

Thanksgiving Day in Toronto.

[Condensed from The Mail.]

A finer day than Thursday last could scarce have been obtained for the great military parade, even if those interested in the success of the event had the power to make any kind of weather best suited to their purposes. It was not sufficiently cold to render spectators of the manoeuvres uncomfortable, and it was not too warm for those who participated in them.

The ground chosen for the position to be attacked and defended was a clear level plain a few miles outside of the westerly limit of the city. It was about twenty acres in extent. South, east and west of it are deep, brush-covered ravines, each extending from north to south. The brushwood renders it difficult for a defending force on the plateau to observe the approach of an enemy from the lake shore, while the gullies and consequent hills are features of the landscape which would prove obstacles or advantages just as the attacking force or defence might use them. These ravines are three in number. To the east is the hill sloping down towards Grenadier Pond, on the west is a ravine extending north almost to Bloor Street, and in the centre is another reaching to the foot of the twenty-acre plain, on which the defenders of the position were to be drawn up while awaiting the opening of the engagement.

At 9.30 in the morning the umpires met according to orders, and were briefly addressed by the General. They were simply told to follow as closely as possible the rules laid down in the drill book, and apply them to the special instructions issued by Col. Otter. The umpires were all mounted, and wore broad white bands on their left arms. The umpires were:—Lieut.-Col. Otter, D.A.G.; Lieut.-Col. Grasset, R.L.; Lieut.-Col. Miller, R.L.; Lieut.-Col. Gray, Dist. Staff; Lieut.-Col. Wayling, York Rangers; Major McSpadden, York Rangers; Major King, Welland Field Battery; Major Vidal, C. Co. I. S. C.; Major Dunn, G.G.B.G.; Capt. Wise, Headquarters Staff; Capt. Baldwin, 2nd Regt Cavalry; Capt. Manton, Royal Engineers; Capt. Dickson, G.G.B.G. They performed their duties very effectively. Only one dispute occurred which was of only minor importance.

ASSEMBLING OF THE TROOPS.

The Queen's Own Rifles began to assemble at the drill shed a few minutes before 8 o'clock in the morning, and in half an hour they were ready for the march out. Major Delemere commanded the force, with Major Sankey and Captain and Adjutant Macdonald as field officers. Capt. Pellatt was deputed as aide to Col. Jones, of the Dufferin Rifles. The strength of each company was as follows:

"A" Company, 57; "B" Company, 49; "C" Company, 43; "D" Company, 63; "E" Company, 49; "F" Company, 57; "G" Company, 45; "H" Company, 37; "I" Company, 41. "K" Company, 39. The bandmen numbered 38, the buglers 30, the staff-sergeants 13, the pioneers 9, and the ambulance corps 11. Surgeon Lesslie, Assistant Surgeon Nattress and Quartermaster Heakes were with the battalion, but fortunately, the doctor's services were not required. The total number in the regiment was 590. The special corps of mounted scouts of the Queen's Own consisted of twelve men, Lieut. Mercer in command.

The Royal Grenadiers numbered, all told, 425, made up as follows: "A" Company, 46; "B" Company, 47; "C" Company, 43; "D" Company, 36; "E" Company, 46; "F" Company, 41; "G" Company, 36; "H" Company, 45. The band, under Bandmaster Waldron, numbered 33; the drummers, 27; the pioneers, 7; and the ambulance corps 16. The staff of the regiment numbered 16, and consisted of three field officers Lieut.-Col. Dawson, Major Harrison and Major Mason; three captains, viz: Paymaster, Capt. Bruce, Quartermaster, Capt. Tassie, and the Adjutant, Capt. Manley.

Eighty-two men from "C" Company, Infantry School Corps, under command of Lieut. Evans, marched out of the New Fort about nine o'clock and proceeded along King street towards the Humber. Their officers were Lieut. Laurie, Lieut. Macpherson, Governor-General's Foot Guards, and Lieut. Stevenson, 57th Batt. They were constituted two companies of the 13th Batt.

The Thirteenth Battalion, from Hamilton, who arrived by train in the morning, looked exceedingly well, marched steadily, and won the approbation of the spectators immediately. Major McLaren was in command of the battalion. Its total strength was 393, divided as follows:—

"A" Company 43; "B" Company 50; "C" Company 38; "D" Company 53; "E" Company 37; "F" Company 44; "G" Company 45; "H" Company 41. Capt. Stuart, the adjutant, was acting as senior major, while Lieut. Carpenter assumed the duties of adjutant. The regimental surgeon was Dr. Griffin. The addition of two companies formed from the Infantry School corps put the battalion in possession of two sergeant-majors, Sergt.-Major Cummings of "C" Company, and Sergt.-Major Athawes of the 13th.

