostile forces.

(d) Consideration of Japanese Measures

In considering the reconnoitring activity of the Japanese, it must be remembered that there was not for disposal in Korea an independent body of cavalry, for which reason there can be no consideration of the strategical reconnaissance on the side of the Japanese. This was replaced by a well-organised system of spies, and carried out with complete success. Here we may observe a very peculiar tactical reconnaissance and protection, in which mixed detachments were

sent forward step by step to protect and screen landings, crossings, bivouacs, and also the country over which the advance was to be made.

As long as it was only a question of simple protection, the detachments consisted of a preponderating force of infantry, with some cavalry and artillery, but at the moment when reconnaissance was the principal object the cavalry at disposal was used, and only the horsemen which were absolutely necessary were held back for employment with the columns.

EXAMPLES

1. On February 16 was formed a detachment out of the leading force of the 12th Division, which had landed in Chemulpo, to which were added two of the three squadrons of divisional cavalry. The third squadron was with the detachment at Gensan. Only a few horsemen (the weaker horses and men) were held back for duty with the column. The detachment had orders to advance on Pingyang and to protect the passage of the 12th Division over the Taitung and the landing of the 2nd and Guards' Divisions at Chinampo.

On February 16 the detachment set out and arrived in Pingyang with the cavalry on February 27 (about 20 km. daily), and with the remainder of the force on March 3 (marching about 13-15 km. daily).

Until the arrival of the infantry the cavalry scouted right up to the neighbourhood of Anju (50–60 km.), and ascertained that several sotnias of Cossacks were reconnoitring, and that the main body of a considerable cavalry force without artillery were at Anju. On March 10 the detachment continued its march, and arrived on the 17th at Anju.

2. To reinforce the detachment of the 12th Division, which had been pushed forward to Anju and had to take over the protection of the landing at Chinampo, a combined detachment was landed on March 12 from the 2nd and the Guards' Divisions, consisting of three battalions of infantry and six squadrons of cavalry.

Again the Japanese placed the combined cavalry of both divisions at the disposal of the commander of the detachment; and not in vain, as at once, after the junction of this detachment with that of the 12th Division in Anju on March 18, this cavalry at once crossed the Velim and pushed the Russians back everywhere.

3. During the advance of the 1st Army from Pingyang towards Anju a third mixed detachment was formed out of 5 battalions, 3 batteries, and 7 squadrons.

Task: To protect the building of the bridge and to cover the concentration of the 1st Army behind the River Velim. :

On March 20 this cavalry forced the Cossacks

back on to the line Yongpyon-Kasan, on the 23rd as far as Chongju; while the infantry, carried across on the 22nd, took up outposts on the line Yongpyon-Pakchon-Kasan.

4. On March 28 the cavalry regiment of the Guard received orders to reconnoitre (*viâ* Koksan) towards Wiju, and to collect further information about the whereabouts of the Cossacks. The regiment arrived exactly at the right time to take part in the fight of the troops posted at Chongju, pursued the retreating Russians, and arrived on April 4 in front of Wiju, always maintaining touch with the enemy. This is the only occasion where the divisional cavalry was detached from its own division, entrusted with an independent task, and separated from infantry support. The 6 squadrons remaining with the 1st Army were apportioned in the further advance as follows:—

5 squadrons as advance guard.

1 squadron to the right column, which had to advance *viâ* Unsan on Changsong.

These most varied incidents show that the commander of the 1st Japanese Army thoroughly understood how to employ to the best advantage his numerically weak cavalry, and that they answered his call in every case above expectation.

To close this chapter we will compare the daily marching performances of the two cavalries:

1. The Cossacks marched on February 17 from

Wiju, and arrived with their patrols on February 27 before Pingyang: that is 190 km. in 11 days = 17·2 km. daily.

The Japanese advanced on February 16 from Seoul, the cavalry also reached Pingyang on February 27: that is 230 km. in 12 days = 17·8 km. daily.

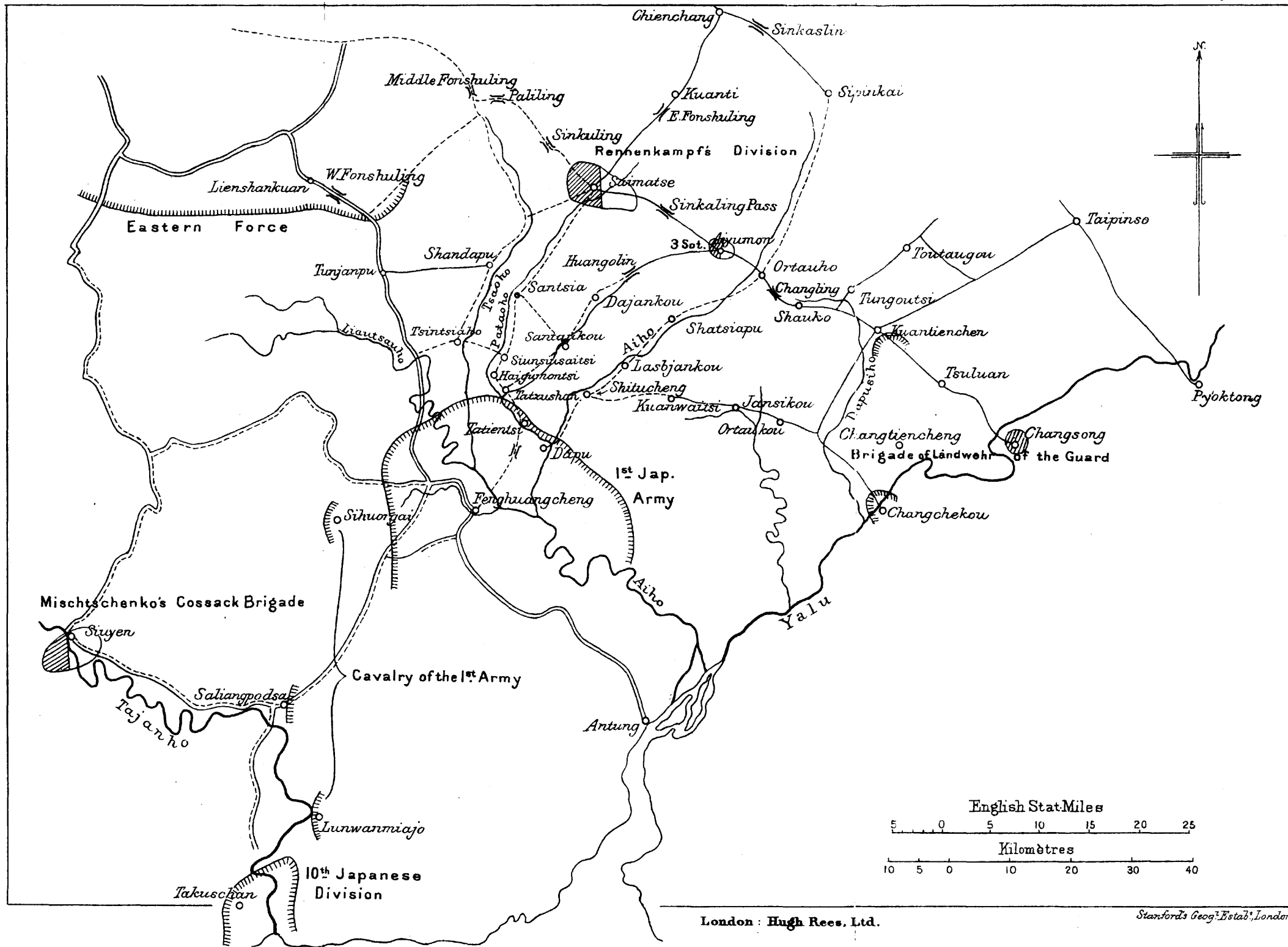
2. The main body of the Cossacks marched on February 17 from Wiju, and reached Kasan on February 24: 75 km. in 7 days = 10·6 km. daily. The Japanese in the pursuit did the same distance in the opposite direction from March 28 to April 4: 75 km. in 7 days = 10·6 km. daily. Both examples show that the Cossacks, as well as the Japanese, if unmolested by the enemy, were able to do an average march of from 17·2 to 17·8 km.; in touch with the enemy, about 10·6 km. daily. Both cavalries exhibit the same rate of movement, and only the unfavourable country and the climatic conditions reduced the marches to this minimum.

They strove, each in their own way, to meet the demands made on them, but the offensive spirit of the Cossacks disappeared with the first hostile bullet; whilst the initiative of the Japanese, which was inculcated in them, already in the first fight secured the victory and compelled the enemy to accommodate himself to the procedure of the Japanese.

SITUATION AT THE TIME OF RENNENKAMPF'S ACTIVITY.

Initial Situation on 7th May, 1904.

Sketch 3.



V

RENNENKAMPF'S RECONNOITRING ACTIVITY ROUND SAIMATSE

1. PREVIOUS EVENTS

THE eastern force, repulsed by the 1st Japanese Army at Antung, was in retreat (*viá* Fenghuangcheng) on the Fonshuling ridges at Lienshankuan. The Japanese pursued to Fenghuangcheng and, it appears, established themselves there (basin of the Aiho River) for a long halt. They pushed out detachments of all arms into the valleys in a northerly and north-easterly direction, and caused the cavalry to reconnoitre to a distance of some 25–30 km.

According to the information supplied by spies, and despatches received from Lieutenant-Colonel Madritow, who had been detached to Pyoktong, an enemy's force of all arms was on the march from Changtiencheng (*viá* Kuantienchen) on Saimatse, and on May 5 had reached Kuantienchen with their advance guard (see sketch 3).

We see concentrated on the shortest and principal line of communication, Wiju-Liaoyang,

the main body of the 1st Japanese Army, while a second column, in the endeavour to obtain a parallel line of advance *viâ* Kuantienchen, Saimatse, sought to obtain possession of the Fonshuling passes, north of Saimatse, in order to threaten the left flank of the Russian eastern force, and to open up the road to Mukden in this direction also.

At the date of the fight on the Yalu only three sotnias of the Ussuri Cavalry Regiment were facing it, who after the retreat of the Russians from Fenghuancheng were reinforced by five sotnias of the 1st Argunski Cossack Regiment under Colonel Kartsew.

As the information concerning the advance of a strong Japanese army on Saimatse was repeated, General Kuropatkin gave Major-General Rennenkampf the order to advance with the 2nd brigade of the Transbaikal Cossack Division and No. 4 Cossack Battery to Saimatse, and to take over the command of the troops which were already there and of the 23rd East Siberian Rifle Regiment under Colonel Wolkow, which had been ordered to go there on April 30 from Liaoyang.

Rennenkampf's division consisted of :

1. The Cossack Brigade under Major-General Ljubawin :

2nd Argunski Cossack Regiment . . . 6 sotnias.

2nd Nertschinski Cossack Regiment 6 „

Transbaikal Cossack Battery . . . 6 guns.

2. The Cossack Brigade under Colonel Kartsew :
 - 1st Argunski Cossack Regiment . 5 sotnias.
 - Ussuri Cavalry Regiment . . . 3 „
 3. The Column under Colonel Wolkow :
 - E. Siberian Rifle Regt. No. 23 . . 3 battns.
 - No. 4 Battery of the 6th E. Siberian
 Artillery Brigade 6 guns.
 4. A detachment of Red Cross Ambulances.
- Total : 3 battalions, 20 sotnias, 14 guns.

2. ORDER FROM ARMY HEADQUARTERS TO
 RENNENKAMPF'S DIVISION

“ By *holding on to Saimatse, to find out* all about the strength of the Japanese forces stationed at Fenghuangcheng, and advancing *viâ* Kuantienchen, to *protect* the left flank of the eastern force which was ordered to fall back on Lienshankuan, and to delay the hostile march on Mukden.”

The situation of Rennenkampf's detachment on May 7 is shown on sketch 3.

It was thus :

Three Ussuri sotnias in touch with the enemy, who had advanced to Kuantienchen, at Aiyumon ; 3 sotnias on duty on the line of communication between Saimatse and the army headquarters ; 3 battalions, 14 sotnias, 14 guns concentrated in Saimatse.

No further news was received of the enemy.

Adverting to the details of Rennenkampf's instruction we may accentuate the following points :

1. Reconnaissance towards Kuantienchen and Fenghuangcheng.

2. Holding on to Saimatse.

3. Protection of the left flank of the eastern force.

4. Delaying a hostile advance on Mukden.

The directions can be summarised under two heads as follows :

(a) *Information and delaying* action, which necessitate a search for the enemy, thus involving offensive activity.

(b) *Holding on to a position and protection*, which imposes a defensive rôle.

This grouping is not beyond dispute, for we must admit that it is possible to delay defensively, and to protect offensively, and such procedure is obviously compatible with information and holding on to a position, if in accord with discretion and sound judgment.

Information can, however, only be gained on the offensive, while holding on to a position is what one would consider a most decidedly defensive rôle.

The carrying out of both rôles demands a splitting up of the forces, as a part remains as a holding body, while the other must push forward for information. The division and use of the different arms depend again on how the leader intends to carry out his task.

If collecting information is considered to be the only offensive part of the task, and the holding

on to the position is to be a means of both protection and delaying the enemy, then infantry and artillery with a few sotnias should be left behind, while the reconnoitring proceeds only with the help of the Cossacks. That means, the offensive rôle falls to the more mobile, the defensive to the less mobile portion of the troops.

The march of an enemy advancing in a given direction is best delayed (for the Japanese in Fonhuantschon were stationary) by adopting the offensive oneself and attacking the opponent where it is least expected and most unwelcome, a procedure with which the object of protection can readily be combined.

If this plan be adopted, every rifle not actually required for holding the position must be taken along, only an absolutely necessary number of troops being left behind.

The rate of marching of the mounted detachment remaining in the column must conform to that of the infantry and artillery, for only thus the principal object—*i.e.*, to appear with combined forces and as strong as possible at any one point, can be attained. To attempt both, in sufficient force to hold out any prospect of success, is impracticable, and leads to no result.

In this case *Rennenkampf* had two hostile groups opposite him, of which one was at *Fenghuangcheng*, and the other was advancing *viâ* *Chongju* on *Kuantienchen*. While the

Fenghuancheng group was at a distance of 60 km., that on the advance, supposing its head had actually arrived at Kuantienchen by May 5, and if it had continued its movement, might be assumed to be on May 8 at least at Ortauho, 30 km. distant.

Therefore the more dangerous enemy was for the moment the one advancing *viâ* Kuantienchen; against this one he had to march in the first instance.

His principal task.—To start reconnoitring towards Kuantienchen, to delay the march of the enemy, and thereby protect the left wing of the eastern force. All this was capable of being carried out by an advance against Kuantienchen, whilst the *secondary task* consisted in the holding on to Saimatse and the reconnaissance (at the same time protection) in the direction of Fenghuangcheng, and this, supported by the advance against Kuantienchen, was attainable with inferior forces.

Rennenkampf determined to advance against Kuantienchen, and ordered that—

- 1 battalion of infantry
- 7 sotnias from Saimatse
- 3 „ „ Aiyumon
- 6 guns of the Cossack battery
- 2 guns of the field battery
- 3 ammunition waggons and the detachment
of the field hospital from Saimatse,

should be ready to march at 6 p.m. on May 9, both from that place and Aiyumon. The composition of the detachment clearly shows that Rennenkampf had a firm intention to fight the enemy at Kuantienchen.

On the arrival of Rennenkampf in Saimatse on May 7, Colonel Kartsew, who had just returned from a reconnaissance in the Pataoho Valley, informed him that the enemy was still in Fenghuangcheng, but had barred the valleys with infantry detachments, whilst the enemy had not advanced as yet from Changsong *viâ* Kuantienchen.

In order to reach Kuantienchen the narrow valleys on the upper reaches of the Aiho, the Dapusiho, and the Changling Pass, which united these valleys, had to be passed. The possession of this pass was of the greatest importance, a fact which caused Rennenkampf to take measures for its occupation. With the exception of this pass the height immediately south-west of Kuantienchen is the only point where stronger forces could be deployed for fighting. It was therefore in the interest of the success of the operation that this point, which allowed the deployment of the whole force, should come the sooner into the hands of the Russians. Therefore in the first place we must consider the sotnias which were nearest in Aiyumon.

3. INSTRUCTIONS AND THEIR EXECUTION

On May 8 a troop of Cossacks was sent forward to reconnoitre *via* Kuantienchen and Jansikou.

On May 9, at 6 a.m., in Saimatse a force of 1 battalion, 7 sotnias, 8 guns, 3 ammunition waggons, and the Red Cross detachment stood ready to march; in Aiyumon at the same time the 3 Ussuri sotnias.

Up to this time no further news concerning the enemy was received from the two Cossacks' troops and the group at Aiyumon.

For the defence of Saimatse Colonel Wolkow remained behind with 2 battalions, 6 guns, and 7 sotnias; he had orders to hold the fortified post west of Saimatse in the event of a hostile attack.

Two sotnias rode out from Saimatse at 6 a.m. to occupy the Kantshuling Pass. The main body followed at about 7 o'clock in the following order of march: Cossacks, infantry, artillery, and train. They all marched without measures of protection; only owing to Rennenkampf's insistence did the more mobile Cossacks form a sort of advance guard for the infantry, artillery, and train behind.

Each arm continued the march with or without halting for rests, and without considering the other part of the column. Soon the Cossacks were a long way in front, then the infantry followed

alone, and, separated from the latter, the field artillery and train followed.

