

in the interest of the 2nd Dragoons, from a military point of view. The action taken by him certainly was not conducive to the interests of the regiment.

DIFFICULT TO GET OFFICERS.

It is, perhaps, here necessary to say how difficult it is to get qualified officers for the militia. This difficulty was accentuated in the comparatively small area of the Eastern Townships, where the number of cavalry officers had been increased from 26 to 192, and the number of squadrons from four to 20, since May, 1903. The only possible way to get the new corps officered was to get local support, and trust the opinion of the commanding officer entrusted with the duty of raising the regiment.

The whole details of the interference with the officers entrusted by me with the duty of organizing the 13th Scottish Light Dragoons have already been made public.

That Mr. Fisher's motives were political he himself admitted in his second speech in the House of Commons, on June 10th. This admission, I may observe, was singularly at variance with his earlier speech on the same day. In that speech, which was a prepared statement, he distinctly stated that his objections to Dr. Pickel were of a military nature, and that his interference was not due to political motives.

A PECULIAR COINCIDENCE.

I may also note the peculiar coincidence by which Mr. Fisher was Acting Minister of Militia on the very day on which this case came up. I do not remember any previous instance of his acting for the Minister of Militia. The case of the 13th Scottish Light Dragoons was pending. On the 18th of May the Minister struck out from the *Gazette* the list of names submitted to him by me, on the ground that further consideration was needed. On the very next day that further consideration was given—by the very man whom Sir Frederick Borden knew to be pressing to have the *Gazette* altered in the direction of his own wishes. The effect of Sir Frederick Borden's unusual step in asking Mr. Fisher to act for him was to make the strong opponent of Dr. Pickel the arbiter by whose decision the Council was to be guided.

It has been said that my proper course, on the matter coming up before Parliament, was to send a statement of facts to the Minister of Militia, and not to an Opposition member of Parliament.

Although statements condemning my course were being prepared to be read in the House, I received no intimation from Sir Frederick Borden that this was being done, and no invitation to prepare a memorandum setting forth the facts as far as I knew them. All that I received from Sir Frederick Borden was a request to know whether a paragraph in a newspaper represented what I had said in Montreal.

THE LETTER TO COL. HUGHES.

Had I volunteered such a statement, I had no assurance that the Minister of Militia would read it to the House. On the other hand, Col. Hughes, M.P., a brother officer, and a member of the headquarters staff, asked me for information on the subject. I do not think that I did wrong in complying. But for my doing so, a one-sided version would have gone uncorrected to the country, which, half an hour afterwards, was universally seen to be untrue. I took pains to place a copy of my memorandum in the hands of Sir Frederick Borden, by the same messenger who gave it to Col. Hughes.

These few instances which I have quoted are sufficient to show how my reports have been suppressed or manipulated, how my hands have been crippled in my endeavours to promote the efficiency of the militia.

Having dealt with matters appertaining to my administrative duties, I desire