The Dufferin Rifles, from Brantford, paraded early in the morning, and embarked on board a special train which was to take them to Toronto at 9.30. They had not been long on the way when word was received that an accident had happened at the "Y" near Dundas. The special was sent down the short cut to the Hamilton and North-Western railway. The train was kept standing on the short line for nearly three hours before it was sent round by Burlington. The troops became very weary of the delay; but when they at last arrived at the Humber and saw the rifle green ranks of the Queen's Own standing on the shore cheering on their arrival their drooping spirits revived. In less than five minutes the regiment was disembarked, and the men fell in without any confusion or delay at the sound of the bugle. They formed as follows:

Lt.-Col. C. S. Jones in command. Staff officers:—Majors B. R. Rothwell and T. H. Jones; Adjutant, Capt. W. A. Wilkes; Surgeon, W. T. Harris; Assistant Surgeon, H. Minchin; Paymaster, Capt. S. S. Hamilton; Quartermaster, Capt. R. R. Harris; Chaplain, Rev. R. Ashton.

A company, 43 strong; B company, 49; C company, 54; D company, 39; E company, 47; F company, 53; brass band, 24; bugle band, 23; ambulance corps, 8; bicycle signal corps, 8; pioneers, 6; total strength of all ranks, 364; authorized strength, 278; over strength, 86. The bicycle corps attracted considerable attention. The general bearing of the soldiers was excellent. They performed their evolutions very promptly.

THE ATTACK.

As soon as the Dufferin Rifles fell in Col. Jones, as senior officer, took command of the attack, and the plan of attack was laid down and the disposition of troops made. Capt. Macdonald was given command of the west flank, consisting of "F" Company Dufferin Rifles; Capt. Nelles, "I" Company Queen's Own under Lieut. Crean, and "G" Company Queen's Own under Capt. Bennet. They were instructed to follow Jane street, and turn the enemy's right. The east flank, in command of Major Jones, consisted of "D" Company Queen's Own, Capt. Mason, and "D" Company Dufferin Rifles, Lieut. Curtis. This detachment was ordered to proceed along Ellis avenue, and attack the enemy on the left. The main attack was on the centre, the route being up Windemere street. The skirmishers were extended in the following order from the left:—"A" Company Dufferin Rifles, Sergt. Kilmaster; "H" and "B" companies Queen's Own, Capt. Gunther; "C" Company Dufferin Rifles, Capt. Leonard. Major Sankey and Capt. Wilkes were in command of the skirmishers. Supports were extended as follows from the left:—"A" Company Queen's Own, Capt. Thompson; "E" Company Queen's Own, Capt. Mutton; "E" Company Dufferin Rifles, Capt. Jones. The reserves were:—"F" Company Queen's Own, Capt. McGee; "K" Company Queen's Own, Capt. Brock, and "B" Company Dufferin Rifles. The Dufferin Rifles' bands and the Queen's Own Rifles bands acted as a third reserve line.

When the first scout returned the order was given and the troops began the advance. Major Meade galloped his guns up Jane street to a high bluff about three hundred yards from the railway track. This is a very commanding position, and holds the whole field. "C" Company acted as support to the artillery. The guns were unlimbered, the limbers were placed behind the brow of the hill—time 1.26 p. m. Major Meade sighted the enemy's guns, and the battery opened the action to clear the way for the infantry. At 1.45 p. m. the detachment on the left continued up Jane street, under cover of the bluffs, until a point opposite College street was reached; then they turned to the east, and crossed the ravine with little or no opposition. The main attack on the centre began to develop very strongly at 2.10 p. m. Major Meade then limbered up his guns, and drove off along the Lake Shore road to follow up the right flank. At this juncture the firing became very heavy. The centre kept advancing according to the new formation; the reserves taking advantage of the sunken roads. The centre advanced up past College street, advancing up the declivity in force and assuming the final tactical formation. Some difficulty was experienced in supplying ammunition to the men, but a heavy fire at short range was maintained until the bugle sounded "cease firing."

The east flank of the attack, formed of "D" Company Queen's Own Rifles, under Capt. Mason, and "D" Company Dufferin Rifles, under Lieut. Curtis, was commanded by Major Jones. The men gradually felt their way along Ellis avenue, fighting the opposing forces as occasion demanded. During this phase of action, the guns stole back from Jane street. Securing cover from the enemy by the bluffs, they galloped along the Lake Shore road up Ellis avenue, coming into action on the high land near the new houses, "C" Company, Q.O.R. being the escort. Major Jones' party, by means of concentrated fire, drove the defending party before them, the volleys from the defenders at 2.20 following quickly in succession, supported by artillery fire from the high land north of the Grenadier's pond. This was the last position held by these troops when the bugle sounded the cease fire at 2.45 p. m.