At 7.30 p.m. the 3 sotnias from Aiyumon joined themselves on to the tail of the Cossacks, and at about 8.30 p.m. all the Cossack sotnias were on the Changling Pass. It was 2 o'clock in the morning before the field guns arrived, while the infantry and the train bivouacked for the night in Ortauho.

The 2 sotnias which had been sent forward to the Changling Pass reconnoitred as far as Kuantienchen, and Rennenkampf discovered from them, after his arrival at the Changling Pass, that hostile infantry, about 400 strong, had left Kuantienchen in an unknown direction on May 8.

Rate of marching: Cossacks 40 km., infantry 35 km. daily.

Acting on this information Rennenkampf determined to push forward to Kuantienchen on May 10. For reconnoitring purposes were sent forward, in each case one sotnia as follows :

via Kuantienchen to Siaopuho on the Yalu,
 „ „ into the valley of the Dapusiho,
 „ „ to Ortaukou, and Jansikou to Kuanwaitsi.

Behind these followed, without any protection, Rennenkampf with 3 sotnias to Kuantienchen. On the Changling Pass 4 sotnias remained until the arrival of the infantry. After the arrival of the

latter this force was to march to Shauko, and to rest there.

Rennenkampf arrived in Kuantienchen at 12 midday, and remained there as support to the 3 reconnoitring sotnias.

At 1 p.m. the following despatch arrived for Rennenkampf from Colonel Wolkow: "Strong hostile forces are advancing from Fenghuangcheng on Saimatse."

This despatch caused Rennenkampf to make the following dispositions:

"1. Major-General Ljubawin will march with the infantry, 6 guns, and 2 sotnias, from Shauko to reinforce the garrison of Saimatse.

"2. The remainder of that force will retire to the Changling Pass and remain there."

Rennenkampf's division was thus disposed at 2 p.m. on March 10, in a depth of from 70 to 75 km. (see sketch 4) somewhat as follows:

Explanation of Sketch

1. In Saimatse Colonel Wolkow with 3 battalions, 6 guns, 7 sotnias.

2. General Ljubawin on the return to Saimatse with 1 battalion, 6 guns, 2 sotnias.

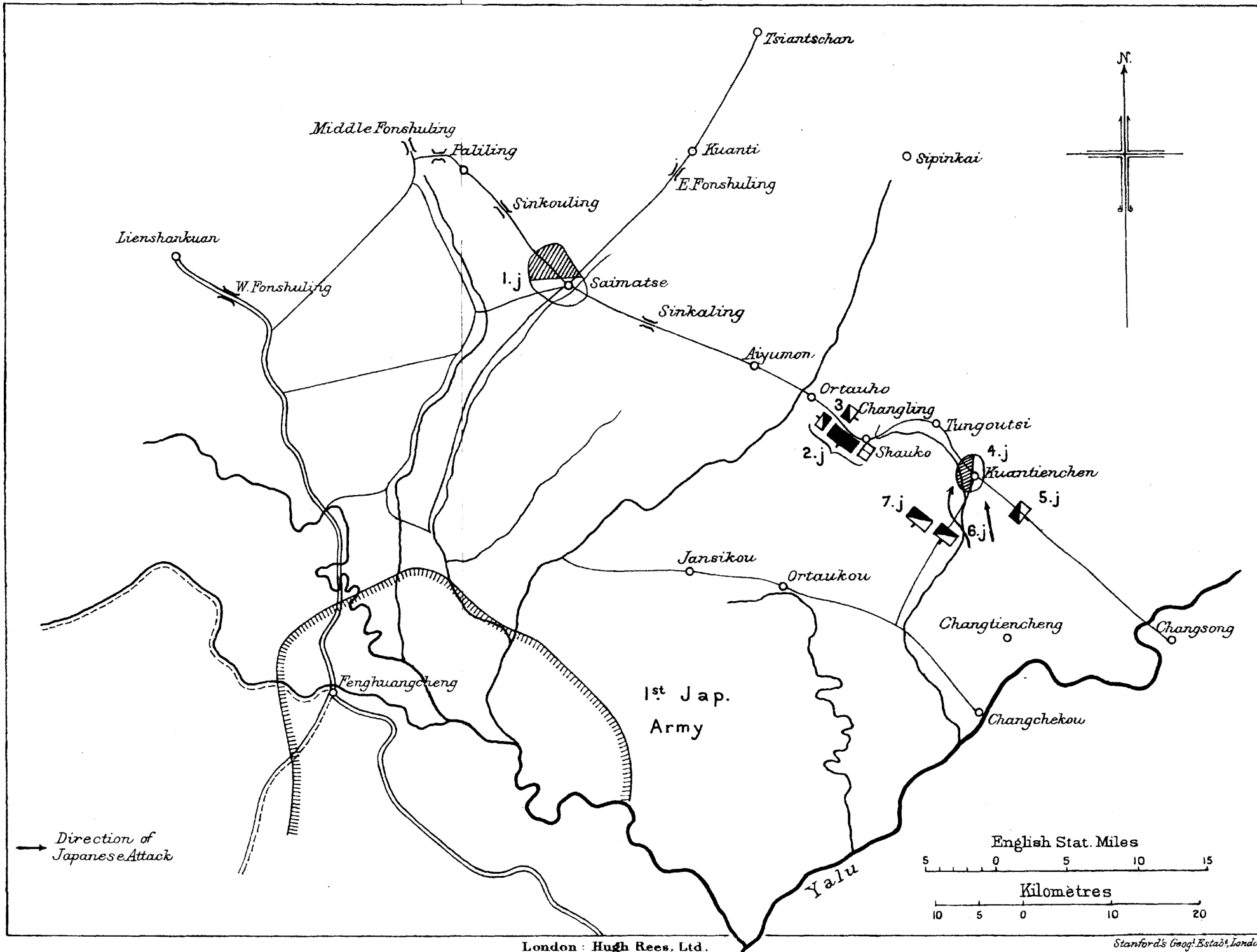
3. Communication group on the Changling Pass, 2 guns, 2 sotnias.

A group of Rennenkampf's surprised at 2 by the Japanese in Kuantienchen (3 sotnias).

RENNENKAMPF'S DISPOSITIONS AT THE TIME OF THE JAPANESE ATTACK

At 2 p.m. on the 10th May, 1904.

Sketch 4.



5. The reconnoitring squadron sent forward to the Yalu.

6. The reconnoitring squadron sent forward to the Dapusiho Valley.

7. The reconnoitring squadron sent forward to Jansikou.

The arrows indicate the direction of the Japanese attack.

Direction of the Japanese Attack

At 2 p.m. the Cossack posts at Kuantienchen reported that hostile infantry were only 3,000 metres distant, in a south-westerly direction, in descent on Kuantienchen. The Cossacks deployed with the intention of holding back the enemy, till at least a part of the reconnoitring sotnias had gained touch with the main body. They did not have to wait long, for these sotnias appeared extraordinarily quickly, whereupon a retreat on the Changling was commenced.

The fight on the Russian side was purely defensive, carried out to gain time, and gave no results, as not once was it possible to ascertain with any exactitude the strength of the opposing Japanese.

A reconnaissance behind the Japanese line did not take place—in fact, was not attempted, for Rennenkampf was content to know that his sotnias were in safety. The detachment marched still on the 10th to the east of the Changling Pass, where it encamped unmolested by the enemy. On May 11 the retreat was continued. On May 12 the

detachment arrived in Saimatse, where it was now ascertained that the information from Chinese sources about the advance of the Japanese force from Fenghuangcheng to Saimatse was exaggerated.

4. REMARKS

It was as much to the interest of the Russian superior headquarters as to Rennenkampf to reconnoitre the enemy advancing towards Saimatse, to hold him, and thus relieve the left flank of the eastern force. In the first instance the Cossacks were called upon to do this.

The narrow valleys and the country, which was crossed only with great difficulty, compelled the use of small detachments for reconnaissance, *i.e.* patrols, at the most, troops, as only such bodies were able to use their mobility to advantage. The larger, therefore, the reconnoitring bodies, so much more unwieldy were they at the moment of contact with the enemy. For a possible fight in the narrow valleys only that number of troops can be used for which there is room to deploy.

It can, therefore, be taken for granted that in this country a patrol of about 10 to 12 horsemen is the most suitable unit for reconnaissance, but that at the same time at certain distances a support is required which, in case they should be overwhelmed, would take them up, support, and relieve them, and also forward their despatches. Under the conditions such as described above,

one sotnia (130 to 150 horsemen) would seem the most suitable unit.

Should, however, fighting be intended, which in this case was clear from the fact that infantry, artillery, and ammunition carts were taken, then every section of country must be considered on which such forces could be deployed; besides, all precautions must be taken to protect these troops, during their march between such sections of country, from surprise attacks. For such fights we must take into consideration, in the first instance, the cross roads connecting Ortauho and Kuantienchen.

Ortauho, itself little adapted to defence, has in the Changling Pass a splendid *point d'appui*, whilst in the neighbourhood of Kuantienchen the deployment of larger bodies is specially favoured by the configuration of the ground.

One march from Kuantienchen to Saimatse (55 km.) is too great a performance for one day for a mixed force, which caused Rennenkampf to decide to proceed to the Changling Pass with the main body on May 9, and only to send reconnoiters beyond that point. On May 10 they were to march farther, to Kuantienchen. In consideration of the situation on May 7 and 8 (see sketch 3) it was quite natural that the three sotnias which were in Aiyumon, that is, only 15 km. distant, should be called up to occupy the Changling, and also to carry out the reconnaissance. This force

had a start of 25 km., and by the time the main body of the detachment arrived in Aiyumon could have scouted as far as Kuantienchen and reported to Rennenkampf on his arrival in Aiyumon that that place on the 9th was free of the enemy. Rennenkampf would not have pressed on towards the Changling and not split up the column, but after a profitable rest in Aiyumon, would in spite of the difficulties of the ground, have reached by 8 p.m. the Changling, or at any rate Ortauho, not only with the Cossacks, but also with the main body of the force. Dropping parts of the column at different points was doubtless very demoralising to the men. As far as concerns the composition of the detachment it must be noticed that in a country such as this, where the conditions did not allow of the use of large masses of Cossacks as cavalry, the proportion of infantry was too small, the Cossacks having sunk to the level of mounted infantry, whose horses in course of time only formed an encumbrance.

Leaving behind two battalions for the defence of Saimatse appears for two reasons unnecessary:

1. The advance, as we have already shown, was based on the probability of a meeting with the enemy, and for this infantry in considerable numbers was necessary. Whether the expected fight was to be carried out offensively, *i.e.* that it should end by the repulse of the enemy,

or defensively with the intention of compelling him to deploy, could not be settled definitely beforehand.

2. The defence of Saimatse decidedly demanded that a portion of Rennenkampf's division should be left behind. But for this purpose, during the offensive movement of the main body on Kuantienchen, one battalion would have answered the purpose just as well as two. But the fault lay with the insufficient reconnoitring activity of the force left behind in Saimatse, which should have taken more suitable measures for the protection of the left flank of the eastern force against a threatening movement from Fenghuangcheng, and would then have been able to see through the Chinese report about the advance of the enemy from Fenghuangcheng, and not have accepted it as gospel truth; at the very least the report could then have been verified before despatching it farther. On the other hand, the battalion in question, if taken on to Kuantienchen, could have done better service there.

The battalion told off to this force marched 35 km. on May 9 on the most wretched road, crossed the Changling Pass on the 10th, and, on the report which Rennenkampf had received that hostile columns were marching on Saimatse, was ordered back to its starting-place. The question now is :

1. If there had been a hostile attack, how would this battalion have fared ?

2. What support could it have given after such fatigues ?
3. What would have happened to it supposing Wolkow's detachment had already started on a retreat ?

To 1. Supposing the battalion rested in Shauko (*vide* Rennenkampf's orders for May 10), then the distance to Saimatse would have been about 40 km. If the report of the Chinese on the 9th was true, then they must have seen the advance of the Japanese on May 8, to be able to report it in Saimatse on the 9th. As the Japanese had barred the basin of the Aiho within a radius of from 25 to 30 km. by outposts, it follows that the Chinese must have observed this movement outside this radius. But it is to be presumed that, in order to be able to appear as a surprise, the Japanese already on the day before, May 7, would have marched on to this outpost line. But this, on account of actual and known facts, could not have been the case, as the Japanese only arrived at Fenghuangcheng during the course of this day, therefore they could not have advanced farther than Dapu or Tatzushan. Even if they had left Fenghuangcheng on the 8th, which was possible, they could only have advanced at the most to Tatzushan, 20 km., where they were seen by the Chinese. The Chinaman, who rode or walked the whole night, could certainly have covered the 35 km. before noon on May 9. However, this

was not the case, as otherwise Rennenkampf would have personally received this report in Saimatse, or been handed it halfway. For this reason we must come to the conclusion that the Chinaman only arrived in the afternoon of the 9th, and that pretty late. By this time the Japanese would have put the day's march of the 8th and 9th behind them, and would already have been in Santsia, 20 km. distant. But at the time when Rennenkampf received the report, 1 p.m. on May 10, the expected fight at Saimatse could have been fought and decided. As it was impossible for the battalion, even by an extraordinary march, to arrive in Saimatse before the evening of May 11, its participation at the right time in an eventual fight was quite impossible.

To 2 and 3. We may mention that the rifle battalion advancing from Kuantienchen, quite exhausted by its forced march, would not have possessed sufficient fighting power to render adequate help.

It was, however, to be expected with certainty that the Japanese would have used the evidently unfavourable situation of the Russians, if their appearance before Saimatse on the 10th had been possible, or if this movement had even been planned at the time. If it had been the intention of the Japanese to attack Saimatse, they would have ascertained also the strength and composition of the Russian force left behind

there, and would have carried out the attack with sufficient troops to ensure success, and against this attack neither one nor two battalions could have offered prolonged resistance.

The already exhausted rifle battalion arriving would have been in the greatest straits in this case, as it would have been between the body of the Japanese already advanced beyond Saimatse, and their main body, which was still on the march. Therefore any support of the Saimatse detachment from Kuantienchen was impracticable and unnecessary. If, however, Colonel Wolkow's detachment required any support, then it was easier to be got from the eastern army in Lienshankuan than from a more distant force, which was already in contact with the enemy. Also, if no support could have arrived in Saimatse at the right time from Lienshankuan, then the occupation of the Paliling and Fonshuling Passes could have taken place in time, which would have offered to the retreating force of Colonel Wolkow the necessary support.

But the initial mistake lies in Rennenkampf's instructions, which, relying on the report received from Kartsew, had neglected to cause a reconnaissance to be carried out in the direction of Fenghuangcheng. In the second place the blame falls on Colonel Wolkow, who, as commander of an independent force, did not carry out the necessary scouting on his right flank, and only

after the receipt of this exaggerated despatch took the necessary steps for this. If the Russians had protected themselves sufficiently, and reconnoitred efficiently in the neighbourhood of Kuantienchen, then the exaggerated report about the advancing Japanese troops would, after maturer consideration, certainly not have had any further results. Where the three reconnoitring squadrons were, and how they were able to appear so suddenly on the battlefield at Kuantienchen, is up to the present a mystery. Presumably, warned by the inhabitants of the near approach of the Japanese, they preferred not to separate themselves too far from Kuantienchen, their *point d'appui*. It would not be incorrect to say that the Russians were already here under the spell of the victory, and consequently of the superiority, of the Japanese. Owing to an insufficient system of protection the Russians were put in a situation of constraint, and consequently commenced to retreat immediately their three reconnoitring sotnias returned. This retreat shows want of fire power and furthermore confirms that Rennenkampf was obliged to give up his first intention of attacking the enemy, or of delaying his advance, when once he sent back part of his infantry and artillery. His grouping, widely dispersed over a depth of 70 to 75 km., consisted of single detachments, which were supposed to serve as supports to each other.

Everything was to be held, so as to make it possible for the most advanced detachments to send information concerning the enemy. *The result was—losses in fighting, otherwise nothing.* The Russians never once knew the strength of the enemy with whom they had fought.

The whole division seems to have fallen a victim to the intrigue of the Japanese, through the transmission of a false report, *i.e.* as to an advance from Fenghuangcheng on Saimatse.

5. POINTS WORTH CONSIDERING

(a) Marching too late and insufficient protection repeat themselves. The fundamental principle that patrols in reconnaissance meet always with greater success than sotnias or larger detachments, has received fresh confirmation by the experiences of the Russians.

(b) In mountainous districts the country on both flanks of the line of march and during halts should be reconnoitred by infantry or dismounted Cossack patrols, so that a surprise is impossible.

(c) Dismounted Cossacks are no match even for rather weak detachments of Japanese infantry.

(d) With mixed forces the pace of the slowest arm must be conformed to, in order to avoid the splitting up of the column.

(e) Reconnaissance was carried out in a negative sense during the fight, as the sotnias which

were already behind the enemy gave up their activity and returned to the main body on the first noise of battle, instead of sending out fresh patrols to reconnoitre round the flanks of the enemy.

(*f*) The Japanese did well in evacuating a place when in uncertainty as to the strength of the advancing enemy, and in withdrawing to an ambush for observation; and then, having sufficiently orientated themselves, with the greater ease possessed themselves, by a surprise, of the previously voluntarily evacuated place, and thus checked the hostile advance.

(*g*) It was never attempted to break through the Japanese infantry screen.

(*h*) The marching performances of the Russians were increased at the sacrifice of adequate protection.

