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Observations.

BY MARC MARIUS.

If there is one man in the city of Toronto who deserves to be called an "animated Pasquin," it is ex Ald. E. A. Macdonald. He has latterly run foul of the lawyers and judges, and a great time they are having of it. The other day up at Osgood Hall, it is rumored, a budding young barrister of a "legal and judicial family," took the "Baron" by the throat and threatened to kick several holes in him if he persisted in his attacks upon a certain judge. In another instance a young lawyer, who used to figure as half-back for Yale, told "the Macdonald" he would kick his whiskers off if he lampooned him. Several other encounters of a similar nature are said to have occurred. If these limbs of the law could only induce the "Baron" to participate in a game of Rugby, there would not be much of him left after the first scrimmage.

Captain Manley has been making a fool of himself over the rifle ranges. Last week I said that I thought there was a nigger in the fence somewhere. I believe there is still. Captain Manley and those chiefly interested in the Mount Denis range held a meeting on Saturday night to try and keep the city from purchasing a new range unless it was that at Mount Denis. Of course they did not say so, but that is virtually what was at the bottom of it all.

I have already said that I can see no reason why the present range should be changed, and the whole scheme is being engineered by the Industrial Exhibition Association. This institution is now using ground given to it free by the Ontario Rifle Association, and because it wants more ground, the riflemen are to be driven out of the city, and the city has to pay thousands of dollars for a new range.

What are the facts? The ground around the New Fort barracks is Government property, owned by the Imperial authorities. The Ontario Rifle Association rents the common for about forty dollars a year. On part of this property the Industrial Exhibition grounds, buildings, and parks are placed. The riflemen willingly gave up this land. It never cost the Exhibition Association a cent, although it is worth over half a million dollars. The Industrial Association well know that at any moment the Imperial authorities can step in and seize their grounds and buildings, and what is more, they cannot refuse admittance to those grounds to a soldier in uniform. Not content with what they have secured, like a gigantic

devil-fish they want more, and because an accident happened once at the ranges, this is made the fulcrum by means of which they expect to clear the common of riflemen and get the ground for a race-course.

As a matter of fact, the Garrison Common range has had less accidents on it than any other range in Canada considering the shooting that is going on continually. And what is more, the Militia Act gives the riflemen power to stop all boats from passing outside of the range on the lake in the danger zone. To go boating there is an offence that can be punished by law.

Now, the new range is also to be on the lake shore, and it will be just as dangerous as the present one, for there will be just as many people boating out from the shore. But the authorities say they can make the new range perfectly safe by putting the butts in *echelon*; that is to say, placing the firing line at the farthest point away from the water, and building embankments for targets at the proper distances from the firing line. This is the very thing that would make the present range absolutely safe. Say that the firing line were placed down near the bridge at the lower end of the common, the two hundred yard target two hundred yards away from this firing line, the four hundred yard target four hundred yards away, and so on up to the thousand yards. Behind each target an embankment could be thrown up. In other words, the riflemen would shoot from the same line for all ranges and the targets would be placed apart, instead of the targets being placed together as at present and the riflemen apart. This would remove all danger on the lake altogether.

Let us see how a bullet that would miss the target would act. These things have been figured out to a nicety by the ordnance authorities, and tables for the calculation of the trajectory are given in the book on musketry instruction. If the bullet of a Snider-Enfield rifle such as is used by the riflemen, fired from the firing line at a target at two hundred yards distance, passed over a ten-foot butt it would graze the earth at about 400 yards. At 500 yards such a miss would graze at about 650 yards, at 800 yards about 900 yards. The further the target is away from the firing line the faster the bullet will graze after it misses the embankment, for the bullet drops much quicker as the force behind it wears out.

If the firing line were placed 1200 yards from the lake, I am satisfied that not one bullet in a million would ever strike the water.

The danger now is from the two and three hundred yard ranges. The firing line is so close

to the shore that when a bullet misses it goes spinning out into the lake about six hundred yards. The distance the rifleman is above the water, and the height of the butt over which the bullet passes, give it sufficient elevation to go out a long distance before it strikes the water. I believe that if the targets were re arranged as proposed, there would be absolutely no danger, and thousands of dollars could be saved to the city. At any rate, if the Industrial Exhibition Association want the land they should pay part of the new ranges.

I ask all my readers to lose no time in signing the petition for Sunday cars. The parsons are organising in opposition, they are afraid that their monopoly will be infringed on. But either with or without their consent we mean to have the cars run on Sundays.

It is a strange but undoubted fact that the clergy everywhere are the opponents of all progress. They earn their bread and butter by working on Sunday, and they mostly go to their work in a hired hack, but they object to the working men and their wives and children riding in the cars.

The question is in the hands of the people; if they will only be true to themselves and act in unison there is no doubt as to the result.

I have received several letters, some of them thanking me and some abusing me for what I have said about the labor leaders. Abused or thanked I shall continue my course telling the truth as I have seen it.

The patriarchal proprietor of THE OBSERVER said to me only yesterday, as with one hand he held me in firm but friendly bondage, while he combed his silver-grey whiskers with the other, "Marc, my boy, keep a firm grip of your cudgel, and go about the city like a knight-errant of old pointing out abuses and aiding all who are in distress." "Maidens in distress?" interrogated I. "No," he answered emphatically, "no, I will attend to the maidens." And I believe the old sinner will. Only the boys had better remember that I shall impartially swing my stick.

A copy of the *New England Magazine* for December has been received at this office. The number is an unusually good one, well printed, profusely illustrated, and in all respects a highly creditable production. The principal article "Canadian Journals and Journalists," by Walter Blackburn Harte, is of much interest to Canadians.