

## Regimental News.

### TORONTO.

#### A LETTER IN RED.

In last week's issue I was lamenting a dearth of news, but never expecting that the lull was for such a short time. A letter in the Saturday edition of the *Toronto Mail* furnished and is still furnishing food for gossip for not only the military but has made itself felt throughout society circles. The letter in question reflects on the management of the 10th Royal Grenadiers, and describes a deplorable state of affairs. Social influence it claims plays too important a part and reasons for Major Mason's retirement are given, also Brevet-Major Manley's unpleasant experiences. The letter is signed with the non-de-plume of "Retired List." The bulk of the letter is devoted to proving the following points:

1. That the battalion is going to ruin at a "go, trot" pace.
2. That social influence plays too prominent a part in the regiment.
3. Moral vs. Social Standing.—That Brevet Major Manley is not enough of a society man to obtain his Majority in the regiment.

That the facts may be distorted a trifle is not an impossibility although the editor of the *Mail* prefaces the letter with a note in which he states that "enquiry showed that in the main at least the letter is substantially correct." Without going any further I do not think that "Retired List" can show a regiment in the militia of Canada or anywhere else for that matter in which in the minds of some of its members the feeling is not that their regiment is going to pieces as rapidly as possible, and in the first part of his letter if in no other the references to the jogg-tot ruin are not borne out, as I don't think that the regiment ever turned out better, and according to the report published in last issue the financial aspect is exceedingly rosy.

The writer then goes on to describe some of the events that led up to Major Mason's retirement, giving as one reason that, according to an officer's wife, Major Mason was not sufficiently high up in the social scale to succeed Col. Dawson and another that being a Roman Catholic he could not expect to command an Orange regiment, many of whose Non-Coms. are worshipful masters. The third and last part is devoted to the unpleasantness hovering over the head of Brevet Major Manley. One reason is given why he has not obtained the vacant majority and again it is "no social position," and it is also charged that a sort of round robin was to be presented to him asking him to waive his claim in preference for Capt. Hay. Petticoat government, according to "Retired List," plays a prominent part in everything connected with the regiment, and the influence of a clever woman seems to have been the cause of many annoy-

ances to officers of the regiment who are not in the social circle.

This letter is answered by one signed "Bang," who, however, does not offset any of the arguments or charges advanced by "Retired List," and evidently proves that those who could have and were in a position to answer did the very best thing from a military standpoint that could be done and that was to remain silent.

The *World* of Tuesday adds its quota to the affair in the shape of interviews with Lieut.-Col. Dawson, Brevet-Major Manley, Lieut. Irving, Capt. Hay and Major Mason.

Neither Lt.-Col. Dawson, Major Mason nor Major Manley would say anything, but sufficient was learned from the others to endorse the rumoured unpleasantness with Major Manley.

In answer to several questions Lieut. Irving made the following statements: That the regiment was never in a better position.

That there is no society trouble and that officers could attend the social functions or not, just as they pleased, their absence not interfering with promotion.

That Major Manley was all right as far as cash was concerned but personally was distasteful to his brother officers.

Asked about Major Mason's leaving Lt. Irving replied that Major Mason left because of personal trouble with Col. Dawson of which Mr. Irving knew nothing, adding that all the officers and Col. Dawson included urged him to stay.

Capt. Hay was then called upon but seemed indisposed to take any notice whatever of the matter. Regarding the writer of letter No. 1, his comment was that it is such an infernally blackguardly thing to assail a lady who can't defend herself. The man who would write such a letter and not sign it, "Retired List" or not, shows that he has no "soldierly" sense of discipline and should be horse-whipped. He asserted that the regiment was never in better shape and that the officers would unanimously stand by Col. Dawson. There was no attempt to drive Captain Manley out he said, and he denied ever having seen the round robin spoken of. Speaking of the charges of breach of discipline contained in the second letter against Captain Manley he stated that they could be substantiated and further stated that the unpopular Captain must have a "pretty thick skin."

Briefly this is the state of the poll and it is highly deplorable that a regiment of the standing the Royal Grenadiers have attained, should be dragged through the mire and exposed to public criticism in this manner. The British public are in the habit of criticising matters of which they know next to nothing in a very severe manner, and more harm could be done to this regiment by the publicity given to this affair, than many years of hard work can efface. While, as the editor

of the *Mail* states, many of the assertions are in the main correct, "Retired List" has evidently been in the service long enough to know that this system of inaugurating reform can only have the opposite effect to the one he has in view. The letter in a sense appears to champion Major Manley in his claims to the Majority. Personally, I do not think that Major Manley is so lax in his loyalty to his regiment as to wish this promotion through heaping up odium on its head, and which would certainly make his position all the harder to fill if he were to be promoted; and again I think that think that if the officers choose to inaugurate and hold social gatherings during the season in which they are exempt from drill, there surely can be no great crime committed, although it certainly will not conduce to the welfare of any regiment if the counsels of the other sex are to make themselves felt, and if the departure is made there these ladies must share in any criticisms on their management that may be indulged in, as they certainly would share in the credit if any of their plans came to successful issue. I don't think "Retired List" meant anything ungentlemanly in his innuendoes, but would certainly say that the influence must have been most marked to make it so apparent to him.

With regard to "Bang's" reference to Major Manley's discipline and a recent incident, he speaks as if that has nothing to do with the question at issue. Major Manley knew nothing of the letter written by "Retired List" and I don't see why he takes this opportunity of giving a dig at this officer, who seems to have got such a hornet's nest about him.

With regard to the incident referred to Major Manley acted as he thought in the interest of his regiment and of the shooting men at large, and I might just add that if the commanding officer and the officers of another corps could unbend and endeavour by meetings and other ways to get at the feeling of the men under their command in the satisfactory manner they did surely others could have followed suit and not refused to consult the shooting men of their regiment in a matter so important to them and to the interest of a regiment. If Major Manley committed an indiscretion in rushing into print, were there not others equally guilty. But for the protests that were raised a worthless range (worthless, with a 25-cent fare to pay) would have been foisted upon the city regiments to replace the much more valuable and accessible range on the Common. Thanks to the better spirit prevailing in the regiment this will have no other effect than cementing stronger than ever the ties that bind all its members and if there should be any family falling out, then I don't believe in anyone outside of that family of officers, N.C.O.'s and men taking part in the quarrel. People, nowadays, are too prone to rush into