The subsequent reconnaissances of *Rennenkampf* we will only sketch cursorily, as they start from the same initial situation, and were carried out in pursuance of one and the same order, and only examine closer that activity which allows of a retrospect as to the manner and method of the reconnaissance of both combatants.

VI

RECONNAISSANCE TOWARDS HAIGUMONTSI

(a) *Information concerning the Enemy on May 12*

PATROLS' report: hostile cavalry advancing towards Aiyumon, Saimatse, and Lienshankuan.

Chinese report: enemy advancing with their principal column on Lienshankuan, with a smaller force on Saimatse.

These reports appear to have caused Rennenkampf anxiety for his communications with the eastern force, for from Kuantienchen he gave the following orders for May 13:

“Colonel Kartsew will march with 3 Ussuri sotnias and 6 sotnias of the Division (three of them just arrived with Rennenkampf) to Shandapu, about 18 km., and from there reconnoitre towards Fenghuangcheng. If the hostile advance allows of it, Colonel Kartsew is then to join the eastern force with the three Ussuri sotnias.”

What was neglected on the 9th was to be now retrieved by partly tired troops.

That Shandapu was chosen as starting-point

for the projected reconnaissance was because this place barred a cross road, which, if not occupied, could have easily led to the interruption of the line of communication with the troops in Saimatse, and the cutting off of Rennenkampf from the eastern force by the advance of Japanese troops *viâ* Shandapu on Fonshuling. The order, though certain initiative was allowed to the commander in the way he should carry it out, showed defects, as it—

- (1) Did not provide for the command in the event of the expected junction of Kartsew with the eastern force.
- (2) Contained no instructions as to the further action of this force, if Kartsew should actually carry out the junction.

(b) Situation of their own Forces

Main body and eastern force as before.

The main body of Rennenkampf's division concentrated in Saimatse. But *all touch is lost* with the enemy in Kuantienchen.

(c) Execution of the Reconnaissance until the Marching of Kartsew

On May 13 at 6 a.m. three reconnoitring patrols start out:

1. *Viâ* Shandapu on Tunjanpu.
2. In the Tsaoho Valley down towards Feng-huangcheng.

3. In the Pataoho Valley down towards Feng-huangcheng.

The main body, 9 sotnias, marched at about 11 a.m., and arrived at about 3 o'clock in the afternoon in Shandapu.

Up till the evening the following messages arrived from the 3 advance patrols:

Tunjanpu and the Tsaoho Valley as far as Tsintsiaho free of the enemy.

In the Pataoho Valley there were hostile infantry at Haigumontsi.

These reports were sent by Kartsew to Rennenkampf; he then handed over the command to Colonel Truchin, and went with the 3 Ussuri sotnias to Lienshankuan to join the eastern force. Colonel Truchin considered his task accomplished, and started on the 14th on his way back to Saimatse.

(d) *Remarks*

Rennenkampf had discovered on his first reconnaissance that even in this country the cavalry arm was the most suitable for reconnoitring in given directions. As it was important for him to clear up the situation about the enemy's forces as soon as possible, he formed the detachment of Cossacks only, so as not to restrict their mobility by the addition of other arms, and gave the very experienced Colonel Kartsew a free hand in the method of carrying it out. The late

marching hour of the main body seems here to be completely correct, as—

1. Their goal was only 20 km. distant.
2. Kartsew awaited news, and wished to know whether Shandapu was free of the enemy. This cautiousness is here the more justified, as a report could have arrived in Saimatse by 11 a.m.
3. It gave the patrols the necessary start.

The patrols did on an average 40 to 45 km., and reported and sent the despatches in good time to Shandapu, whereby the transmitter performed 50 to 60 km.

This splendid activity of the 3 patrols deserves great recognition; they had performed great things by their marches in a very difficult country, and though their reports were of a somewhat negative nature they had helped greatly to clear up the situation of the enemy. Their insufficient peace training, and the small support given them, are the only reasons why they were not able to carry out their task to the full, and why they did not always ride up to the enemy, but were satisfied at not finding the enemy within a radius of 35 to 40 km. from Saimatse. Colonel Kartsew did not carry out the first part of his duty, *i.e.* to reconnoitre towards Fenghuangcheng, satisfactorily. His patrols did not even all ride up to the enemy, and omitted any attempt to reconnoitre behind their line of protective troops. But at the same time it is quite

possible that these patrols could not have reached so far on May 13, as this would have been a march of 60 to 65 km., and their reports could not have reached the main body before the afternoon of May 14. The junction of Kartsew was carried out before what was wanted had been performed. Tunjanpu was free of the enemy, and this is what Kartsew considered to be the principal thing.

How the transfer of the command to Colonel Truchin came about it is difficult to make out; probably it was not Rennenkampf's intention. But apparently Truchin was satisfied with the result attained by Kartsew, as he quietly retired on Saimatse. There may have been another reason which perhaps caused the advance patrols not to get behind the hostile protective troops, and to have caused Kartsew to determine on a premature junction with the main body. On the 13th the patrols only rode as far as they could without anxiety about their line of retreat. If these patrols had been followed at about 20 to 30 km. by the support of a force the strength of a sotnia, which would have given them relief and protection, and also ensured their eventual retreat, then the patrols would instinctively have ridden farther. It cannot be too often reiterated that in a country full of narrow valleys and ravines, where a retreat from an enemy equally strong or stronger is not always

possible, reconnoitring patrols absolutely require a support, and in consideration of the difficult work need more frequent relief than on open or level ground.

On the return march to Saimatse, half-way, an order met them from Rennenkampf ordering a renewal of the advance.

(e) *Reconnaissance in conjunction with Rennenkampf on May 15 and 16*

Rennenkampf's order to Truchin ran thus :

“I shall advance on the morning of May 15 with 5 sotnias and 2 horse artillery guns into the Pataoho Valley in the direction of Fenghuangcheng. The detachment will support my advance by a simultaneous southward march into the valley of the Tsaoho southwards. In the event of a fight, the two columns will support each other by converging against the enemy's rear. Two sotnias will advance, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Sabotkin, from Saimatse *via* Aiyumon, Dajankou to Santaukou.”

1. EXECUTION

On receipt of the order on May 14, Colonel Truchin immediately suspended his retirement, spent the night where he stood, and advanced on the 15th to about 2 km. north of Tsintsiaho, in the Tsaoho Valley. His patrols again discovered

no enemy in the Tsaoho Valley, but located hostile infantry at Haigumontsi. Rennenkampf arrived as far as Siunsiusaitsi without meeting the enemy, where he remained the night. His patrols also located the enemy in Haigumontsi. During the night Rennenkampf sent the following order to Colonel Truchin :

“ On the 16th I shall attack the enemy at Haigumontsi. You will arrive in Siunsiusaitsi on the 16th, at 8 a.m., to support me, and join yourself to my column.”

Truchin marched on the 16th, at 5 a.m., but only arrived in Siunsiusaitsi at 8.30 a.m., as he had extraordinarily bad roads to pass. Directly after Truchin's arrival Rennenkampf marched. Of the eleven sotnias two formed the advance guard, while one in *lava* formation (loose order, usual attack formation of the Cossacks) formed the vanguard. Towards Haigumontsi the steep walled valley of the Pataoho became continually narrower. After a half-hour march the advance patrols were suddenly fired on, dismounted for action, and, with the help of a sotnia sent over the hills to the right, forced the Japanese to retire to a position in rear. Twice in the same manner were the Japanese forced to evacuate their position, until they received reinforcements south of Tatientsi, and appeared to prepare for a more determined defence. The further pursuit and a renewed attack was not attempted by the

Russians. At 2.20 p.m. fire ceased, and, after a rest, Rennenkampf started on his march back. At 7 p.m. the column arrived in Santsia, where Rennenkampf received information from spies that at Fenghuangcheng there were 27,000 infantry, 2,000 cavalry, and many guns, besides 36 howitzers, of the enemy.

2. REMARKS

As the magnet attracts iron, so the Japanese infantry detachment discovered at Haigumontsi attracted the Russians. Rennenkampf himself, with 11 sotnias, determined to gain information towards Fenghuangcheng over the bodies of these Japanese. This power of attraction is not only noticeable with the main body, but at the same time with Truchin's patrols, for they came out of the Tsaoho Valley to Haigumontsi and encountered there the already frequently reported infantry of the enemy.

By concentrating all his sotnias in Siunsiusaitsi Rennenkampf disclosed his intention that, after cessation of reconnaissance in the Tsaoho Valley, the operation should culminate in an attack with his whole force. But that, on account of the close approach (only 3 km. from the enemy) and of the late hour of marching, the moment for a surprise was completely lost, appears never for an instant to have been considered. But Rennenkampf must already before his advance from Saimatse have

reckoned on an attack on Haigumontsi. Why, then, did he not give the necessary orders for the co-operation of his and Truchin's column, so as to make this attack as much a surprise as possible? Rennenkampf's patrols surely were in front and reported that the enemy was no nearer than Haigumontsi. Rennenkampf should have weighed the moment for a surprise more than he did, which was quite possible if he had only marched on the afternoon of the 15th, and had halted halfway between Santsia and Siunsiusaitsi, about 10 km. from Haigumontsi. If then the column had started at 5 a.m. on the 16th a surprise attack could have been carried out at about 6.30 a.m. with greater success than by a march within 3 km. of a place known to be occupied by the enemy.

For three reasons the approach of Truchin did not answer the situation :

1. The march of Rennenkampf was delayed, and so any surprise of the enemy was out of the question.
2. The deployment of 11 sotnias was quite impossible in these narrow valleys. As a matter of fact only $3\frac{1}{2}$ sotnias deployed, while $7\frac{1}{2}$ sotnias awaited the result of the fight in column of route.
3. The reconnaissance in the Tsaoho Valley was interrupted—in fact, broken off, although no results had as yet been obtained, and there was no valid reason for it.

After Haigumontsi had been evacuated by the enemy, the pursuit was indeed taken up, but the valley, which was wide and offered a good view, was not used to its full advantage. Neither fresh sotnias of Cossacks nor artillery were employed, but the enemy were allowed to continue their retreat in the direction most favourable to them. It was only thus that the Japanese could succeed in retreating in order, and, supported only a long way back by fresh reinforcements, were able to take up a new position. Now, the Russians, after firing had ceased, and having no visible enemy before them, advanced 1 km., halted, rested, and then started to retire. Rennenkampf succeeded in compelling the enemy's screening troops to retire, but he took no advantage of this, lost all touch with the enemy and retired, instead of employing his superiority of numbers in a renewed attack. The artillery, which from the entrance of the defile could have had the retreating Japanese under fire, was brought up to the enemy with the greatest difficulty, in order to leave it standing in column of route. In an extraordinary manner the mobility of the Cossacks was shown on the march back to Santsia. At 2.20 p.m. all firing ceased, at 2.35 p.m. the sotnias advanced. After they had dismounted they could not have finished their pursuit of 1 km. before 2.45 p.m. The rest needed in consideration of the necessity for

off-saddling and watering the horses, of looking after the wounded, etc., must have lasted at least an hour. If we allow that they started on the march back at 4 p.m., then the Russians *did the 30 km. in 3 hours*, as they arrived in Santsia already by 7 p.m., while in the advance from Saimatse to Siunsiusaitsi they took 12 hours. On the advance they did 3·5 km. per hour, in the retreat 10 km., on the same road. It would therefore seem that the condition of the roads did not offer such insuperable difficulties as is made out. The remarks on previous reconnaissances apply here also, especially as to the late hour of starting.

The superior leaders of the Russian army meanwhile appear to have arrived at the conclusion that the further operations of the enemy were to be expected, not on the Yalu, but on the peninsula of Liaotung, since they ordered the junction of the infantry (except one company) and Rennenkampf's Cossack battery from Saimatse with the eastern force, and commanded Rennenkampf to observe continuously the Japanese in Fenghuangcheng, and especially the forces of the enemy operating in the Dapusiho Valley. In the hope that he would obtain better results by another method of reconnoitring, Rennenkampf tried, after a well-earned three days' rest, to carry out the reconnaissances with independent officers' patrols on May 21. Two patrols were sent to

Fenghuangcheng and one to Kuantienchen, in the strength of 2 officers and 9 Cossacks, to each of whom was given an interpreter. The choice of roads was left to the patrols. They started on horseback, and when within reach of the enemy continued their way on foot. But their intention of getting a glimpse behind the screen of the enemy did not succeed, as the Japanese were alarmed by the frequent strokes of the Cossacks, and provided for their system of protection with the greatest exactitude, and drove back the Cossack patrols everywhere, who found it hard to get about in this difficult country on account of their equipment.

In the meanwhile Rennenkampf sent 5 sotnias on May 21 in accordance with orders, under Ljubawin, to Aiyumon, and followed himself on the 22nd with 4 sotnias, when he received a report from the patrols sent to Kuantienchen that, according to the Chinese, there were 4,000 infantry, 3 squadrons, and 10 guns in Kuantienchen. In spite of this information, and in spite of the above-mentioned order, Rennenkampf determined to again press forward to Fenghuangcheng. This was done in the hope that it would lead to greater success in rear of the enemy *viâ* Dapu, in the Aiho Valley. In accordance with this intention Rennenkampf started on May 22, at 7 a.m., with 4 sotnias from Saimatse, and advancing *viâ* Aiyumon, took with him the

5 sotnias there, and arrived at 5 p.m. in Shatsiapu, having marched 42 km. in 10 hours. Up till now the march was carried out without any measures of protection. It was only from this place that a reconnoitring patrol was sent to Dapu, which reported during the night: "Saddle south of Shitucheng occupied by one company and one gun; Dapu by one battalion and five guns." Chinese added to this report that Shitucheng was also occupied by the enemy. Let us consider these patrols closer, and examine their methods and performance. We will take the more favourable case and accept as a fact that the patrol was taken from the sotnias in Aiyumon and not those in Saimatse. To Shatsiapu from Aiyumon, Ljubawin's sotnias had only done 13 to 14 km., when, considering the task before them, it could be presumed that these sotnias (patrols) were capable of greater efficiency than those sotnias which, after a march of 42 km., arrived in Shatsiapu. If, then, these patrols which had been selected after arrival at 5 p.m. had rested a short time, and had set out at 5.30 p.m. and had reported at 4 a.m. on May 23, then they must have honestly fulfilled their duty. According to their report Dapu was occupied by the enemy, and that means that the patrol must have been in the neighbourhood of Dapu, which was a march of 30 km., and as much for the messenger to ride back—*i.e.* in 10

hours, mostly in darkness, and that thus they must have covered 60 kilometres. Add to this the 14 km., Aiyumon to Shatsiapu, and the march of the patrol was 74 km. in 12 hours. Considering that it was by night, it was a remarkable performance.

As we shall see later, Rennenkampf gave more credence to the report of the Chinese than to that of his own patrol, although it was to be assumed that the Cossack patrol, if not overwhelmed by the Japanese in Shitucheng on the march out, would certainly have been on the march back if this place had been occupied by the enemy. How the Cossacks succeeded this time in passing the saddle south of Shitucheng and locating the enemy there, without being themselves discovered, is, up till now, a mystery; they probably only did it under cover of the darkness.

In spite of the Chinese report the force marched on the next day, May 25, without reconnoitring patrols, in two columns, and only sending in advance one sotnia each in *lava* formation. Neither Shitucheng nor the saddle south of this place was occupied by the enemy, and the columns concentrated at 5 p.m. in Schitucheng without having met the Japanese. From 7 a.m. till 5 p.m.—that is, in 10 hours—a distance of 22 km. was marched, *i.e.* 2.2 km. per hour. This slow march proves how difficult the road was and with what caution they marched. From Shitucheng

3 officers' patrols were sent forward dismounted to attempt to steal through the enemy's screen by night. They succeeded in getting through, but not a single man returned till the declaration of peace—those not killed were captured sooner or later. This is the almost certain fate of all horsemen who go too far away from their horses. On the other hand the mounted patrols which were sent direct from the advanced sotnias were able to locate the enemy on the hills north of Dapu.

On May 24 the march was continued in one column with two sotnias in *lava* formation as advance guard. Patrols were not sent out again, therefore at 9 a.m. both the advance guard as well as the main body were surprised by the Japanese at Dapu, compelled to retire, and pursued as far as the saddle south-west of Shitucheng. At this place the Cossacks rested till 5 p.m. and then marched back to Laobjankau, where they arrived at 7 p.m.—that is, 15 km. in 2 hours. Again the Russians disregarded the element of surprise. We may notice still further that on the 21st sotnias were pushed forward as far as Aiyumon. On the 22nd four more followed them in order to march together to Shatsiapu, and on the 23rd the march was continued within 10 km. of the enemy, who were disturbed by patrols during the night. All these measures must have made the enemy very observant

and must have alarmed them. Rennenkampf advanced first, and then reconnoitred (*or attempted to*), instead of reconnoitring first and then advancing. These operations also display a general want of caution in the advance, for which a heavy penalty was paid.

VII

THE SECOND RECONNAISSANCE TOWARDS KUANTIENCHEN

1. ITS EXECUTION

ALREADY on May 25 Rennenkampf renewed his activity against the enemy in Kuantienchen. He marched *vid* this place (leaving behind one sotnia in Aiyumon to guard the wounded of the Dapu engagement), on the 25th as far as the Changling Pass. It was only on arriving at the foot of the pass that Rennenkampf sent forward 3 patrols, each of 3 horsemen, with 5 minutes' start, to reconnoitre. At 8.30 p.m. a camp was made on the top of the pass, which was protected by picquets pushed out about 200–400 metres.

