

TORONTO'S RIFLE RANGE.

The following articles show the nature of Capt. Manley's offence, and also a newspaper opinion of how the situation really stands:—

(From the World, 2nd December.)

The choice of a rifle range seems to have stirred up the military gentlemen to a wonderful degree as will appear by the letters which follow.

CAPTAIN MCLEAN GIVES HIS VERSION.

Editor World.—Your editorial this morning on "The Colonel and the Captain" shows that you have been misinformed both as to military rules and the facts that governed Col. Otter in recommending the Mimico range in preference to that at Mount Denis. I would like to put you right. You say: "Capt. Manley had a perfect to be consulted, and it was not at all creditable to his commanding officer, who is nothing of a shooting man himself, to undertake to speak on behalf of his regiment without consulting his officers and the men in his regiment who are really marksmen and have a genuine interest in the securing of a first-class site for shooting."

On what grounds should Captain Manley have been consulted? He has not been regarded by military men in recent years as an authority on rifle shooting. Much less, why should the men be consulted? This consulting Tommy Atkins every time a corps desires to take any action is becoming too common in the militia. In the best disciplined and consequently the most efficient corps there is none of it. You yourself about eight years ago made sport of it in a humorous article, in which you put in the mouth of a Colonel on the eve of battle. "Is Sergeant ——— ready? Then let the fight commence." The Horse Guards certainly do not believe in seniors consulting their juniors, for there is a case on record where an officer commanding was intoxicated on parade. The senior consulted the other captains before ordering the company to leave the parade. The case went to the Horse Guards, where the senior captain's action was upheld, but he was censured for consulting his juniors. An officer commanding a regiment should be competent to decide all questions in which his regiment is interested. If he cannot he is not fit for his position. He is to a corps what a general manager is to a large business. What would be thought of a manager of a newspaper who consulted all his staff before deciding on what make of press to purchase? The officer commanding the Royal Grenadiers is quite competent to select a range. He is one of the few officers in the militia who has a certificate from the Royal School of Musketry at Hythe. When he was asked by the Major General commanding to report on a site suitable for the Grenadiers we were all, excepting Capt. Manley, perfectly satisfied that his selection would be in the best interests of the regiment. That officer selected Mount Dennis, and for over a year has been talking up that range on every possible occasion. In fact he gave us no peace. I know of no other officer in the city who recommended that range and he has had most of us there. Over a year ago a number of representatives of each of the city corps, the 12th and the Ontario Rifle Association, visited Mount Dennis with Capt. Manley and the agent of the property. After examining it he was the only one who favoured it; all others considered it unsuitable.

Now, as to the facts. The officer commanding the Grenadiers did not consult his officers and men, but he referred the matter to Capt. Bruce, president of the Regimental Rifle Committee, who is recognized as the representative rifleman of the Grenadiers, and who is constantly in touch with all the shots. He instructed (not consulted) Capt. Bruce to visit the different sites and report to him upon them. Capt. Bruce did so and recommended a range on the lake shore. Of the Mt. Dennis site he pointed out that it was objectionable because being in a swampy valley it

was liable to fogs, which would prevent firing at times. It was protected from winds, but more important still, the plateau in the back ground was laid out in lots which sooner or later would have houses upon them. If you will inquire you will find out that the C.O. of the Queen's Own instructed a committee of his officers to report. They recommended the Mimico range. Col. Denison for the Body Guard and Major Mead for the Artillery reported in favour of the same range. As to the shooting men, I believe that it was the famous shot, Sergt. McVittie of the Grenadiers, who first drew the attention of the military authorities to the site selected as being the best about Toronto, and I know that the equally prominent Sergt. Mitchell condemned Mt. Dennis. The question of a site would have been settled long ago if the real estate brokers had been out of the way. They have been booming Mt. Dennis, Hog's Hollow, Scarboro and other sites. The one selected is not in the hands of these people. They have even gone so far as to offer bribes in return for influence. A gentleman was offered a large sum of money if he could get a certain influential officer to advocate a particular site. This is a fact and not a mere rumour.

Allow me to suggest that in future the press should seek their information from those qualified to speak. A captain has no right to speak for his regiment or to write letters to the press without permission. The commanding officer of a regiment or a district is the only one entitled to voice the opinions of those under him. Too frequently newspaper representatives interview privates or non-commissioned officers when they can just as easily get at the commissioned officer. The former are less able to state the policy of a corps than your junior reporter is to say what course you should or will pursue during the coming municipal campaign.

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Adjutant Royal Grenadiers.

A MATTER OF AUTHORITY.

Editor World.—I like to see something of the spirit of justice and manliness in either public or private discussion, and hope you will permit me sufficient space to criticise Capt. Manley's recent remarks, and also your editorial of this morning. In the first place, let me say that Colonels Otter, Dawson and Hamilton gave their report on the rifle range because they were asked to do so by Major-General Herbert. They did not voluntarily take upon themselves that duty—as Capt. Manley did—but did so because the highest military authority asked them. Then Capt. Manley walked down to the City Hall and told the gentlemen of the Parks and Gardens Committee that the opinions Colonels Otter, Dawson and Hamilton had given was of no value, and that it did not voice the views of the volunteers—in other words he publicly told his D.A.G. and his Colonel that they did not know what they were talking about, although since admitting that it was not his duty to intrude himself uninvited on either Colonel Otter or Colonel Dawson. Captain Manley contradicts himself when he says he "was present at the Parks and Gardens meeting at the City Hall, because the officers of the different corps had not had the facts of the case laid before them," for he says: "I was completely ignorant of what was coming up at that meeting, and was astounded to hear a site proposed that I knew nothing of." If he did not know that the rifle range was to be discussed at that meeting, why does he say that he went to it because the officers of the different corps had not had the facts of the rifle range laid before them? He sees that he has offered a gross insult to the D.A.G., and to the military gentlemen whose opinion Major-General Herbert asked, and he is now looking for some excuse. Does he imagine that he improves his position with Colonel Otter, by the soft selder, "I have more confidence in the opinion of Colonel Otter in things military, than in that of any other officer in Toronto," and by attacking his own Colonel, instead of con-