

RECEPTION IN TORONTO OF THE HALIFAX PROVINCIAL BATTALION.

The enthusiasm of the citizens of Toronto in the receptions of the returning volunteers is on the increase, and will be so until the grand culmination is reached, when our own boys are tendered a royal welcome. There are few who have not shouted themselves hoarse on one or two occasions in welcoming the returning heroes, who left comfortable homes to go to the North-West to quell the rebellion. The announcement that the Halifax Battalion would reach the Union Station on Monday night kept the city in a state of excitement for a time to give them a hearty welcome. Crowds thronged the Union Station until news was finally received that the battalion had gone on to Niagara Falls, and would not reach here till the following day. They were expected to arrive at one o'clock yesterday afternoon but were detained at Hamilton. Notwithstanding the number of times the hour of the arrival of the battalion had been put off, when the locomotive steamed along the Esplanade south of the Union Station a few minutes before three o'clock, the Halifax volunteers were given a magnificent ovation. The crowd was not so large as that which welcomed the returning regiments on Sunday, owing to the uncertainty of the arrival and the fact that it was during working hours, but it was fully as enthusiastic. Thousands were standing in front of the station, whilst all the windows and towers were crowded. The roofs of boat-houses and other buildings in the vicinity were black with human beings. The first glimpse caught of the locomotive at the head of the train was the signal for an outburst of enthusiasm. Cheer after cheer was given and renewed again and again. As the cars came into sight the volunteers expressed their appreciation of the magnificent reception. They took off their hats and cheered back quite as enthusiastically as the assembled multitude. The band of the Royal Grenadiers started playing "See the Conquering Hero Comes," but for a time the music was drowned by the cheering. After the excitement had somewhat subsided the Mayor and the Reception Committee approached the train to invite the troops to dine at the Albion Hotel. Colonel Bremner, in command of the battalion, cordially accepted the invitation. He expressed his satisfaction at the hearty welcome that had been accorded the troops, and said that all along the line during their journey they had been royally received. The bugles sounded and the different companies fell into columns of fours to march to the hotel. The battalion was composed of six companies of the 66th and 63rd, and two companies of the Halifax Garrison Artillery. It numbered 349 men and 32 officers. In spite of their weather-beaten appearance it could be seen that the men were a fine sturdy lot. Bronzed faces, torn coats, patched pants, hats which were never intended for militia service, but which had been pressed into use to take the place of their departed predecessors, did not detract from the military bearing of the men. They withal looked soldierly, intelligent, and daring.

When the volunteers stepped out of the train many of them were recognized by persons in the crowd who stepped forward, and after a hasty shake of the hand and a few words of congratulation, resumed their places. Every one seemed well pleased and in the best of humor. It was with difficulty that the crowd was pressed back and the companies fell in. After this had been accomplished, headed by the band of the Royal Grenadiers, they marched along York to King and along King to West Market Square. Hearty as had been the reception at the station much more enthusiasm was displayed along the route to the hotel. Crowds thronged the streets and formed almost an unbroken line to the St. Lawrence market. At every window on the street groups were standing awaiting the approaching troops, and as they passed, handkerchiefs and flags were waved, and with brief intermissions continued cheering was kept up till the market was reached. As soon as the cheering had subsided, some one would shout, "Three cheers for Halifax," or "Hurrah for the Halifax boys," and again the cheering would be renewed. At East Market Square they received another ovation previous to going in and partaking of the lunch provided by the Reception Committee.

Arrived at the Albion Hotel, the men were formed in companies and in a few minutes the first half of them were ushered into the spacious dining room, and the way in which the men attacked the viands must have been

exceedingly gratifying to the members of the Luncheon Committee and host Holderness. When the first relay had thoroughly appeased their appetites, the second half came forward and showed themselves to be fully equal to their comrades as trencher-men.

At the officers' table, when luncheon had been partaken of, Lieut.-Col. Bremner rose in his place and expressed for the officers and men of the regiment his thanks for the handsome manner in which the Corporation of Toronto had treated them. His men had come to the city as strangers, but they had been received as brothers. He thanked the Mayor and gentlemen of the committee again and again for their hospitality.

Mayor Manning, in responding, said they were only too happy to have an opportunity of extending the hospitality of the city to the soldiers from the sea. He was glad, as the representative of the citizens, to have the pleasure of welcoming men who had travelled 3,000 miles from their homes to quell the seditious men who had roused disturbances in the North-West.

The men were formed in companies again and marched to the foot of East Market Street, where the cars were waiting to receive them. The moving off of the men caused the crowds to burst anew into cheers, which were kept up with undiminished vigor until the big locomotives with colossal snorts began to draw the long line of coaches away. As the speed increased the mass of people broke into a run and followed in the wake of the vanishing train, the platform of the last car of which resembled a bee-hive door in swarming time. In a brief moment, however, the last red coat and bottle-green jacket disappeared round the curve at the Northern Station.

The Halifax Volunteers were called out for active service on March 21st, and left for the North-West on April 11th. They arrived at Winnipeg eleven days after. They stayed at that place a short time, and went on to Swift Current, where they encamped near the 7th Fusiliers, while the latter were at that point. A portion of the battalion were subsequently sent to Moose Jaw, some to Medicine Hat, and the balance to Saskatchewan Landing. Although they did not take part in any fighting, they did what was required of them in a satisfactory manner, and no doubt, had they been needed to do more, they would have acquitted themselves creditably. The battalion started out with 386 men and officers. Two of the men died, and eight are on the sick list. They were ordered home last week, and left Winnipeg on Thursday at midnight. On Monday they visited Niagara Falls and viewed the great cataract. Many of them were never in this part of the country before, and all are highly pleased with their visit.—*The Mail.*

THE RETURN OF THE REGIMENT.

The bells boom out to the cloudy sky,
The deep drums beat tumultuously,
The martial music's crash and cry
Make all the city dumb!

There are tender eyes at every pane,
And, spite of wind and sifting rain,
From square and alley, street and lane,
The eager people come.

What do they come to seek and see?
Why do they gaze so earnestly?
What may the strange attraction be?
A handful of haggard men!

Mute and strange are their faces all,
Nothing less than a battle call,
With boom of cannon and shriek of ball,
Could shake their even breath.

Written in every line and curve
Are tales of courage and iron nerve—
Of fire tried hearts that never swerve
From danger or from death.

Haggard with toil, fatigue and pain,
Soiled and smoky with battle stain,
Back they come to their homes again,
Changed as by many years.

But leaning out from the gazing bands,
Many a woman silent stands,
Who longs to grasp their hard brown hands;
And wash them white with tears.

Their banner wide in the wind unrolls,
Tattered and ragged with bullet holes,
Think of the strong, heroic souls
Who hailed it as their pride;

And with their faint and anguished eyes,
Lifted in deathful agonies
Saw it between them and the skies,
Blessed it, and blessing died.

Many a cheek at the memory pales;
The jubilant music faints and fails,
Dying in low and mournful wails,
For those whose graves are green.

The crowd grown still with a conscious dread,
So still that you almost hear the tread,
The ghostly tread of the gallant dead
Who walk in their ranks unseen.

Uncover your head and hold your breath,
This boon not every lifetime hath,
To look on men who have walked with death,
And have not been afraid.

—*Buffalo Com. Advertiser.*

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