On the report of a Chinaman that about 300 Japanese were advancing, a patrol was sent forward at 10 p.m. At the same time the northern picquet was surprised. After a short fight Rennenkampf withdrew to Aiyumon, whereby touch with the enemy was completely lost. At 2 a.m. Rennenkampf arrived in Aiyumon. The Russians had marched about 60 km. from 7 a.m.

on the 25th to 7 a.m. on the 26th, and only rested from 2 a.m. till 4 a.m.

In Aiyumon Rennenkampf met the sotnia which had been left there. During the halt there, again only two picquets were posted, and the valley of Shitucheng was left unobserved.

For reconnaissance an officer's patrol was sent to Kuantiencheng, which found the Changling Pass occupied. Rennenkampf, perturbed owing to again having lost touch with the enemy, sent a second patrol on May 28 at 7.30 a.m. to Kuantienchen, which soon encountered a Japanese squadron and had to return. Soon after this the easterly picquet was surprised and the advance of considerable Japanese forces reported, which more and more threatened the line of retreat. After a protracted holding fight Rennenkampf, fearing for his communications, ordered a retirement on Saimatse at 12 noon.

Remarks

In none of the operations so far undertaken had so little consideration been shown for reconnaissance and protection. Eight sotnias in a compact body marched—in a country from which no view could be obtained—on an enemy whose activity was already known, with the intention of carrying out reconnaissances; they sent forward 3 patrols, comprising each 3 horsemen (just as if they were at peace manœuvres) at the foot of

a pass, difficult of ascent, to reconnoitre with only 5 minutes' start, and on gaining the top formed a camp without further care about the enemy, whom they wished to surprise. Was it to be wondered at that with such measures for protection nothing was to be expected but a surprise? Rennenkampf allowed the Japanese to quietly observe his march on to the Changling Pass, and to form their forces on the heights, ready for a surprise attack after sufficient reconnaissance, which naturally succeeded at night-fall. If Rennenkampf's only reason for neglecting reconnaissance during the march and in camp had been to spare his men, then he only attained the exact opposite to what he intended. The carelessness of the Cossacks in protection and reconnaissance, which had already become proverbial, favoured a surprise, and compelled the Russians to evacuate their camp and to undertake a difficult night march on Aiyumon. This sparing of the men caused a negative moral effect which degenerated into demoralisation, and paralysed any further enterprise. These Cossacks, who for two consecutive days had gone through the greatest fatigues and difficulties, were so tired out and listless after this night march that they lost all touch with the enemy, and, only seeking rest in the camp at Aiyumon, in spite of bitter experience, carried out no reconnaissance and put out insufficient outposts.

The surprise on the Changling Pass was followed by another at Aiyumon, which ended with the complete evacuation of the line to Kuantienchen, and the surrender of the parallel road from Ortauho *viá* Sipinkai, Chienchang to Mukden—*i.e.* in the rear and flanks of the eastern force. The means taken to protect the Cossack camp on the Changling Pass and in Aiyumon were remarkable. After settling down in camp, no patrols were sent out to reconnoitre the country in front, so that opportunity was offered the Japanese to approach unobserved quite close to the neighbourhood of the camp. But the well-laid surprise could certainly have been frustrated, if the commander of the detachment had sent forward patrols before the outset of the march and to a long distance in front of the intended camping-ground. Placing the picquets only 200–400 metres from the camp of the main body had the result that, on the Japanese attacking these posts, the camp also suffered, as the enemy's bullets which fell there caused losses and disorder, and made it impossible to advance with a well-ordered detachment, and compelled the retreat of the column. That the surprise by night succeeded should cause no astonishment when we take into consideration the inadequate system of protection, for the Japanese had only to reckon with over-tired troops who had arrived in the dark and who could only search the ground in front with great difficulty.

The want of reconnoissance by day was in this case very hard to make good by a search of the ground in the immediate neighbourhood by night. But at Aiyumon the column had rested for 24 hours, and by a more suitable disposition of the picquets and pushing out of observation posts and patrols the march of the enemy could have been reported sooner.

The Russians again marched great distances in order to carry out a surprise. Perhaps with the idea of not betraying their intentions through patrols in their advance, they did not send them out in time and far enough in front. But the Japanese taught them how to prepare and carry out surprises; their cavalry knew how to screen their own march even on this ground, and the commander understood thoroughly how to employ the night for an advance (from Changling to Aiyumon), so as to succeed in surprising the enemy at daybreak by appearing in front of him quite unexpectedly. It is, however, quite inexplicable how *Rennenkampf* could have lost entirely the touch with the enemy which he had regained after such great difficulties. The prevailing stupor is attested by the unexpected manner in which the enemy appeared, and by the success he attained by the surprise. Of course, under such circumstances no reconnoissance during and after the fight—as far as the Russians were concerned—was to be thought of.

VIII

RENNENKAMPF'S ACTIVITY TILL THE FINAL RETREAT TO CHIENCHANG

BARELY escaped from danger, Rennenkampf omitted to re-establish touch with the enemy on his arrival in Saimatse on the evening of May 28, though he knew that the Japanese might follow. He wished his exhausted sotnias to rest, in order to evacuate Saimatse on May 30, as he believed that, with the forces at his disposal, he was unable to further resist the Japanese. This premature resolve, in the face of a still obscure and active opponent, had the most terrible consequences.

As no reconnaissance was carried out, the report brought by the Chinese at 9 a.m. on May 29, that "a Japanese advance guard was only 3 versts distant from Saimatse," surprised them in such a manner that the troops were roused up, and set in motion as follows :

Eight sotnias of Ljubawin's brigade marched to Chienchang to bar the road over the Sinkaling Pass in the direction of Mukden; whilst the remainder joined the force of Colonel Wolkow,

which had been ordered on to the Paliling. The report, brought by the Chinaman, was forwarded to the army headquarters, under the impression that this was the Japanese force which had the day before been encountered at Aiyumon, and with the addition that 3,000 infantry and at least a battery were marching on Saimatse.

Scarcely had Rennenkampf's troops arrived in Chienchang and Paliling, when the divisional commander received the following order from army headquarters:

“The eastern force will advance on June 2 to Saimatse. Rennenkampf's division will also advance there.”

In accordance with this, Major-General Ljubawin advanced with his brigade to the eastern Fongshuling Pass on June 1, where at midday he received the report of the commander of the sotnias which had been sent forward there, namely, that within a radius of 10 versts no Japanese were to be seen, and where he camped in a forest glade, marching 29 km. in 8 hours, *i.e.* 3.5 km. per hour. A further report stated that the Japanese “arrived in Saimatse yesterday” (May 31).

At 3.30 p.m. suddenly bullets began to whistle among the quietly encamped Cossacks from a dip about 560 metres distant, and hid from view. The outpost sotnia deployed against the enemy and succeeded, after being reinforced by Cossacks from different sotnias, in compelling the enemy,

about 50 rifles strong, to quit his position. But the enemy took up a position again on the heights of the pass and compelled the Cossacks to retire on Kuanti.

The casualties were 5 killed and 24 wounded, including 2 officers, and 63 horses rendered unserviceable, some dead, some wounded; this was the penalty of carelessness and an inadequate system of protection.

It might be thought that the sotnia which had been pushed forward here had had sufficient time and opportunity to reconnoitre the neighbourhood thoroughly, and that 50 of the enemy's men should not so easily have been missed even in such a difficult country, if the service of protection had been efficient.

The Japanese, on the other hand, again proved that they understood how to *combine reconnaissance with fighting*, for they had nothing more to conceal after a successful reconnaissance, and knew how to reap the full benefits of a surprise through the carelessness of the Cossacks.

On June 2 Ljubawin arrived again in Saimatse, and learnt here that the Japanese had only touched the place with reconnoitring detachments, and that such a detachment, exaggerated in the report of Chinamen, had not only roused Rennenkampf's division and engaged Ljubawin's brigade, but compelled the whole eastern force to make a forced march of 50 km. Lieutenant-

General Count Keller started with the head of his force on June 2 from Lienshankuan, and arrived in 15 hours in Saimatse—50 km., *i.e.* 3·3 km. per hour, which is a fine performance for a column of $8\frac{1}{2}$ battalions and 2 batteries. Enlightened on the situation by Major-General Ljubawin, Lieutenant-General Count Keller ordered the retirement of the eastern detachment on June 3.

Major-General Rennenkampf received the order to occupy Chienchang with his Cossacks, while Major-General Grekow, with Colonel Wolkow's force, remained for the defence of Saimatse.

I have given an outline of Rennenkampf's activity at Saimatse in order to point out to the reader every omission through which even a commander full of zeal, self-sacrifice, and energy, as Rennenkampf decidedly was and is, was unable to bring to a successful issue his given task, even though it was extremely difficult. Reports of spies are only to be accepted with the greatest caution, and invariably to be verified, otherwise they will do mischief with incalculable consequences in their train. In the Introduction I have already mentioned that reconnaissance forms half of protection, and this proposition has proved only too true. Caution is never to be neglected, even when the enemy is reported, or assumed to be, at ever so great a distance.

The strictest performance of all reconnoitring and protective measures keeps up and increases

fighting efficiency and guards against reverses, which are particularly demoralising to troops, lower their confidence in their commander, and destroy discipline.

In conclusion, we will mention, for comparative purposes, the average marches which Rennenkampf's division, with the main body of his Cossacks, carried out in this difficult country.

March from Liaoyang to Saimatse .	140 km.
1st reconnaissance to Kuantienchen	130 „
„ „ „ Haigumontsi .	100 „
„ „ „ Dapu . . .	150 „
2nd „ „ „ Kuantienchen	85 „
1st march to Tsiantshan and back .	115 „
2nd „ „ „ „ „ .	45 „
Total . . .	<u>765 km.</u>

The period from May 4 till June 3, including rest days, equals 30 days, giving a daily march of 25·5 km.

It is easily understood that these men and horses, who had only three resting days in one month, should need recuperation. And what is the net result of all this activity? Really nothing at all, for concerning the force in Fenghuangcheng there were merely the doubtful reports of spies, while in the direction of Kuantienchen, Rennenkampf, despite all endeavours, was unable to penetrate the screen.

IX

THE 1ST JAPANESE CAVALRY BRIGADE UNDER MAJOR-GENERAL AKIYAMA, FROM MAY 30 TO JUNE 16, 1904.

1. PREVIOUS EVENTS AND THE DISPOSITIONS OF THEIR OWN FORCES

AFTER the Russian eastern force on the Yalu was compelled to retire on the Fonshuling ridges, and the 1st Army was no longer dependent for support on the 2nd Japanese Army waiting in the neighbourhood of the mouth of the Yalu, the latter, together with the 1st Japanese Cavalry Brigade under Akiyama, was landed in and around Pitsewo. During the fights round the Nanshan position it was the duty of the cavalry brigade, in conjunction with the 5th Division and detachments from the 3rd and 4th Divisions, to protect the rear of the 2nd Army on the line Pulantien-Pitsewo. After the capture of the position at Nanshan on May 26 the 1st Division pursued the Russians who were retreating towards Port Arthur, while the 3rd, 4th, and 5th Divisions concentrated behind the line Pitsewo-Pulantien, in order to be able to oppose Stackelberg's corps, which was advancing from Kaichou to Port Arthur.

The 2nd Army numbered 36 battalions, 17 squadrons, 41 batteries, formed into 3 divisions—3rd, 4th, and 5th.

Of this the 5th Division stood with the main body at Tandsiafan, and with advanced detachments in Pitsewo, Yudyiauo, and Kuodjatun, when the 1st Cavalry Brigade, reinforced by 2 machine gun detachments and 2 battalions of infantry, advanced on May 30 for a reconnaissance from Itschonpu towards Wafangkou. The 3rd and 4th Divisions were concentrating still at Kinchou, and started on June 2 the march on the line Pulantien-Pitsewo, with the 3rd Division on Tandsiafan, and the 4th towards Pulantien, where they arrived on June 4. The 10th Division landed at Takuschan, and forced Mischtschenko's Cossack brigade back beyond Siuyen, while the 1st Army stood with its main body in Fenghuangchen, with detachments pushed out towards Siuyen and in the direction of Kuantienchen.

2. INFORMATION CONCERNING THE ENEMY

Of the enemy it was known that they were in the country about Yingkou-Haicheng and Kaichou with about one army corps and one cavalry division; and that these concentrating groups had the intention of advancing against Kinchou, to draw away the Japanese troops which were there, and to prevent, or at any rate delay, the investment of Port Arthur.

In Liaoyang a so-called army reserve was concentrating, while the eastern force with Rennenkampf's Cossack division faced the 1st Army in the country between Lienshankuan-Saimatse and appeared to be making no advance. All the passes from the Chapanling to the eastern Fonshuling, were barred by the Russians. (See sketch 5.)

3. ITS COMMISSION

Major-General Akiyama received instructions to advance in a general line along the railway to Kaichou, and to gain an insight into the situation of the enemy.

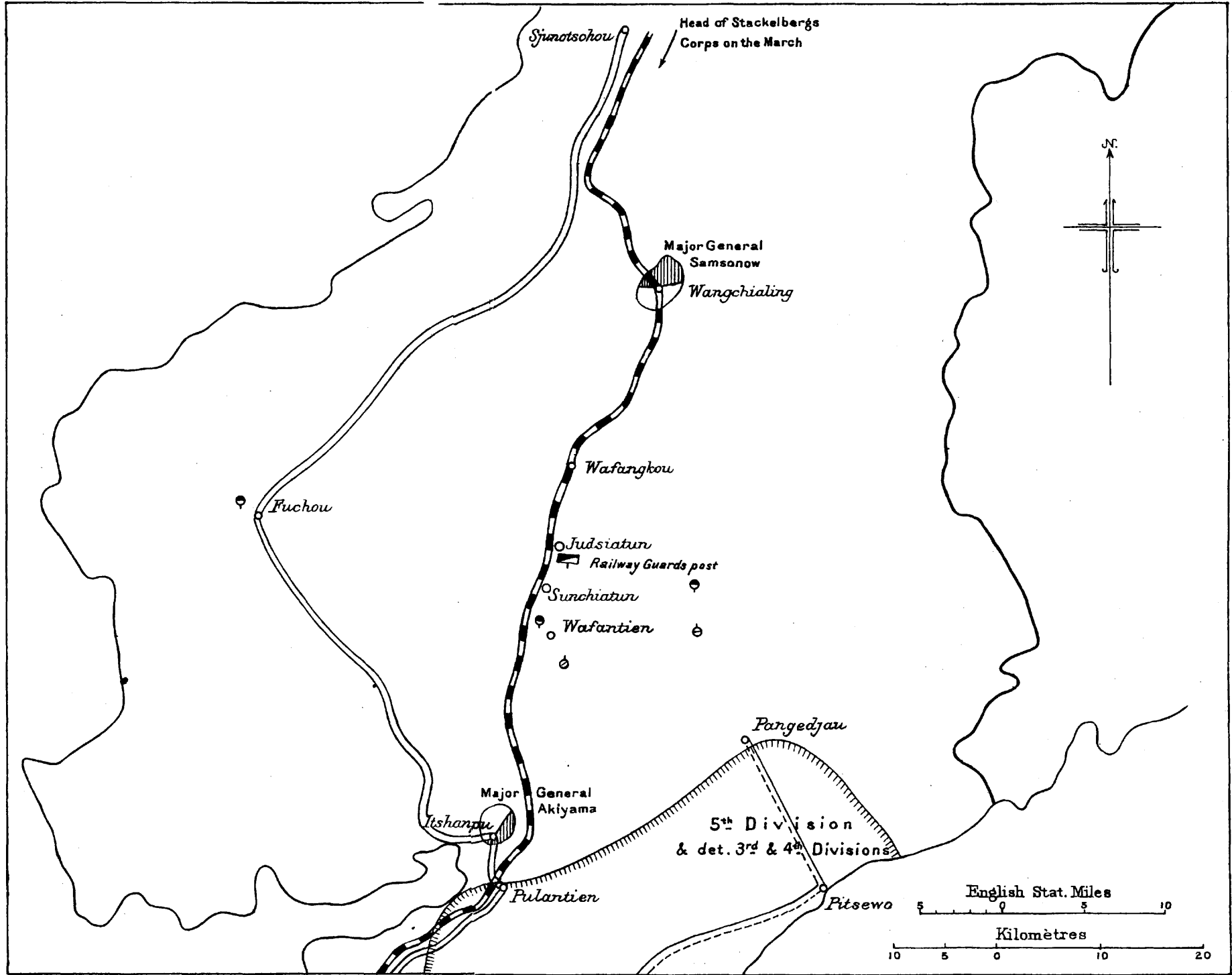
4. EXECUTION

The cavalry brigade advanced early on May 30 from Itschonpu on Wafangkou, and received from the advanced patrols on arrival in Sunchiatun at about 10 a.m. the report that Judsiatun was occupied by weak forces of the enemy. Akiyama ordered his infantry to dislodge this comparatively weak hostile force from Judsiatun in order to advance over the heights east of the railway, and thus to gain also a view into the valley of the Fuchouho at Wafangkou. As he learnt from his patrols that the enemy were advancing along the railway line with several sotnias and a battery, and had already passed the railway bridge south of Wafangkou, Akiyama

SITUATION OF THE ADVANCE CAVALRY

On the evening of 29th May, 1904.

