

CORRESPONDENCE.

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FROM MONTREAL.

(BY OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

Last Saturday evening the Mechanics Hall was the scene of a grand and imposing ceremony in the presentation to that old and gallant veteran, Col. Dyde late commandant of the Volunteer and Militia Force, with his portrait in oil, a noble picture, life-size, life-like, and well worthy of the honors, the officers of the Volunteer Militia Force, who in their gift wished to testify to the great and universal esteem to which he was and ever will be held by them.

Col. Dyde is the oldest citizen soldier in Canada, having commenced as a private, and risen step by step to the position he occupied as commandant. His loyalty and patriotism have been manifested in the energy and activity he has always shown when his country called out her gallant sons.

Col. Dyde first organized the Montreal Light Infantry, in 1855 he took the command of the Montreal Rifles, which afterwards became the Prince of Wales Rifles. In 1856 he was appointed commandant, and in 1869 was still higher promoted to the rank of Colonel.

Imperial favors have been so plentifully showered of late among our military force that it is somewhat strange that the claims of the gallant and hale old colonel should have been ignored.

It is to be hoped that tardy justice will, "better late than never," be meted out to this Canadian veteran, and no higher compliment to the volunteer force could be made than that the recognition by government of the long and valuable services of Col. Dyde.

The Mechanics Hall on the occasion of the presentation was literally crammed with an audience comprising many of the leading citizens of the city, also a number of volunteers, officers and men who in their gay and attractive uniform gave a brilliancy to the scene.

The platform was tastefully decorated with flags, at one end stood the portrait, and in front were tastefully arranged the flags of the Hochelagas and Light Infantry regiments. The guard of honor was furnished by the "Vics," and music, good music too, was furnished by the band of the "Vics" and Prince of Wales Rifles.

On the platform were seated Col. Bacon, B. M., Cols. Bethune, David, Stevenson, MacKay, Lovelace, Grant, Farvier, Belle, Booker; Majors Martin, John Smith, Worsey, Kennedy, Campbell; Captains Muir, Smith, Dyde, Sutherland, Sinton, Ramsay &c. &c., with Messrs. John Leeming, E. G. Venny and several ladies.

The greatest enthusiasm was manifested, and the Colonel's popularity was apparent

in the hearty and unanimous welcome by which he was received.

Col. A. A. Stevenson acted as chairman, a position that he filled with great credit. Col. Dyde on his arrival was received by the guard of honor and conducted to the platform by Cols. Stevenson and David, the band playing. As soon as the Colonel was seated Col. Stevenson opened the meeting as follows:

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—We have assembled to-night for the purpose of doing honor to one of our most highly respected fellow-citizens, who has devoted a large portion of a long life to the Military service of his adopted country. (Applause.) From shouldering a musket on our own Champ de Mars in the year 1814, he gradually rose through all the various grades, until he reached the proud position of Commandant of the Active Volunteer Militia Force of this city, a position which he held for over thirteen years. Every citizen of Montreal knows well that the gallant commandant displayed great energy and zeal in the discharge of the duties of his office, and the ability and tact he manifested won for him the approbation of the Militia authorities, whilst the interest he took in everything relating to the welfare of his command endeared him to every member of the Force with whom he came in contact. (Applause.) On the severance of his connection with that Force, the officers resolved to present to their late brigadier a portrait of himself in uniform, as a memento of the warm friendship which had always characterized their intercourse with him, and in carrying out that object the Committee were exceedingly fortunate in securing the services of Mr. Bell Smith, an eminent artist residing here, who, it will be universally admitted, has performed his task in such a manner as to reflect the highest credit upon Canadian Art. (Applause.) Through the kindness of my brother officers, I have been selected as the medium through which this portrait is to be presented to Col. Dyde, and I esteem it a very great honor indeed to be permitted so to do, but before proceeding to read the address I would take the opportunity of assuring that gentleman that it affords the greatest gratification to the officers of the Force, and I will undertake to say the same for this vast assemblage of his fellow-citizens, to meet him here to-night, hale and hearty, on the completion of his seventy-fifth year, (great applause,) and I feel confident, that blessed as he is with a vigorous constitution and intellect unimpaired, should occasion ever require, that gallant Veteran Volunteer would again be found willing and ready to draw his sword in defence of that glorious old flag under which we now live, and under which we hope always to remain. (Prolonged applause.)

The Chairman then read the following address:—

To Colonel John Dyde, late Commandant of the Active Volunteer Militia Force of Montreal.

DEAR COLONEL,—The officers of the Volunteer Militia Force of this city have for some time past entertained a desire to convey to you some tangible token, which would serve to manifest in some degree the esteem and affection entertained for you by every member of the Volunteer Force of the city of Montreal.

The long period during which you occupied the onerous and responsible position of commandant (extending over thirteen years); the readiness with which, while dis-

charging the duties of that office, you had at all times exerted yourself to promote the efficiency and welfare of the Force under your command; the courtesy and consideration uniformly extended by you to all the officers in your brigade; taken in connection with your honorable military career, embracing a period from 1814 to 1869, during which period you had been uninterruptedly a member of one or other of the Volunteer or Militia organizations existing from time to time for the defence of the country. All these considerations combined to inspire the utmost confidence in you as Commandant of this District, and tended in no small degree to secure the high state of efficiency for which the corps under your command were ever distinguished.

It was, therefore, with extreme regret, that the members of the Volunteer Force here learned, that by the provisions of the Militia Act of 1868, the connection which had long and happily subsisted between you and them had been so unexpectedly severed;—and as a slight proof of the sincere attachment existing between the officers of the Force and their brigadier, they now feel the greatest pleasure in presenting you with this portrait of yourself, accompanied as it is with their ardent wishes for the future happiness and prosperity of yourself, Mrs. Dyde, and family. And while heartily congratulating you upon having this day, in the full vigor of middle manhood, attained the venerable and almost patriarchal age of seventy-five years, they most fervently pray that it may please Divine Providence to continue your useful life for many years to come; and they would also join in hope that the day is not far distant when they shall have the gratification of knowing that your long, faithful, and disinterested services in defence of our country, and the undeviating loyalty and patriotism which have ever characterized you as a soldier and a citizen, have been suitably acknowledged by some special mark of distinction, emanating as we trust it will, from the hand of our Beloved Sovereign.

In the name and on behalf of our respective corps.

E. D. DAVID,
Lieut.-Col. Cavalry.

JAMES MUIR,
Capt. Commanding No. 1 Troop Cavalry.

A. A. STEVENSON,
Lieut.-Col. Commanding Volunteer Field Battery of Artillery.

HENRY MCKAY,
Lieut. Col. Commanding Montreal Garrison Artillery.

WILLIAM KENNEDY,
Major Commanding No. 2 Company Engineers.

WILLIAM RUTHERFORD,
Captain Commanding No. 1 Company Engineers.

W. H. SMITH,
Captain Commanding Montreal Light Infantry.

FRANK BOND,
Lieut.-Col. Commanding 1st or Prince of Wales' Rifles.

H. J. ROUTH,
Lieut.-Col. Commanding 5th Batt. Royal Light Infantry.

JOHN MARTIN,
Major Commanding 6th Batt. Hochelaga Light Infantry.

During the reading of the address the Chairman was interrupted with loud and prolonged cheering.

At the conclusion of the address the band of the Victoria Rifles played "Auld Lang Syne."

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