

for complicity in the dishonourable detraction from De Salaberry's glory. Otherwise his signature on the general order would leave him open to suspicion, as it evidently did, in the mind of De Salaberry.

"About eleven o'clock on the morning of the 26th," wrote Sir George Prevost to Earl Bathurst, Secretary for War and the Colonies, "the enemy's cavalry and his light troops were observed on both sides of the river by a detachment which was protecting 'habitants' employed in cutting trees for the construction of an abatis.

"Lieutenant-Colonel De Salaberry, who commanded the most advanced pickets, composed of the light company of Canadian Fencibles and of two companies of Voltigeurs, on the north bank of the river, handled his small force so excellently that he stopped the march of the principal column of the enemy, commanded by Major-General Hampton in person, and accompanied by Brigadier-General Izard.

"The light brigade of the American army, under Colonel McCarty, was repulsed in the same way in its march on the south bank of the river, where it met the right flank company of the Third Battalion of the embodied militia, under the orders of Captain Daly, and supported by the company of the Chasseurs of Chateauguay, under Captain Bruyere; these two officers having been wounded and their companies having suffered loss, the position which they held was covered immediately by a flank company of the First Battalion of embodied militia; the enemy rallied and returned to the attack several times until forced to abandon the effort at the end of the day, seeing himself baffled at all points by a handful of men who held their position bravely and succeeded in protecting our working parties against all attack.

"Having by good fortune arrived on the scene of the action a little after its commencement, I was a witness of the conduct of the troops on this glorious occasion, and it was to me a great satisfaction to be able to praise them on the very field.

"I thanked Major-General De Watteville for the wise measures taken by him for the defense of this position, the advanced post; also Lieutenant-Colonel De Salaberry for the good judgment which he showed in choosing the field of battle and the bravery and address with which it was held."

That the same brain which drafted this despatch drafted also the general order which roused the ire of De Sala-

berry, is abundantly evident. There is the same belittling of the action as a defence of working parties. There is the same credit given to De Watteville for choosing the position and for the defences erected. There is the same verbal recognition of the fact that De Salaberry chose his positions; and the same belittling of the significance of that choice and of the part played by him. Finally, there is the same indirect attempt to indicate that Prevost had some part in the management of the battle, when, as a matter of fact, he was visiting posts at Lake St. Louis and came on the ground only after the Americans had been repulsed. One cannot acquit Prevost of a deliberate attempt to rob his subordinate of the honour of a brilliant military success. The Governor-General was too vain to be fair; he was also too vain to be held back by the consideration that he was thereby endangering the policy of conciliating the French-Canadian population, a policy which had been committed to his care by the British ministers.

Unfortunately the unfairness of Prevost's conduct did not hinder its immediate success. His report coloured the official mind so deeply that for more than three years the just claim of the actual victor at Chateauguay could find no hearing there. The Duke of Kent, who had been closely associated with the De Salaberry family when in Canada, strove to correct the official impression; and he stated in a letter to the Lieutenant-Colonel's father that English officers present at the battle fully supported the protest made by the victorious commander. Still it was not until the winter of 1817, nearly three and a half years later—and then at the instance of a Canadian officer, Lieutenant-Colonel G. McDonnell, of Glengarry, who had served under him in the action—that De Salaberry, in accepting the honour of Companion of the Bath, received royal recognition of his brilliant services to the country.