Sketch 5



determined to let his infantry advance also over the heights east of the railway, but only to press the attack sufficiently to force a deployment of the Russian forces in order to gain a clear insight into their strength and composition. The cavalry and the machine guns Akiyama placed behind the left wing, in order to employ them more advantageously in the plain. The fight ended with the retreat of the Russians beyond Wafangkou. Only their outpost line remained on the heights south of the railway bridge. The Japanese spent the night with the main body in Sunchiatun, and pushed forward their outposts on to the heights north of Judsiatun, the latter being also prepared for defence.

5. REMARKS

In the composition of the augmented cavalry brigade of Akiyama which took the field for the first time independently, the Japanese showed an appreciation of the correct proportions in the strength of the different arms. In consideration of the small numbers of the squadrons, they gave them machine guns, so as to have at disposal for the carrying out of offensive and defensive operations a volume of fire equal to the strength of two companies of infantry. By this means the cavalry brigade was independent of the

infantry and possessed the necessary mobility for the most distant undertakings.

As, however, it was to be expected in this instance that the brigade would have to carry out their task in the face of superior hostile forces, infantry was also added to them. The object of the assignment of infantry was to help the cavalry in the actual fight, as well as to leave at the commander's free disposal the already small force of cavalry, and to facilitate uninterrupted reconnoitring even during the course of an engagement. The addition of infantry to the cavalry, both in the employment of independent bodies of cavalry and in the tactical reconnoissance, forms a characteristic of the Japanese reconnoitring methods, and can only be put down to the great numerical superiority of the Cossacks. In any case, the co-operation of these arms alone made it possible to attain such unexpected results. In contradistinction to the Russians, the Japanese always knew how to protect themselves against surprise.

In spite of the fact that on this occasion Samsonow's cavalry division took all precautions for protection, such as the sending out of patrols, and telling off advance guards on the march, the sending in advance of the camping party shows that there was no idea of a probable collision with strong hostile forces, and Samsonow has only to thank the Railway and Frontier Guards

in Judsiatun, that he was able to avoid a surprise on the part of the Japanese. In this encounter we see for the first time regular Russian cavalry in action (Dragoons), and so we will here point out the difference in training between the Dragoons and Cossacks.

(a) In reconnaissance their more thorough training shows them decidedly superior to the Cossacks. The patrols which were sent forward on Pulantien and Pitsewo, put on the alert by the fight at Judsiatun, reported in time the enemy, who was advancing over a stretch of country not within their reconnoitring zone. They not only reported to the commanders the composition of the hostile columns, but also their grouping, whereby Samsonow was enabled to take the necessary measures to oppose the hostile advance, from the railway bridge south of Wafangkou.

(b) In action their good musketry training was clearly evident, whereby fire control was greatly facilitated, and it was made possible to sustain a fight for a long time, even in the face of superior hostile infantry.

(c) In a moral sense their effect was immense. Their discipline, training, and aptitude in the execution of every duty worked as an incentive to the Cossacks who fought with them, and was certainly not the least cause of the results achieved by the cavalry in this fight.

(d) The action of their commanding officers, too,

appears in a good light, especially their initiative and correct decisions, such as :

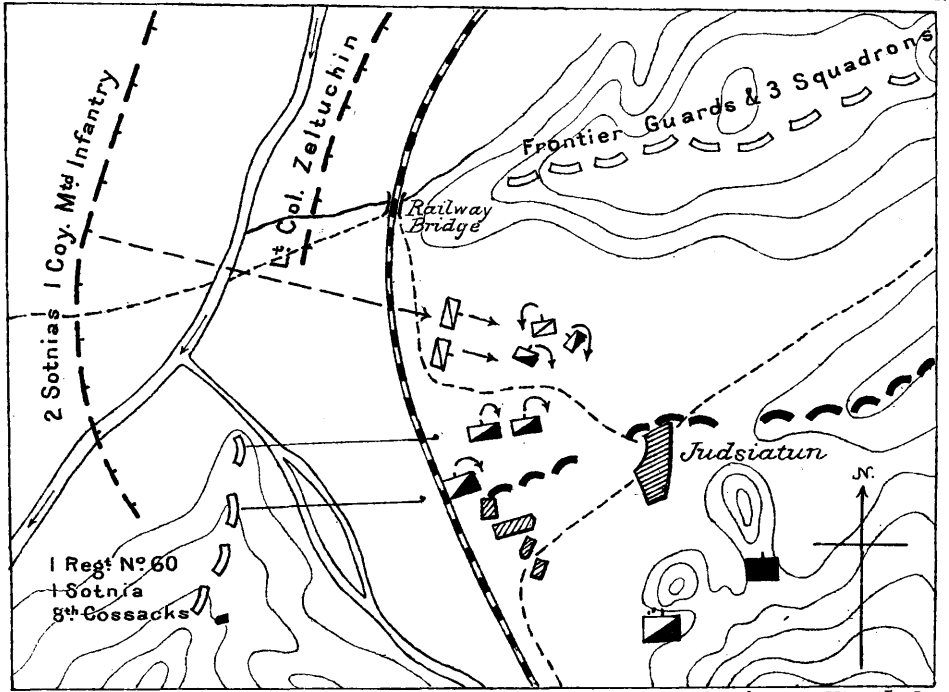
1. The junction of the camping detachment (40 Dragoons) with the Frontier Guards when the latter were attacked.
2. The further advance of the 3 squadrons of Dragoons, which had been sent forward by Samsonow on Wafangkou, to the battle-field, in spite of the fact that they recognised that, by a further advance, they would separate themselves very far from the main body (9-10 km.).
3. The rushing, on their own initiative, of two Cossack sotnias to the support of the camping detachment, when finally yielding Judsiatun, being hard pressed by the Japanese cavalry.
4. The immediate rallying of said camping detachment on perceiving the approach of the two sotnias of Cossacks.

Even though such prompt decisions be already exacted in the training manuals, we must allow that they were exceptional performances, for they gave evidence of fundamental resourcefulness, and up to that time similar cases had not come to light in this campaign on the side of the Russians. Up till then the first Japanese bullet, fired by unseen hands, was the signal for the cessation of Russian offensive and reconnoitring activity.

THE ATTACK IN THE COMBAT AT JUDSIATUN

On the 30th May, 1904.

Sketch 6.



Stanford's Geog. Estab. London.

English Stat. Mile

1/2 1/4 0 1/2 1

Kilometres

1000 750 500 250 0 1 2

London: Hugh Rees, Ltd.

As to the march discipline and marching capacity of the Japanese on this occasion, it may be taken as a model performance.

Akiyama's brigade marched at 5 a.m. from the night's camp, and the main body arrived by 10 a.m. in Sunchiatun: 24 km. in five hours, which is 4-5 km. per hour. Every measure was taken so that the infantry in fighting kit (without knapsack) should be able to follow the cavalry the more easily. On the other hand, the main body of the cavalry did not separate from the column, taking over the duties of protection, so that the infantry should not over-tire themselves, but should arrive at their destination (Wafangkou) fit for the fight. Through this mutual consideration it was possible to get the whole force to the spot and to deploy infantry for the fight, now granting the cavalry protection and rest, as it was wished to make the enemy show his forces. (Note the contrast in *Rennenkampf's* first undertaking against Kuantienchen.)

In this fight shock action was employed for the first time.

To the accompanying sketch of the fight we may add the following explanations. (See sketch 6.)

Yielding to the pressure of the superior Japanese infantry advancing *viâ* the heights south and south-east of Judsiatun, the Russian frontier and railway guards withdrew to the hills north of this place, where meanwhile the 3 squadrons of

Dragoons had arrived, while the 40 men of the camping party, now reduced to 30, were not dislodged from Judsiatun without the greatest exertion. As the Japanese at last succeeded, and the 30 Dragoons withdrew in the plain north of Judsiatun, to gain communication with the Russian right wing, they were attacked by a Japanese squadron and hard pressed. At the same time the two Cossack sotnias sent forward to the help of the Frontier Guards arrived on the same hill, near the small railway bridge, formed *lava* to the left, and attacked the left flank of the Japanese squadron, whereupon the hard-pressed Dragoons formed line and compelled the Japanese to retreat. The commander of the 14th Cavalry Regiment, recognising the dangerous position of his squadrons, attacked with the rest of his regiment, two squadrons in the front line and the now approaching Cossacks in *échelon* to the left. But no decisive result was obtained, for at this moment a column of mounted rifles (Regt. No. 60) and 1 sotnia (8th Regt. of Cossacks) appeared on the flank of the Japanese on the hills south-west of Judsiatun, fired on them, and compelled them to retreat.

The Japanese showed here that they did not shy at *l'arme blanche*, and even took the initiative to encourage the Cossacks to attack. When in consequence of the superiority of the Japanese, the Russians were compelled to retreat on Wafangkou, it was again the misjudged and

undervalued Japanese cavalry which took to the naked sword and pressed the retreating enemy with energy.

Finally, we will compare the hour of marching of the Russians with that of the Japanese.

The Japanese commenced deploying for the fight at 10 a.m. north of Sunchiatun; as they had already marched 25 km. they must at the very latest have started at 5 a.m.

Major-General Samsonow received the news at 11 a.m. near Fouchouho, north of Tsiahosin, that the Frontier Guards were fighting south of Wafangkou. As the Russians started from Wangchinling they had marched 15 km. Considering the Russian detachment consisted of mounted men only, the march performance of 5-6 km. per hour cannot be accepted as too much. Thence it follows that the head of the column (advance-guard squadron) cannot have left Wangchinling before 8 a.m., even if they had ridden at the walk throughout.

If the Russians had marched at 5 a.m., the fight would have still taken place at Judsiatun in consequence of the presence there of the Railway Guards' detachment, but the Russians would have been on the spot with their whole force, and with the help of the artillery would not only have been able to resist the Japanese, but also to drive them back.

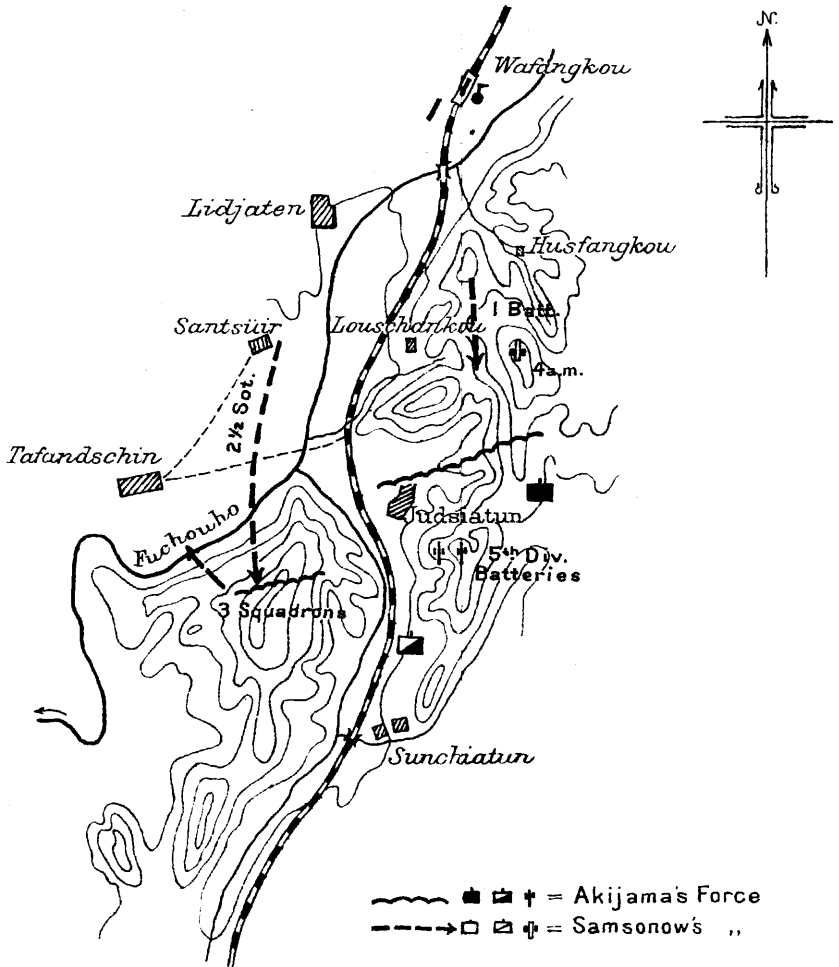
As a matter of fact the artillery never took part in the fight, as the battery commander declared

the position assigned to him to be inaccessible; it absorbed a large escort, namely, two sotnias, and never came into action. The fact was that the battery, which had to contend against bad roads, could only advance at a slow pace, and delayed the five sotnias of the 8th Cossacks, the sotnia of Frontier Guards, and the mounted company of the 60th Infantry Regiment in such a way that it was already 1 p.m. before they arrived at Husfangkou, about 5 km. behind the fighting line, which by an earlier hour of starting they could have reached three hours earlier at 10 a.m.

After this fight the outposts remained in the closest contact with each other, while the reconnaissance was carried out in every way possible by both sides. For example, on June 1 Japanese infantry surprised the principal Russian post about 3.5 km. south-east of Wafangkou, but were repulsed by rifle fire; on the same day eight Japanese squadrons drove back the Russian post at Supintse to Satilutsi on the Fouchouho, by which means they were able to gather valuable information. From these operations we see how well the Japanese understood how to employ infantry and cavalry in combination in reconnaissance. At short distances in difficult and close country they sent out infantry, which by surprise attacks drew the attention of the enemy, while from the other side infantry patrols passed through the line of outposts. The cavalry, on the other

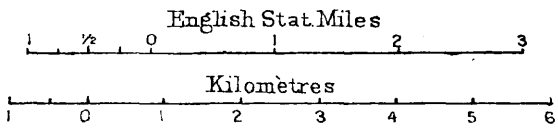
RECONNOITRING FIGHT OF MAJOR GENERAL SAMSONOW

At Judsiatun, 3rd June, 1906.



= Akijama's Force

 = Samsonow's ,,



London : Hugh Rees, Ltd.

hand, were assigned to tracts of country over which their mobility could be used to advantage, and where a good view facilitated their task. Both methods of reconnaissance, employed judiciously, produced capital results.

Disturbed on all sides, Major-General Samsonow tried on June 3 to gain further information concerning the strength of the enemy by a reconnaissance in force. For this purpose he used the main body of his detachment, which also had been reinforced by infantry, *i.e.* 1 battalion, $4\frac{1}{2}$ sotnias and squadrons, 1 battery. (See accompanying sketch 7.)

Of this force 1 battalion advanced *viâ* the hills east of the Fouchouho on Judsiatun, $2\frac{1}{2}$ sotnias against the hills west of that place, and only the battery, under the escort of 2 sotnias, remained halted south of the big railway bridge, waiting developments. The patrols and outposts of the Japanese retired slowly in the closest contact with the enemy on Judsiatun, artificially strengthened for defence, and the hills east of that place, where their own infantry were in position. As the Russians after a fight lasting $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours could not advance any farther, the battery was called up, which succeeded in not only compelling the infantry in Judsiatun and the hills east of this place to retreat, but also the three Japanese squadrons who had dismounted for action west of that place. But since May 30 the Japanese,

too, had received two batteries of the 5th Division as reinforcement, who now opened fire, whereupon Samsonow started to retreat. Irrespective of the moral effect of the artillery, which was clearly manifested here, both opponents learnt much during the fight, and were able to collect invaluable material from which to judge of the respective situations.

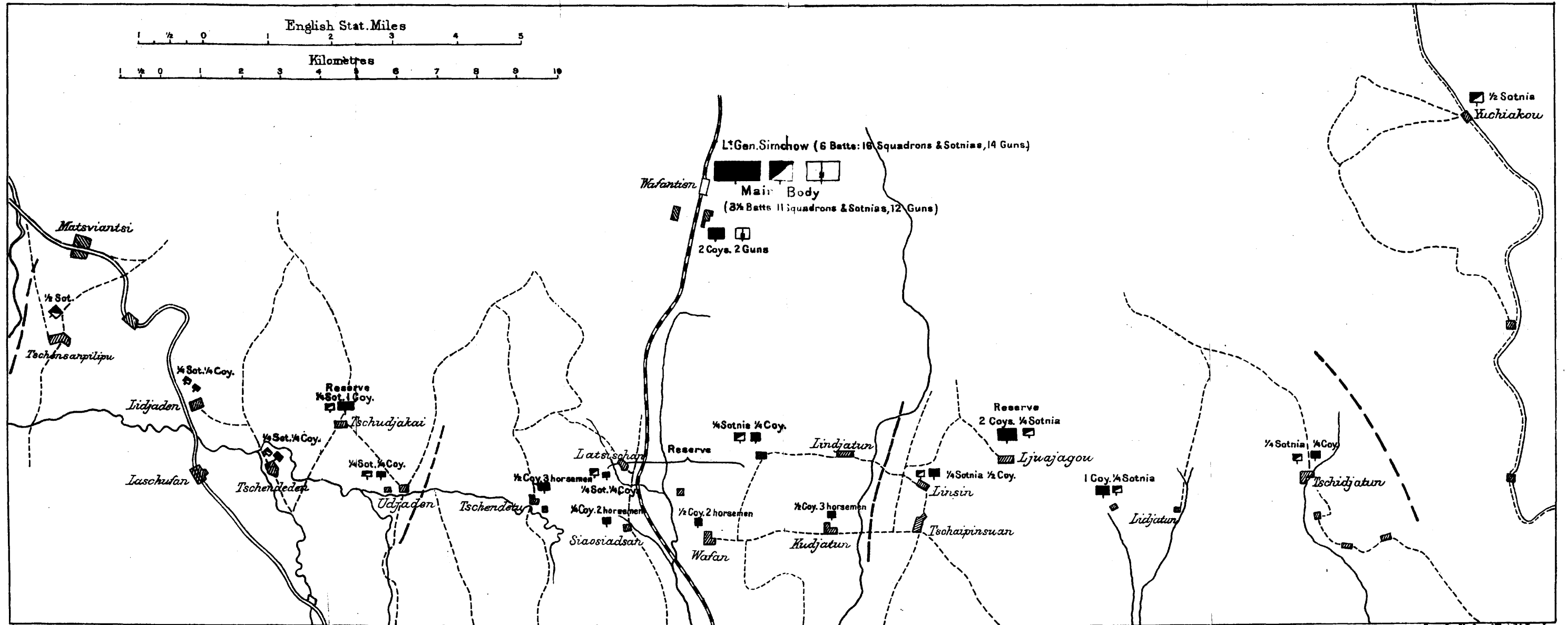
By the appearance of Russian infantry, Akiyama was convinced that the head of the infantry had already reached Wafangkou, and that the concentration of the corps at Kaichou had been changed to the latter place; *i.e.* that strong forces of the enemy were only about 30–40 km. (one or two days' march) distant from the line Pulantien-Pitsewo, the area of concentration of the 2nd Japanese Army. On the other hand, the Russians could deduce from the co-operation of the Japanese batteries, that they must have come from a hostile force not far distant, since they were not present on May 31. This justified Samsonow's assumption that the enemy intended to oppose the Russian advance on Kinchou.

