

THE MANOEUVRES IN TORONTO.



THE annual sham battle in Toronto came off on Thanksgiving Day, November 26, a most instructive field day being held. The scene of the operations was the upper part of the Don Valley, a tortuous network of ravines, affording several good positions, and the high open ground to the north of the heights, from Eglinton avenue to Moore avenue.

In all a force of over 1,750 of all ranks was collected, the corps engaged being :

Attacking force : Lieut.-Col. Mason, Royal Grenadiers, in command ; Major Mutton, Q.O.R., brigade major. Royal Canadian Dragoons, Capt. Forrester, 33 all ranks. No. 1 Section, Toronto Field Battery, Capt. Myles, 18 all ranks. No. 2 Company, R.R.C.I., Capt. Thacker, 78 all ranks. Queen's Own Rifles, Major Delamere, 550 all ranks, with 7 attached officers. Royal Grenadiers, Major Bruce, 327 all ranks.

Defending force—Lieut.-Col. Davidson, 48th Highlanders ; Major Nelles, 37th Haldimand Rifles, brigade major ; Governor-General's Body Guards, Capt. Denison, 26 all ranks ; No. 2 Section, Toronto Field Battery, Capt. Crane, 22 all ranks ; 13th Battalion, Hamilton, Major McLaren, 405 all ranks ; 48th Highlanders, Major Cosby, 302 all ranks.

The umpire staff was as follows : Umpire-in-chief, Lieut.-Col. Otter, District Officer Commanding. Umpires—Lieut.-Col. Tyrwhitt, 36th Batt. ; Lieut.-Col. Wayling, 12th Batt. ; Lieut.-Col. Patterson, 34th Batt. ; Lieut.-Col. Starke, Victoria Rifles ; Lieut.-Col. Dunn, G.G.B. Guards ; Lieut.-Col. Buchan, R.R.C.I. ; Lieut.-Col. King, 7th F.B. ; Major Mead, 9th F.B. ; Major Hendrie, 4th F.B. ; Major Lessard, R.C.D. ; Major Sankey, Reserve of Officers ; Capt. Cartwright, R.R.C.I. ; Capt. Denison, Capt. Wallace, 36th Battalion ; Lieut. Peters, G.G.B.G.

The Minister of Militia, Hon. Dr. Borden, was present during the manoeuvres and the march past which concluded the field day. In the evening the customary garrison dinner took place at the armories, the Minister of Militia and the officers of the 13th being guests. At the dinner Lieut.-Col. Otter, as umpire-in-chief, delivered his comments upon the movements, and the Minister, in response to the toast in his honor, delivered the speech which is reported at length on another page of this issue.

Following is the narrative and remarks upon the operations by Lieut. Col. Otter :

DISTRICT OFFICE,
Toronto, 30th Nov., 1896.

General idea.—A southern force is retiring before a northern force.

Special idea (southern force).—The rear guard (one-half squadron, one section field artillery and two battalions) is at the corner of Clarence avenue and East York avenue at 10.30 a.m., when the commander receives the following order : "Woodbine, 10 a.m., 26th Nov., 1896.—My embarkation will not be completed till 2 p.m. You will delay enemy in every way possible up to that hour." Situation.—At 11 a.m. no troops were east, west or north of the junction of the roads above named.

Special idea (northern force).—The advanced guard (one squadron, one section of field artillery and two battalions) is on Eglinton avenue, about 400 yards east of Yonge street, when the following message reaches the officer commanding : "York Mills, 10 a.m., 26th Nov., 1896.—I have reason to believe the enemy will embark at the west end of Ashbridge's Bay. Push forward at 11 a.m. and delay this movement. You will be reinforced at 1

p.m." Situation.—No troops were south or east of the above-named place at 11 a.m.

Boundaries.—On the west, Yonge street ; south, Gerrard street ; east, Leslie street, and north, Eglinton avenue.

Narrative.—Owing to the muddy state of the roads, the several corps were late in reaching their stations, and operations were postponed for one hour.

At noon the O. C. the rear guard disposed of one battalion (48th Highlanders) on Clarence avenue, in three or four parties between East York avenue and Yonge street, a troop of cavalry (G.G.B.G.) was sent along Clarence avenue to Yonge street to reconnoitre, a small party of cavalry and one company (13th Batt.) proceeded on similar duty up East York avenue, while the guns (9th F.B.), under escort of two companies (13th Batt.) and a few mounted men, were sent to the high ground on the Don Mills road to the north of the village of Todmorden, proceeding there by the Cudmore bridge and the southerly paper mills ; the remainder of the 13th Batt. (5 companies) was disposed of to the east of East York avenue, in a line with, and partly in the rear of, Clarence avenue, and south of Leaside Junction.

The commander of the advanced guard at noon made the following disposition of his forces : Two troops (R.C.D.) were ordered, via Eglinton and East York avenue, to Moore avenue, to move at a gallop and extend east and west on Moore avenue ; one company (No. 2, R.R.C.I.) was ordered to advance in extended order to the edge of the high ground overlooking the two branches of the C.P.R. ; two companies of the R.G. were to support this company.

The artillery (9th F.B.) was to follow the above mentioned force as far as Moore avenue, and there halt until the main guard had passed, when the guns were to proceed to a position named as No. 1, and then await orders. The two troops (R.C.D.), ordered to reconnoitre to Moore avenue, were then to form an escort to the guns ; the third troop was detailed to reconnoitre the No. 1 position for the guns.

At about 12.15 the cavalry of the advanced guard came galloping down East York avenue, and when at Balliol avenue met the cavalry of the rear guard and a half company of the 13th Batt., both of whom at once opened fire, placing the greater part of the advanced guard cavalry "hors de combat." At 12.45, No. 2 Co., R.R.C.I., reached Moore avenue and became engaged with a company of the 13th Batt., which, having no support near, had to retire. No. 2 Co., being reinforced by two companies of the Grenadiers, pushed on to the brow of the hill overlooking the C.P.R. line, and at 1.12 came under the fire of the rear guard artillery, which held these companies in check.

Four companies of rifles (Q.O.R.) of the northern force, now appeared on the left of the three advanced companies, but these were screened from the fire of the enemy's artillery, though they had to contend with three companies of the 13th Batt., who were on the enemy's right. Two more companies of the Royal Grenadiers then came up on the right of the first companies engaged, with the remainder of the battalion and six companies of the Q.O.R. in support and reserves. The rear guard was thus practically cut through the centre, as the left battalion of that force (48th Highlanders) was completely isolated and unable to render any assistance to the 13th Batt., which, with the cavalry and artillery, was left to bear the burthen of the day. The three last-named corps were on the east and south side of the Don, and in a safe position, as the advanced guard artillery had not yet come into action, while the rear guard artillery was keeping up a heavy fire upon the centre of the advanced guard's position. Both flanks of the advancing force were, however, free to move, and yet it was not till 1.25 that the left