

THE BISLEY COMMAND.



THE force generally, and riflemen in particular, will be pleased to hear that Major "Johnnie" Mason is likely to be sent as commandant of the Bisley team next year. Few officers of the militia have spent as much time and energy in the interests of rifle shooting as the gallant major of the Thirteenth of Hamilton, and the splendid shooting of his own battalion is largely due to his care and instruction. When brevet promotions are so plentiful, no one would complain at Major Mason receiving the rank of lieutenant-colonel in view of this appointment.—Toronto Telegram.

Major Cosby, 48th Highlanders, is said to be pulling the wires to secure the position for himself. Such an appointment would certainly be an unpopular one. He has been but a few years in the militia and has never done anything to qualify himself for this honor, by long services or by liberal contributions to Dominion Rifle Association matches. If the officer commanding his regiment, Lieut.-Col. Davidson, would consent to go, his appointment would be enthusiastically received. Until Major Cosby has been longer in the force, and has done half as much for rifle shooting as have Major Mason, Major Delamere, Lieut.-Col. Tucker, Lieut.-Col. Davidson or two or three others who have been mentioned for the command, it would be a very much more graceful thing if he would use his social and political influence in favor of one of these gentlemen. We merely make the suggestion, as it may not have occurred to Major Cosby.

A DOMINION RIFLE RANGE.

A SUITABLE site for a range for the Dominion Rifle Association at Ottawa has again become a live question. At a recent meeting of the council of the association the members visited two sites which are being recommended to the association.

The majority, if not all, seem to think the Rockcliffe range is the best. It can be reached by electric car and water. It runs parallel to the river, and is about 20 feet above it, and just a short distance beyond New Edinburgh. From the Russell House it takes about 15 or twenty minutes to get there. It is long enough for a 3,000-yard range if necessary, with room for sixty or more targets. The sun will be behind the competitors all day, and, in the opinion of experienced riflemen, it is altogether an ideal range.

The other is at Hintonburg, just beyond the West End Park, and convenient to the electric cars. It gives a range of only 1,200, and is altogether too narrow for the work of the Dominion Rifle Association.

It is generally understood that the District Officer Commanding supports the latter, as he considers it more suitable for the Ottawa corps, and he explains that he has nothing to do with the Dominion Rifle Association, as he has only to consider what is best suited for Ottawa riflemen. This is how matters stand at present. Some thing definite will be done very shortly.

THE HEADQUARTERS STAFF.

A C.O. and one of the best officers in the force makes a serious complaint against the Headquarters Staff. He has had occasion in the last couple of years to be in Ottawa frequently on militia affairs. By the G.O.C. and the quartermaster general he has been treated with the greatest of courtesy, and they have done their best to assist him in every way. The same applies to one or two other officers, but the majority have thrown every obstacle in his way. One senior officer, who should have known better, replied to a suggestion—and one which is endorsed by the majority of C.O.'s: "We do not propose to take suggestions from militia officers, but intend to

run affairs as we think best." Coming from a junior this might be overlooked, but from an officer high up in the service it surprises us. Our informant says he has left Ottawa on more than one occasion with his mind made up to resign. And we know that it was only through the strong appeals made to him by his field officer that he remained.

It is too often the case with public officers that they consider themselves the masters not the servants of the people. We have had many similar complaints of the Headquarters Staff, civil and military, and have accumulated a considerable amount of information, but lack of space has prevented its use.

We publish this in the meantime as a hint to the Minister and the G.O.C. to keep an eye on their subordinates. In the off season, when our space is not so crowded, we will have something further to say if things do not show some improvement.

A COMMANDANT RECOMMENDED.

LONDON cables say that Major Kitson, 4th Batt., King's Royal Rifles, formerly the 60th Rifles, has been recommended for the position of commandant of the Royal Military College of Canada by Lord Lansdowne, to whom the Canadian Government applied. Lord Lansdowne is Secretary of State for War, and no doubt the selection was made on the recommendation of the Commander-in-Chief.

Major Kitson is well spoken of as a clever, ambitious young officer and should work a great and needed improvement in the College. He was born on October 6, 1856, and consequently is barely 40 years of age. He entered the army on February 11, 1875, joining the 1st Foot, better known as the Royal Scots. On January 29, 1876, he transferred to the King's Royal Rifle Corps, the old 60th Rifles. He attained to his captaincy on January 1, 1885, and his majority on July 27, 1892. He is one of the eighteen majors which that corps possesses, belongs to the 4th Battalion and is borne on the strength of the depot. He has passed the Staff College, the training academy which exists to qualify officers for executive work and command, and has a good deal of staff experience. He was in 1884-5 A.D.C. to the Brigadier-General at Aldershot, in 1885-6 A.D.C. to the General Commanding the western district, and in 1890 district-staff-officer of Bengal. He served in the Manipur campaign in India in 1891 as deputy-assistant-adjutant general to the force; he was mentioned in despatches and is entitled to wear the Manipur medal with clasp. He can thus be described as an unusually young officer for such a position, belonging to a crack regiment and possessing a good deal of staff and some war experience.

THE COMPARATIVE EFFICIENCY.

AN excellent letter from "Outpost" appears in this issue. It still further emphasizes the fact that the efficiency competitions, as carried out in the infantry, are far from being satisfactory. The plan followed this year is an improvement on previous competitions, but it is still far from perfect.

The details of this year's efficiency inspection, it is said, were practically arranged by an officer who has never been in the active militia.

Officers commanding regiments and companies readily see the many weaknesses. They generally agree that, as a test, the competition is of very little practical use. When next year's scheme is being prepared let the G.O.C. take the matter up himself and call the inspectors of infantry and half a dozen up-to-date officers commanding regiments and companies to make suggestions to him.