After Akiyama had collected sufficient information and knew that his own army had completed its concentration, he commenced to retire before the enemy, who was being daily reinforced, on Pitsewo, where he arrived on June 4. The Russians followed slowly till they arrived on the line Matwiantsi-Yuchiakou, and occupied all lines of approach

PROTECTION OF THE CONCENTRATION OF STACKELBERG'S CORPS

By the combined Division of General Smonow, from 10th-13th June, 1904.

Sketch 8.



with Cossacks and infantry posts. Still, even then the Japanese continued to carry out the reconnaissance with good results.

Sketch 8 shows the dispositions of the Russians, from which one will be able to form a clearer idea about the posts attacked during the reconnaissance of the Japanese.

Among the enterprises undertaken in the interest of further reconnaissance, we will consider the following more closely :

1. On June 9, 2 Japanese squadrons forced back a picket half a sotnia strong from Yuchiakou to the railway station of Wafangkou, and located there strong infantry forces with artillery. They were only driven back with the help of 5 more sotnias and 2 guns.
2. On June 10, 1 squadron and 3 companies of Japanese surprised and dislodged the Russian post at Tschidjatun, and it was only early on the 11th that, with the help of 2 sotnias and 1 rifle battalion, which were ordered up, the Japanese were compelled to retire.
3. On June 11 the 2 squadrons already mentioned (in 1) again surprised the half sotnia at Yuchiakou, which only cut its way through with great difficulty.
4. On the evening of the 12th the rifle battalion which was called up for the support of the post at Tschidjatun was attacked and driven

back by three Japanese battalions, in the course of which a Russian counter-attack was repelled.

All these reconnaissances were well considered and planned, and were for the most part successful, and they greatly facilitated the passage of reconnoitring patrols by day and by night through the hostile reconnoitring zone. The persistency with which reconnaissance was carried out in the eastern zone of protection was due to the necessity for reconnoitring in an effective manner the line chosen for the advance of the 2nd Army, and of ascertaining accurately the grouping of the enemy's forces in their bearing on the formation of their own columns.

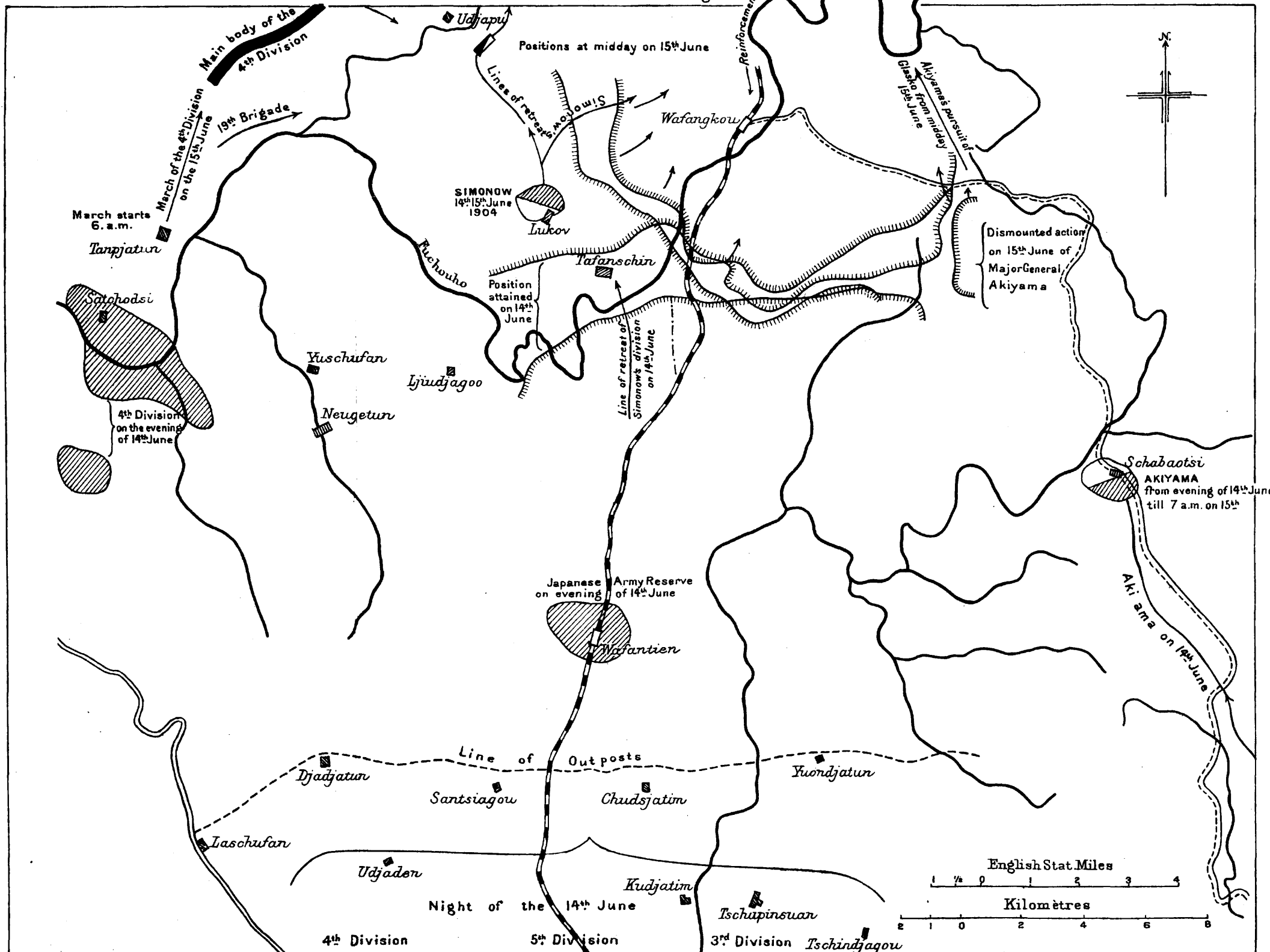
Owing to this ceaseless reconnoitring activity, and the ample information received from spies, the Japanese army headquarters were kept fully informed about the strength, grouping, and composition of the enemy concentrating in, and to the south of, Wafangkou, as well as about the defences which were being constructed there.

The Russians also tried to obtain some data as to the enemy by sending out a force, but it arrived too late; for the 3 sotnias and a company of mounted infantry, which advanced on the evening of the 12th from Siaosiadsan, already came upon an advancing Japanese column early on the 13th.

SITUATION OF BOTH CAVALRIES BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER, THE FIGHT

On 15th June, 1904, at Wafangkou.

Sketch 9.



6. EMPLOYMENT OF INDEPENDENT BODIES OF CAVALRY DURING THE FIGHTS OF JUNE 14 AND 15.

The Japanese marched the cavalry brigade of Akiyama from their original position at Panpedjan on the 13th to Tschudsiakou, on the 14th to Schabaotsi, where on June 15, on account of the increased volume of fire at its disposal by the assignment of machine guns, the task was given it of protecting the right flank of the army in prolongation of the right wing of the 3rd Division.

Situation on June 14 and 15 (see sketch 9)

The extreme right wing of the 3rd Division was posted at the time of the decisive fighting, about midday, on the hills west of Tschendjatun, while its cavalry regiment, 3 squadrons, covered the right flank from the hills east of this place.

Akiyama marched on the sound of fighting in this direction, and arrived just in time to succour the 3rd Regiment of Cavalry, which was doing its utmost to ward off an attack of the force (3 battalions) under Colonel Perfiliew.

The dismounted cavalry brigade not only succeeded in stopping this hostile force, but it pursued the enemy during the retreat which followed, and drove Glasko's force from a rear-guard position on the hills near Tsjutsiatun.

Only to this self-sacrificing attack by Akiyama

is due the fact that his own army was saved from a defeat which might not only have dimmed the successes on the left wing, but might have led to an unfavourable turn in the general situation. When the Japanese cavalry already possessed great inclination for dismounted action, the addition of machine guns gave them such fire power as to enable them to make the most obstinate resistance.

However, we do not see this cavalry in dismounted action only, but also taking advantage of every opportunity to attack small as well as large hostile detachments with the *arme blanche*. In the pursuit of the retreating enemy, they would have scored far greater success, if the ground had been more favourable for cavalry action, than merely to compel Glasko's rear guard to evacuate its position. Here, as well, they carried out their task in a satisfactory manner, for they not only protected the right wing of the army from surprises, but frustrated every attempt at intervention by numerically greatly superior bodies of hostile infantry.

We will now compare briefly the action of Simonow's cavalry division.

In consequence of the advance of the Japanese on the 14th of the month, the advanced positions, which had the inherent weakness of a wide-spreading position (about 50 km.) held by insufficient forces, had become quite illusory, and

the division withdrew *viâ* Tafanschin towards the western wing of the Russians to Lukov, when it received the following orders (see sketch 9): "After passing Tafanschin, to take up a position to the west of it, to protect the right flank of the corps, and to observe the roads and valleys of the river in the stretch of country Tafanschin-Neugetun-Tschendjatun. If superior forces of the enemy be met, the cavalry is to withdraw to Uidjatun *viâ* Lukov."

The cavalry arrived on the evening of the 14th in Lukov, but does not appear to have sent out any patrols *viâ* the line Neugetun-Yuschufan-Tanpjatun, as neither Simonow nor Stackelberg had received information of the presence of a Japanese division at Satchodsi.

The Russian patrols, everywhere driven back by the Japanese cavalry, were also unable on the 15th to bring any information in time. Only as the Japanese columns reached Tanpjatun at 6 a.m. were the enemy sighted, and a report to that effect sent to Wafangkou, and this report only arrived at 11 a.m., at army corps headquarters.

Meanwhile, the Russians were driven out of their advanced positions, and Simonow's cavalry compelled to leave the neighbourhood of Lukov without offering any determined resistance, thereby exposing completely the right flank of the corps.

However, after the commencement of the retreat, Major-General Samsonow tried to hold the enemy

with about 6 sotnias, but this was unsuccessful, as the enemy had already deployed in great part.

Simonow's division retreated with only the smaller portion *viá* Uidjatun as was ordered; the main body joined the corps north of Wafangkou, thereby neglecting the protection of the right flank. The portion of the division which withdrew *viá* Uidjatun came upon parts of the 4th Japanese Division and had to march on Lonpjatun.

Thus Simonow's division, in contrast to the Japanese cavalry, did not understand how to carry out its allotted duty, of guarding the main body against surprise. Knowing that strong hostile forces were on the march, he nevertheless tried to solve his task in a definitive manner; he did not carry out the reconnaissance with the necessary vigour, and never tried to hold the Japanese for a moment. Such an important despatch as the one reporting the approach of the 4th Japanese Division seems not to have been sent with the necessary speed, and to have been entrusted to irresponsible hands, for otherwise it is incredible that in a country completely controlled by the Russians an army corps headquarters at a distance of 6 km. could only be found in 5 hours. Eighteen squadrons and sotnias calmly withdrew, and scarcely attempted to compel even part of a hostile brigade to deploy. Simonow's conclusions were decisive of the failure of reconnaissance and

protection. The importance of the personality of the leader is clearly shown here. The spirit of enterprise and the power of rapid and bold resolve, though qualities essential in every arm, are more particularly necessary in a cavalry leader. The element of cavalry mobility was not exploited in reconnaissance, and dismounted action unduly postponed until it was too late. About 2,500 carbines ($2\frac{1}{2}$ battalions) were not employed, because the wavering commander was incapable of making the necessary resolve, and to choose the right time for its execution.

Whilst the Dragoons and Cossacks up till now in all their operations had at once taken to the carbine, whether opposed by cavalry or infantry, on this occasion they did not do so, when dismounted action was the only possible means of gaining time for their reserves to come up.

X

MISCHTSCHENKO'S RAID ON YINGKOU

1. GENERAL SITUATION

THE defeats which the Russians had hitherto suffered, and especially the disastrous offensive which led to the battle on the Shaho, the surrender of Port Arthur, and the complete destruction of the maritime forces there, were triumphs for the Japanese which re-echoed to the scorn and mortification of the Russians. The irresolution which from the commencement of hostilities characterised the Russian leadership, as well as the long pauses in the operations, awoke and fostered, as in the Russian people, so in the army in the field, distrust of the leader, whom they commenced to hold answerable for the prevailing inactivity. For this reason it is easily understood that at army headquarters the authorities wished for an opportunity of dispersing such ideas, in order to raise the already declining moral element. Port Arthur had fallen, and it could almost be reckoned as a certainty that the Japanese troops now set free would join the army on the Shaho. To hinder

this advance, a raid was to be undertaken around their own west wing against the rear of the Japanese to endanger their lines of communication, and by breaking their lines to stay their further advance as well as to obstruct the transport of troops to the north. Other reasons besides contributed to the desire for an early execution of such an enterprise. The prestige of the Cossacks had suffered greatly through the fruitless reconnoitring manœuvres on both wings. This was to be retrieved, and the former reputation of the Cossacks re-established by this raid. Also the elated moral of the Japanese was by this undertaking to be undermined, and the Japanese leader compelled to detach strong detachments for the defence of the lines of communication. Should they succeed in interrupting the transport of ammunition and provisions, and hinder the junction of the 3rd Japanese Army, then the moment of weakness was to be used for an attack on the westerly Japanese wing, which was to end with the forcing of the Japanese from their lines of communication.

This raid was to be led by General Mischtschenko, who had acquired a good reputation by his reconnaissances in Northern Korea.

For this purpose the following force was placed at his disposal :

1. Samsonow's brigade of Dragoons : 15 squadrons, 6 guns.

2. Khan Makhitschemoanski's Caucasian mounted brigade : 12 squadrons, 4 machine guns.
 3. Teteschew's brigade of Don Cossacks : 18 sotnias, 12 guns.
 4. Abramow's Ural, Transbaikal Cossack division : 21 sotnias, 16 guns.
- Total : 66 squadrons and sotnias, 34 guns, 4 machine guns.

Besides the above, 4 sotnias of Railway Guards were allotted as guides and interpreters. It was known that the enemy stood with the 1st, 2nd and 4th Armies on the Shaho, and that his railway and other lines of communication were guarded by Landwehr troops (militia).

The Russians, divided into three armies, were in position in the line Sufangtai Pass-Katulin, 85 km. in extent. The 4th Division of Don Cossacks was guarding the railway north of Mukden, and the 16th Army Corps, en route by train, only arrived at Mukden at the end of January.

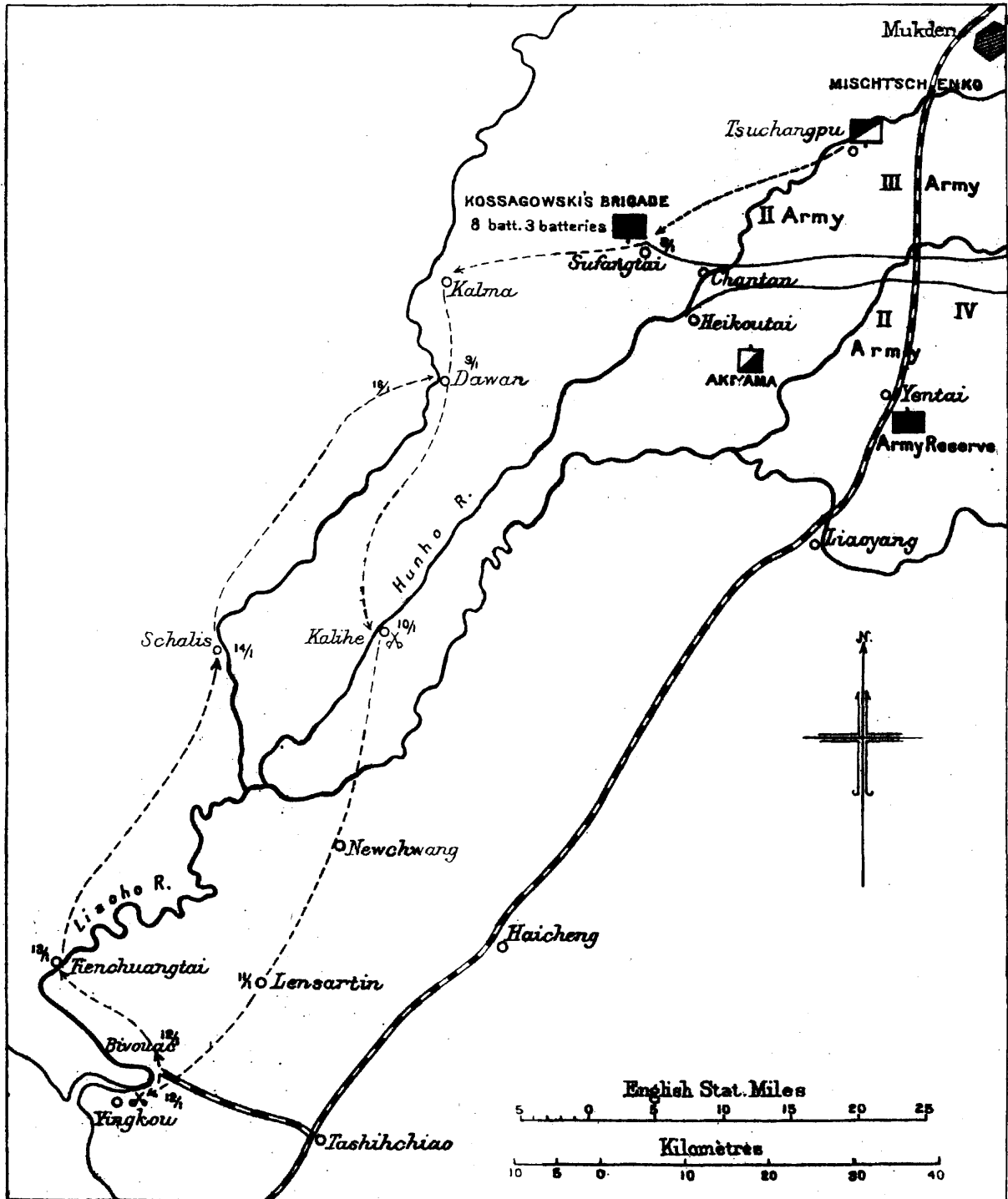
2. EXECUTION

To carry out this raid successfully against the hostile communications was only possible by the direction indicated by the nature of the ground (see sketch 10). Advancing between the Hunho and the Liaoho southwards, Newchwang marked the point from whence a detour towards the east

SITUATION ON THE WEST DURING MISCHTSCHENKO'S RAID

From the 8th to the 16th January, 1905.

Sketch 10



had to be made, in order to be able to cut the enemy's communications between Haicheng and Tashihchiao with any chance of success. The stretch between Haicheng-Tashihchiao is particularly suitable for cutting the line, because here the railway leads through unlevel country with severe gradients, cuttings, and curves, which if destroyed would mean a long interruption of traffic. Besides, here is the junction of the branch line Yingkou-Tashihchiao, and the goods unloaded in Yingkou would, in the event of a cutting here, experience great delay in their further transport. On January 8, 1905, the above-mentioned troops assembled at Tsuchangpu, 20 km. south-west of Mukden, from whence they started on the same day, and arrived at Sufangtai, 30 km. In the further advance Mischtschenko arrived on the 10th on the Hunho at Kalihe (28 km.), which he was only able to pass after a fierce fight with bands of Chunchuses. His loss was 6 officers, 35 men.

On the 11th the force advanced in three columns across country to Newchwang, from where the Japanese garrison of the strength of two Landwehr companies (militia) withdrew unmolested. The few provisions which were found there were destroyed, and the march continued not to Haicheng as originally intended, but to Yingkou. Mischtschenko had been informed in Kalihe by spies that Haicheng was occupied by

1,500, Yingkou by about 2,600 Japanese, but Tashihchiao by much stronger hostile forces. These circumstances can only have been the reasons for his wavering and the subsequent change of his original plan. On the 11th they marched further, and reached Lensartin (42 km., half-way between Yingkou and Newchwang). On the 12th they marched at 4.30 a.m. in order to effect a surprise, but the force did not appear before Yingkou until 11 a.m., in quite an exhausted condition. For this reason they rested, and at 4 p.m. the artillery opened fire, to prepare the way for an attack, which lasted till 6 p.m. At this time 25 sotnias and squadrons (about 2,500 rifles) dismounted for an attack on Yingkou from three sides. This attack was unsuccessful owing to the obstacles to be overcome, and as, in view of the Cossacks, 2 extra Japanese infantry battalions had arrived earlier in Yingkou by train. The losses amounted to 17 officers and 183 men. At 7 p.m. the attack was stopped, and with the greatest caution a camp was taken up, covered by an outpost line north-west of Yingkou.

On the 13th Mischtschenko received information that Newchwang had been occupied by 5 infantry battalions, and that the country between the Hunho and the Liaoho swarmed with bands of Chunchuses. In accordance with this information, the return march was made west of the Liaoho, and Tienchuangtai was reached on the 13th.

Early on the 14th a part of the force was suddenly attacked by Japanese infantry with mountain guns, and the Russians were obliged to strike camp hastily, with a loss of 4 officers and 41 men. The retreat now continued without hindrance. On the 16th the force crossed the Liaoho at Dawan, and was received at Kalma by Kossagowski's advanced brigade, 8 battalions and 3 batteries strong. After a march of 9 days the force was broken up on the 18th. It had done 145 km. on the march out, and 130 km. on the return march, *i.e.* a total of 285 km.

3. REMARKS

(a) Composition of the Force

Great mobility was possible to a force composed entirely of mounted troops. To protect the communications and as a support, Kossagowski's augmented infantry brigade, comprising 8 battalions and 3 batteries, was placed at Sufangtai. In spite of the fact that surprise was intended to play the principal rôle in this operation—and this was always kept in view—Mischtschenko must needs hamper this mobility in an inexcusable manner, by not only accepting a baggage-train of 1,600 pack-horses, but by actually taking it along with him.

(b) Condition of the Ground and of the Weather

As an excuse for Mischtschenko the fact is put

forward that, owing to the ice, frozen ground, cold weather, and snowstorms, a more rapid advance was impossible. But this is not a fact, for as regards the pack-animals we must mention that the riding-horse carries a lighter saddle and is not overloaded, and at the walk is quicker than the pack-animal. By frequently dismounting and leading the horses their load can be considerably lightened, which is impossible with the pack-horse, for the load, not only during the march, but also during the shorter rests, must remain on its back. At the same time such a huge baggage-train required a large escort against bands of Chunchuses, and an average march of 30 km. *per diem* became the rule. This baggage-train was the principal cause why in the first three days the force was only able to cover about 30 km. daily, whereby every chance of a surprise was lost. Only after passing Kalihe do we find a march of 42 km. On this day, however, the baggage lagged behind, partly so as not to hamper the column in the expected fight at Newchwang, partly to increase the freedom of movement of the columns. On these marches the several columns and parts of columns marched across the fields, as the roads and paths had become impassable on account of the autumn rains, after which the pools and ponds had become frozen over with the advent of winter. The uneven arable land of this highly cultivated portion of Manchuria could

only be crossed with great difficulty, and necessitated frequent dismounting and leading of the horses. Especially difficult was the march in the inundated area of the Liaoho in front of Yingkou, which was exactly like a sheet of ice, so that in $6\frac{1}{2}$ hours only 22 km. could be covered. The cold season thus only offered the one advantage, that the firm ice allowed the unobstructed passage of all rivers.

(c) *Destruction of the Railway Line*

Why the railway line in the country Haicheng-Tashihchiao was especially suitable to be destroyed, we have already mentioned. When Mischtschenko allowed himself to be persuaded to advance against Yingkou instead of Haicheng, he sent numerous officers' patrols, who rendered the line impassable in about twenty places. As all stations were occupied, this destruction of the line was confined to the blowing up of rails in open places, which could not even be accomplished in all cases, as the weak Russian patrols were everywhere driven back. The entire damage done amounted only to an interruption of traffic for six hours.

Weak patrols will never be in a position to render railway lines, stations, rolling stock, etc., permanently useless. For this purpose stronger detachments must be told off, provided with the necessary explosives, of a strength

sufficient to keep off any enemy that may be met with, or at least to hold them back till a thorough demolition is accomplished.

(d) *By changing the original plan,*

the task became very difficult of attainment. The destruction of the railway line might have succeeded, but a lasting interruption could only have ensued if the objects destroyed could have been occupied for a space of time by adequate forces, whilst detached patrols watched the neighbourhood. For this purpose force and time are necessary. In spite of the fact that Mischtschenko had considerable forces at his disposal, he believed he could not spare sufficient men to be able to maintain the lasting destruction of the railway line. He employed all his forces in a correct manner for a single object only. Unfortunately he mistook the secondary object for the principal one; and as a consequence the whole raid became aimless, and no results accrued. A few thousand men of Japanese militia in Haicheng and Tashihchiao were sufficient to cause a cavalry leader with a force of about 9,000 horsemen and 34 guns, as well as 4 machine guns, to depart from the plan which he had made, and to give up all previous moral advantages of success, and to advance on Yingkou, the possession of which at that time was of no advantage for the Russians,

and could cause no disadvantages to the Japanese. It is true that in Yingkou the Japanese had stored up provisions, but the harbour at that time was ice-bound, and since the complete rebuilding of the railway line Dalny-Liaoyang on the Japanese gauge, it was far inferior as a depôt to this first-class line of communication. By the occupation of either Haicheng or Tashihchiao, the provisions in Yingkou would have been equally immobilised, for it was only by rail that the many necessary articles for the whole army could be brought up in sufficient quantities. The railway from Yingkou terminated at Tashihchiao, and could be interrupted by the mere occupation of that place. Against the small marches of only 30 km. in the first 3 days, every endeavour was made to increase this performance as much as possible in view of the purposed surprise. On the 11th, 45 km. were covered, the baggage remaining behind, and in spite of the fact that the Cossacks were not able to obtain rest till 11 p.m., camp was struck as early as 4.30 a.m. on the 12th, in order to appear as unexpectedly as possible before Yingkou. But they reckoned without their host, for the over-tired horses and Cossacks were only able to advance slowly in the inundated country. As the columns arrived before Yingkou at 11 a.m., the men and horses were so tired out, that an immediate attack was out of the question, and a

(e) Rest

in the open, in the face of the enemy, had to be ordered. The result was that the Japanese were able to get ready for the defence, and call up reinforcements. How exhausted the force was can be seen from the fact that the Russians were unable to advance to cut the line only a few kilometres off, and had to allow the Japanese to bring two battalions by railway into Yingkou. After failure of surprise nothing remained but to attack Yingkou at night, or to withdraw without accomplishing anything.

(f) The Attack on Yingkou

was to have taken place with the advent of darkness and to have been prepared by the artillery. Fire was opened at 4 p.m. and continued till 6 p.m. The reconnaissance of the hostile measures for defence was not carried out. When, therefore, the attack was started (at 6 p.m., from three sides) by 25 dismounted sotnias, it was shattered against wire-entanglements and an energetic defence. By 7 p.m. the retreat was already commenced, and a camp taken up under cover of outposts north-west of Yingkou. The grouping of the 3 attacking columns is interesting, in so far as Mischtschenko laid great stress on the sotnias and squadrons of all regiments being of the

same strength, in order that all regimental commanders could be proposed alike for decoration in the event of success.

With such haphazard methods, and such indolence in view of past events, and with the enemy in the immediate neighbourhood, as well as the omission of any sort of reconnaissance of the enemy's position, no other result was to be expected from this raid, which was to have accomplished such great things. And what was the result of this operation, carried through without the necessary enterprise and regardless of everything?

1. Twenty-seven officers and 259 men killed and wounded.
2. The intended glorification of the Cossacks was a failure.
3. The cue was given that the Russians intended to attack, and the Japanese were thereby shown—
4. That their lines of communication would be safe from further similar undertakings.

Entirely negative for the Russians; on the other hand, positive for the Japanese.

If it be assumed that the baggage-train and the time of year precluded the chances of Mischtschenko making a sudden and unexpected appearance, his raid would have been robbed of every effect by the advance to Yingkou instead of against

Tashihchiao or Haicheng. After the night attack on Yingkou with dismounted cavalry, there was nothing left to the Russians but to retreat, and to disappear from the reach of the enemy as quickly as possible, so as to escape in time the close pursuit which was ordered.

What impression the unsuccessful raid of the Russians made on the Japanese is shown by their immediate adoption of the offensive, which led to the surprise of the Cossacks in the early morning of the 14th.

XI

SUMMARY

IN Chapters I. and II. we have attempted to describe the cavalry of both the combatants, where special stress was laid on the source and the training of officers and men. We will now endeavour to make some remarks on the basis of the occurrences described, as to how far the peace training of both cavalries has stood the test of war; what unexpected and insuperable difficulties the combatants met with; and finally what new methods and measures have established a claim to future consideration, and may be applicable to European theatres of war.

1. EMPLOYMENT AND COMBAT OF CAVALRY

(a) *Russia*

Kuropatkin's instructions demanded that the superiority in cavalry should be skilfully applied to an endeavour either to destroy the Japanese cavalry or to force it into inactivity. They were to continually observe the strength and composition as well as the direction of movements

of the enemy to the moment of the collision of both armies, and when possible to attack vigorously with the other arms. During battle, the extent of front, dispositions, and wings of the enemy were to be ascertained, whereas all information was to be denied the enemy's cavalry. When it was possible, operations were to be undertaken against the flanks and rear of the enemy with strong forces, so as to cut his line of communication and to destroy accumulated supplies. By disturbing him day and night the enemy was to be kept always on the alert and thereby exhausted. The cavalry received an essential support from the mounted infantry, which made it possible that only 2 sotnias per division and army corps had to be allotted as divisional cavalry, and by this means more cavalry regiments were available to form independent bodies of cavalry. How far these instructions were carried out will be discussed in the detailed remarks of each operation.

(b) *Japan*

Japan had only two independent cavalry brigades, each of 8 squadrons, whilst the several divisions had 3 squadrons, and were thus liberally provided with cavalry. The numerical superiority of the Russians compelled the Japanese to use the greatest caution. Smaller detachments of cavalry and patrols avoided the Cossacks where possible,

more especially in reconnaissance. Owing to their small numbers they were tied to their infantry and scarcely ever acted independently, and when they did, never more than one day's march ahead. The rule was a mixed detachment of infantry and cavalry. *This manner of reconnaissance produced results quite unexpected by the military world.*

2. THE CAVALRY IN THE STRATEGICAL RECON- NAISSANCE

The 225 squadrons and sotnias of the Russians were used partly for guarding the railway, partly as divisional cavalry, and for convoy duty, but for the most part they were formed into large independent bodies of cavalry for the protection of the flanks, and for reconnaissance and raids.

At the commencement of the war only Cossacks and Dragoon regiments with horse artillery were used in the strategical reconnaissance. They seldom met hostile cavalry; on the other hand, they often met infantry whose positions they located only with difficulty, and whose presence they generally ascertained only by their casualties and the crack of rifles. As the larger bodies of cavalry neither during the advance nor during halts employed the necessary measures of protection, and especially often neglected to protect their flanks, every collision with the enemy took the form either of an ambushade or of a surprise, with the result that

the Russians, thus taken aback, ceased all offensive activity, and either assumed the defensive or beat a retreat. Only in very few cases were they able to ascertain the real strength of the enemy. The Cossacks, without regard to the nature of the ground, on collision with the enemy were always ordered to dismount and use their rifles. They never succeeded in breaking through the hostile screen, either mounted or dismounted, in small or large detachments. This ineffectual procedure led to the employment in reconnaissance of mixed detachments, with whom fighting became the principal and reconnaissance only a secondary object. In most cases the reconnaissance during the fight was quite neglected (Mischtschenko in Northern Korea, and Rennenkampf around Saimatse). In carrying out the strategical reconnaissance the Russians fell into the error of neglecting protection in favour of rapid marching. They did not employ their mobility with its resulting facility of covering long distances in the correct manner, for they moved by difficult and long marches to within 2 to 5 km. of the enemy with a view to surprising him on the next day. They then spent the night close to the enemy and started late, whereby the chance of surprise was lost, and all the former exertions were in vain. Starting late had exceptionally unhappy consequences. The immediate result was that they were themselves surprised instead of being

the surprisers. Only on the last day of Mischtschenko's raid against Yingkou in January 1905, a feeble attempt was made to start early, which was unsuccessful owing to the bad condition of the roads and the exhaustion of the troops, and they were compelled to rest in face of the enemy, just as in the Turkish wars of the seventeenth century.

For the most part employed in a country unsuitable for cavalry, or during the worst time of the year, the Cossacks were never able to use their mobility in the sense of speed, but tried to march long hours, relying on the hardihood of their horses, in order to cover great distances. The large number of sotnias which were taken into the narrow valleys around Saimatse were never able to deploy, which had a very bad influence in dismounted action on the troops not taking part, as they were compelled to wait in inactivity, one body behind another, often exposed to the fire of the enemy. The frequent surprise collisions with hostile infantry tended to make the Cossacks use the rifle even when they met cavalry, as at Chongju in Northern Korea and Judsiatun on the Kwantung Peninsula, south of Wafaukou. Besides the eagerness to always be in numerical superiority, the untrustworthiness of the non-commissioned officers, and the low intellectual level of the Cossack subalterns fostered the tendency to employ entire sotnias, instead of

patrols able to proceed to a great distance. It was proved that sotnias on collision with the enemy in narrow valleys, as at Saimatse, were terribly unwieldy, and as such meetings were mostly quite unexpected, they generally ended in a retreat resembling an utter rout. For this reason Rennenkampf tried to form patrols of officers and men who volunteered to perform further reconnaissance duty. Concerning the result of reconnaissance with such officers' patrols, we will speak later in our comments on the tactical reconnaissance.

For strategical reconnaissance the Japanese had at disposal a well-organised system of espionage. Nevertheless their cavalry, when employed on this duty, rendered excellent service. The Japanese were certainly not able to provide each army with a great body of cavalry (1st and 2nd Armies), and even during the course of the campaign were unable to organise such bodies; but they provided the existing two cavalry brigades with machine guns and horse artillery, and when necessary assigned infantry to them, thereby enabling them to act independently. Whilst the army commanders met their own requirements by concentrating the divisional cavalry for combined action (1st Army after the fight at Chongju in Northern Korea), the Commander-in-Chief used the two cavalry brigades in the most skilful manner by forming them into a division on reaching ground favouring the action of cavalry, and using

them to cover the left flank of his armies. Besides the occasions mentioned, the 2nd Cavalry Brigade was entrusted with the protection of the left flank of the armies in the battle on the Shaho and in Sandepu, and each time they succeeded in holding Mischtschenko's superior cavalry in check or in defeating them (Bonsika). The Japanese cavalry performed a great feat in screening the advance of the 3rd Army in the country west of Mukden (combined brigades). When supported by infantry, the cavalry brigades were always able to carry out their task and always answered all expectations.

3. THE TACTICAL RECONNAISSANCE

As already mentioned, there were various reasons why the reconnaissance was carried out with entire sotnias by the Russians. Their overwhelming numerical superiority was to annihilate the Japanese reconnoitring cavalry, but instead of cavalry, Japanese infantry generally appeared and this plan fell to the ground. Many of the examples adduced prove that it was only patrols which were able to do anything useful. Rennenkampf employed 6 to 12 sotnias in his reconnaissance in force, without being able to accomplish more than his patrols. But that patrols proceeding long distances ahead require support is proved by the reconnoitring activity of Colonel

Kartsew at Shandapu (west of Saimatse); for, if these patrols had received timely support, their reconnaissance might have been extended, and would have met with far greater success.

The patrols resorted to a variety of methods of carrying out their task :

1. Only in the rarest cases were mounted patrols able to pass through the Japanese protective troops. The Japanese allowed them to approach to a certain distance, and then they were fired upon by well-covered infantry and driven off. Such patrols could, as a rule, merely ascertain in a general way that there was an enemy here or there.

2. Patrols who advanced on horseback and dismounted on approaching the enemy, only obtained better results in so far as they were able to ascertain the strength and composition of the covering troops in their immediate front. On account of their dependence on their horses, to break through the hostile screen was not to be thought of, as they could not separate themselves too far from their mounts for fear of being cut off.

3. Dismounted Cossacks, who had either sent their horses back or had started on foot, did succeed in passing the enemy's outposts under cover of night, but they were speedily captured, owing to their want of mobility and of practice in marching. Messages were never received from such patrols.

4. In reconnaissances in force all attempts at reconnoitring during the fight were dispensed with. But the greatest mistake made by the Russians was that they advanced up to the enemy in a compact body, and then started to reconnoitre with patrols and sotnias, who came everywhere upon posts and picquets put on the alert by the advance, and consequently they often turned back without any results. These experiences constrained the Russians to attach infantry to the reconnoitring detachments, who during the fight were to procure information about the enemy.

The Japanese distinguished between a reconnaissance during the advance, which they always carried out with mixed detachments (infantry and cavalry), and a contact reconnaissance, for which they sent forward infantry in extended lines—especial aptitude was shown by the Japanese in the way they carried out a reconnaissance in force. They managed, during such engagements, to push a sufficiency of patrols through the opposing screen to accomplish any given task.

4. MEASURES FOR PROTECTION AND KEEPING TOUCH WITH THE ENEMY

The fact that the Russians neglected measures for protection in a positively indolent manner has already been demonstrated by various exam-

ples. Protection on the march consisted of, at the most, one or two sotnias, which marched at about 600 metres in front of the main body in *lava* formation, searching the valley on the line of advance. Patrols were seldom sent out in the direction of the march and to the flanks. For protection on the march the staff, riding in front with an escort, was generally deemed sufficient. The marching capacity of the different arms was seldom taken into consideration, so that, in a column consisting of the three arms, owing to the bad intercommunication, they arrived at their destination at different times, or sometimes parts failed to arrive, whereby the liability of the column to suffer from surprises was considerably increased.

For ensuring the night's rest sufficient picquets were not posted, notwithstanding the fact that ample troops were used (quarter of the whole force). A further disadvantage was that these picquets were posted in unsuitable places and too near the main body, owing to which, in the event of attacks, the main body had not time to get into fighting formation, and during the time they were forming up they suffered considerably from the enemy's rifle fire (Ljubawin's brigade on the Eastern Fonshuling Pass).

When halted, the Japanese outpost troops were so close together that it was impossible to pierce their line. Whilst during the march they under-

stood how to occupy points of vantage in time, whereby the enemy was denied any view of the column; for example, the commander of the mounted infantry company of the 139th Infantry Regiment reported on August 31: "A hostile troop has occupied the isolated hill near the village of Santsapou, and thereby prevented my further reconnaissance." The brave officer, however, did not allow himself to be so easily driven off; he changed his point of observation and reported later with great success.

This example proves, on the one hand, the difficulty of reconnoitring in the presence of an enemy careful of adequate measures of protection, and, on the other, the possibility of performing the task while on the move, providing the men be well trained.

As far as touch with the enemy is concerned, the Russians often neglected it altogether, or more often failed to maintain it, whilst the Japanese, once touch with the enemy was established, never lost it. Great help was given them in this respect by the Chinese.

5. DISMOUNTED AND SHOCK ACTION

Both combatants at once took to the carbine as soon as it was a question of carrying out an energetic stroke. Many examples show that cavalry *versus* cavalry fought out important decisive fights with the carbine. Whilst the

Cossacks concealed their indifferent training by resort to the carbine, the Japanese always sought to hold their superior numbers at bay by means of the same weapon. In attacking infantry, too, dismounted action was resorted to, and in the fight at Wafangkou the army commander was indebted to the carbines of the 2nd Cavalry Brigade, as much as to his good dispositions and the indecision of the enemy.

Shock action was only employed in small bodies, and never with decisive success. The ultimate decision was always fought out with the carbine. (Fight at Judsiatun.)

The Russians tried to employ larger bodies in the battle of Sandepu; still Mischtschenko was driven back by Akiyama.

In the battle of Mukden, Akiyama attacked and defeated superior Russian cavalry.

The lance is said to have been used with success at Judsiatun.

6. CAVALRY DURING THE BATTLE

Difficult country, climatic conditions, indifferent training, and numerical weakness (Japanese) stood in the way of the use of the cavalry during battle. Whilst the Cossacks attempted charges on a large scale, the Japanese were not in a position to exploit their exhausted cavalry, weak in point of numbers, after a victory had been obtained.

7. RAIDS

Raids were carried out by both sides, but with little success, as the points threatened on the lines of communication were always occupied in strength, and in consequence of the small daily marches, the element of surprise was lost. The extraordinary support which the Japanese cavalry received from the bands of Chunchuses is especially worthy of notice, because the Russians were compelled to watch their railway line unceasingly in order to preserve what constituted their very life nerve. It was only due to the help of the bands of Chunchuses that two Japanese squadrons succeeded in destroying the railway line north of Mukden.

8. CRITICISMS OF THE OPPOSING CAVALRIES

(a) A Japanese general commented on the Cossacks before the commencement of hostilities in the following terms :

“The Cossacks prefer guerilla warfare, and will be used for surprising columns, baggage-trains, and lines of communication, etc. They were unable to perform anything of note in the 1877-8 war, and a steady infantry has nothing to fear from them. But we must, at the same time, be prepared for even the most improbable Cossack enterprise,

which applies more particularly to our service of security."

(b) The commander of the 1st Japanese Army published an order in October 1905, in which the Cossacks were referred to as follows:

"There is nothing to be feared from the hostile cavalry."

Kuropatkin criticised the Japanese cavalry in his "Instruction" of April 15, 1904, as follows:

"The cavalry up to the present represents the weakest part of the Japanese army, in comparison with the other arms; it is small in numbers (fifty-five squadrons), indifferently trained, and badly mounted."

"*Instruction*" of August 15, 1904.

"Reconnaissance before the attack is, as a rule, carried out by small cavalry and infantry detachments, who advance off the road, and in this manner act both on our front and flanks, even in the mountains."

"Wherever Japanese cavalry met ours, it was always vigorously attacked with lance and sword and driven back."

9. COMMANDERS OF INDEPENDENT BODIES OF CAVALRY

What importance Kuropatkin attached to the persons who were to be called upon to command

independent bodies of cavalry is shown by the second part of his "Instruction":

"If our cavalry is under the command of a clever leader, then it will render good service. Up till now it has not obtained all the information which we expected."

In the cavalry arm everything is dependent on the initiative of the leader, without whose direct personal influence there can be no hope of success. He must know how to permeate his troops with the spirit of absolute enterprise and the will to conquer, and by bravery and the ability of forming prompt and bold resolutions to raise the confidence of his subordinates in himself. Rennenkampf, who possessed these qualities, failed owing to the inferiority of his Cossacks. Mischtschenko, on the other hand, lacked daring and ability to carry out a plan, once decided upon, to the bitter end, and he did not understand how to exploit the element of cavalry mobility.

XII

NEW FEATURES APPLICABLE TO A EUROPEAN THEATRE OF WAR

1. **I**N strategical reconnaissance the independent cavalry corps should be provided not only with artillery, but with machine guns as well, in order to make them as independent as possible of the infantry, and to enable them to carry out important and distant operations.
2. The tactical reconnaissance will, as formerly, be only possible through patrols, by the constant co-operation of cavalry. In mountainous regions, or in a country deficient in roads, it will commend itself to have $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 squadron as support, following at about half a day's march, to take up the patrols in the event of attacks by superior forces, and to provide timely reliefs for this exacting duty.

Once reconnoitring patrols are observed, the enemy will use every endeavour to foil their reconnoitring enterprise in that district. The patrols will then have to make a wide sweep, in order to be able to carry out their task.

Mounted cavalry patrols will be unable to break through the outpost line of a stationary enemy. Dismounted cavalry are unable to separate themselves far from their horses without the danger of being cut off.

Cavalrymen on foot are not adapted, on account of their arms and equipment, to make distant reconnaissances in this condition.

For reconnoitring in mountainous countries off the roads, only infantry is suitable with any chance of success.

The reconnaissance of an enemy on the move is a comparatively easy matter.

The greatest care must be taken to provide security from the leading patrols back to the main body.

The fire of a few infantrymen can hold cavalry patrols or single horsemen (a big target) at a respectable distance.

Hence it is advisable to send out infantry patrols with the cavalry patrols for after-reconnaissance, whose duty would be :

1. To bar the most important lines of approach during the movement.
2. Screening of their own advancing forces from the observation of hostile pickets and patrols by compelling them to retire by rifle fire.
3. Coming to the assistance of their own cavalry as soon as the former are pressed by the hostile infantry, and can no longer work with success.

4. To serve as a rallying point for hard-pressed cavalry patrols.

5. Carrying out of the contact reconnaissance before the arrival of the advance-guard troops.

6. Barring to the enemy the area within which their own forces will take up position (see sketch 11).

The commander of a column sends out at 5 a.m. 4 reconnoitring cavalry patrols. The head of the advance guard starts from the same place at 6 a.m. Together with the cavalry 4 infantry patrols are sent out on the principal approaches in the direction of the proposed march.

After the first hour we have the following :

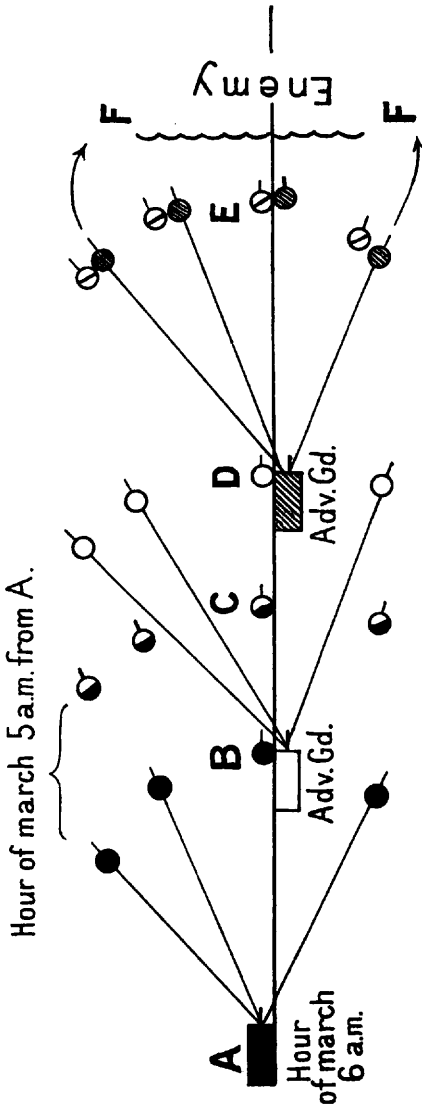
1. Head of advance guard starts from "A."
2. The infantry patrols are already at "B," 4 km. from the head of vanguard.
3. The cavalry patrols have already arrived at "C," about 6 km. from "A," walking and trotting.

After the second hour :

1. Head of advance guard at "B."
2. Infantry patrols at "D," 4 km. from the advance guard.
3. Cavalry patrols at "E," 8 km. from the advance guard, in touch with the enemy.

If the enemy be in a defensive position in the third hour we shall find :

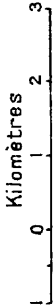
1. The cavalry and infantry patrols in contact with the enemy.



Dispositions

- in the first hour = = at starting ● — = 4 km. ● — = 6 km.
- " " second " = = 4 km. ○ — = 8 " ○ — = 12 from A.
- " " third " = = 8 " ● — = 12 " ○ — = already in touch with the enemy.
- " " fourth " = = in touch with the enemy.

Advance Guard already in touch with the enemy.
 For reconnoitring the 12 km. of country from "A" to the enemy,
 the Cavalry patrols have 2 hours, Infantry patrols have 1 hour.



2. The head of the advance guard still 4 km. from them. The infantry patrols will thus still have a full hour to reconnoitre, and they can send back reports through horsemen from the cavalry patrols who have joined them.

In this manner all the duties enumerated from 1 to 6 could be carried out by the time of arrival of the main body, whilst otherwise they would fall to the advance-guard troops. Written reports are only to be expected from long-distance patrols. Patrols engaged in tactical and battle reconnaissance report verbally.

Orders given in brief, clear, and definite terms considerably lighten the task of a patrol.

But if reconnaissance may have become more difficult on account of the hostile rifle fire, still a patrol leader endowed with the requisite military knowledge and intelligence can with determination and skill, perform great deeds even in this field of activity. *The result of all reconnaissance will thus always be in proportion to the capability of the leader.*

In reconnaissances in force, in which an early start is half the success, sufficient cavalry should be taken, who should do their utmost to work round the flanks of the enemy.

The personality of the leader of large bodies of cavalry always exercised, and still has, the greatest influence on the efficiency of bodies of cavalry, whatever their size, and comes ever more

and more into the foreground. The qualities and talents which a commander should possess have already been discussed.

Shock action will probably not be employed so often as formerly on European battlefields, but entirely disappear it will not.

It will find its chance in the moment of surprise, but such moments want watching for. Against unbroken infantry every attack will be in vain, whilst in pursuit it will only be by shock action that the beaten enemy will be completely vanquished. Want of available cavalry was greatly felt by the Japanese after every battle. If the Japanese had had more cavalry at the battle of Mukden, the Russian field army would have been destroyed, and far different terms of peace might have been dictated.

The value of cavalry has not in any way suffered by the experiences of the last war, but their training and employment seems to be a matter of increasing difficulty. In the proper use of the rifle the very best results should be aimed at, without allowing cavalry to sink to the level of mounted infantry. Mounted infantry are dependent on their horses and cannot always be employed, and for that reason is often a hindrance. It cannot get about in all places, and might readily be replaced by machine guns.

The principal rôle of cavalry will remain the reconnaissance and screening, both in a strategical

and tactical sense. On engaging in a fight, it should be the cavalry leader's aim to reduce his opponent for a time to a state of compulsory inactivity, though the victory of one's own cavalry will not of itself be of decisive influence on the course of further events.

The whole force and strength of cavalry rest as before on the horse as its principal weapon, beside which the *arme blanche* and the rifle are only means to an end. Without doubt, it is quite true that cavalry must be trained for dismounted action, but it must only be allowed to dismount if the country or the qualities of the enemy prevent it from attaining its aim on horseback. From this it follows, that cavalry, untrained to fight dismounted, is unable to meet the demands imposed by the conditions of the present day.