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Nec aranearum sane textus ideo melior, quia ex se fila gignunt, nec noster vilior quia ex alienis libamus ut apes.

No. 32.

Miramichi, Friday Afternoon, May 16, 1845.

From the London Sun. HIGHLAND SOCIETY OF LONDON.

This convivial Society held, on Saturday, at the Freemason's Tavern, their anniversary festival in commemoration of the victory of Alexandria, in which so many Highlanders had distinguished themselves on the 21st March, 1801. Good Friday having this year fallen on that day, the gathering took place on the 22d. It is usual for the Society to invite all the officers who had been present with the army in Egypt under Sir Ralph Abercromby, but the hand of death has made sad havoc amongst those brave men, and the present long and severe winter has been the means of confining several of them to their homes by indisposition, so that only a few of these veterans were present, viz., Col. Sir John M. Wilson, Col. Elwin, Captain Kelly, R. N., and Capt. Fead, R. N. The Gallant President of the Society, Lord Saltoun, was prevented from attending in consequence of the death on the previous day, of his brother, the hon. Wm. Fraser. The chair was, however, very ably filled by The Chisholm. Amongst the general company present we observed Major General Duncan McLeod, Major General Briggs, Colonel Sir John McRa, James Matheson, Esq., of Achany, M. P., who wore a magnificent Highland dress, Lord Reidhaven, Colonel and Major Burns, sons of the poet; Captain Maitland, R. N.; Captain Rigmaiden, R. N.; Captain Lamont, R. N.; Captain Charles Forbes, Captain Kincaid, Dr. Power, Captain Tulloch, W. Spott Boyd, Dr. Stewart Chisholm, R. A.; Robert Coates, Esq.; W. W. Scrimgeour, Esq.; Thomas Lawrence, Esq.; D. C. Guthrie, Esq.; J. Gordon Duff, Esq.; J. Tulloch, Esq.; J. Masterman, Esq.; Geo. Bain, Esq.; John Burnie, Esq.; John McGregor, Esq.; Hugh J. Cameron, Esq.; W. Judd, Esq.; T. Archer, Esq.

Before dinner the Society held a general Court, at which the proceedings of the Society, and other matters of business connected therewith, were brought before the court by Mr G. Bain, the Honorary Secretary, after which the company proceeded to the banquet in the magnificent hall of the Freemason's Tavern, preceded by her Majesty's piper, Mr Angus McKay, and his brother Donald, the Society's piper, formerly in the service of his late Royal Highness the Duke of Sussex.

About one hundred gentlemen sat down to dinner, the majority of whom were attired in full Highland costume. This gave a most picturesque appearance to the gathering. It looked like a *tableau vivant* from Sir Walter Scott. The gallery was occupied by ladies. During the dinner, which was an excellent one, and which included most of the national dishes of Scotland, in addition to the most recherche of the products of the *cuisine* of France, and the solid roast and boiled of Old England, the band of the Scots Fusilier Guards played several popular airs. At the conclusion of the dinner, the pipers paraded the room, playing a Highland national air, which was received by the company with shouts of enthusiasm. Grace having been said, the cloth was withdrawn, the toast master Toole, *the Toole*, proclaimed silence for

The Chisholm, who in proposing the first toast, briefly alluded to the circumstances under which he had been unexpectedly called upon to assume the chair. Their President, Lord Saltoun, was unavoidably absent in consequence of the death of his brother, the hon. W. Fraser, and in alluding to that melancholy event, he could not forbear paying a passing tribute to his memory—(cheers.) They had not only to regret the loss of his valuable services to that society, but to the world. In consequence of that unexpected calamity he had been called upon to fill the chair. He would not ask their indulgence on the occasion, as that might imply a presumption on his part, on the one hand, that any exertions of his might contribute to the hilarity of the evening, or on the other that his short-comings might damp it—(cheers)—but he would ask them all cordially to unite in assisting to pass the evening with true Highland feeling, and true Highland enthusiasm—(Cheers.) He had now to propose a toast,

dear to them as British subjects, most dear to them as Highlanders—"The Queen."

Drunk with all the honors.
"God save the Queen,"—by the band.

The Chisholm, in proposing the health of the Queen Dowager, alluded to the well-known benevolence of that respected lady, and stated that on being recently applied to for her patronage for a benevolent institution at Inverness, the capital of the Highlands, her Majesty had not only granted her patronage, but had also sent a liberal subscription. The toast was drunk with three times three.

The Chisholm then rose to propose the Prince of Wales and the rest of the Royal Family—(cheers.) He proposed that toast under peculiar circumstances. He could not but recollect that this was the year '45 (cheers.) A hundred years ago the ancestors of some of those present would have told a different tale (cheers.) But what brought them out in '45? In what character did they appear? They appeared as the gallant subjects of their Sovereign. It was their loyalty that made them take the field (loud cheers.)

It was to support that Prince who was the lineal representative of the heir to the British Crown that their ancestors went to the battle field—(cheers)—and that same feeling of loyalty would induce them now to stand up as firmly and undauntedly in support of those who now occupied the throne (cheers.) They were now, in 1845, surrounded by English officers, but he could not forget that their ancestors, in 1745, met them on other terms at Preston Pans (cheers and laughter.) So far from forgetting it, the remembrance of it should excite in them the spirit of emulation as to who should best serve their Sovereign and their country (loud and cheers.) As the descendant of one of those clans which had been out in '45 (loud cheers) he would not be afraid to do or ashamed to suffer in the cause of his Sovereign anything that his ancestors had done or suffered for the sake of the Stuarts. He called upon them heartily to respond to the toast of "The Prince of Wales and the rest of the Royal Family." (cheers.)

The toast was drunk enthusiastically. The Chisholm next proposed "The Health of His Royal Highness Prince Albert, the Chief of the Highland Society." (Loud cheers.) From all that they had heard and seen, it was evident that true Highland feeling reigned paramount at present in high places (loud cheers.) He proposed the toast should be drunk with Highland honors.

The toast having been drunk, each man placed his left foot on his chair, and his right foot on the table, and waving his plumed bonnet, gave that enthusiastic and inspiring shout which is so often heard on the battle field, when the clans "Like reapers descend to the harvest of death."

The appearance of the Hall at this moment was most picturesque. The magnificent costume of the Highlanders, the animation of their features beaming with delight as they cheered, the enthusiasm with which the sound of the bagpipes which immediately struck up was greeted, until impelled, as it were, by an irresistible force, they rushed to the dance, and began a Highland reel, contrasted forcibly with the tame, dull matter-of-fact manner in which the *business* of the evening is usually gone through at English dinners.

The Chisholm then proposed the "Army and Navy," a toast never omitted at any public festivity, but one which was more peculiarly appropriated to the present military festivity, inasmuch as the Highlands had devoted so many of her gallant sons to the defence of their country in both services.

Drunk with three times three.
Sir J. McRa, on the part of the army, returned thanks in Gaelic.

Captain Kelly, in returning thanks on the part of the navy said, that he was proud to believe, from the manner in which the toast was always received, that the services of the members of his profession had met with the approbation of their countrymen in the effort which they had made to protect this sacred island from the invading foe (cheers.) All the

attempts of the French, who at that time had extended their tyrannous grasp over the whole of Europe, had been ineffectual. This sacred isle had by the efforts of the navy been preserved from violation by the foe (loud cheers.) And if an enemy should again be induced to make the attempt, that same patriotic feeling which now slumbered in their breasts would be again aroused, and again would the navy deserve the approbation of the country (loud cheers.) He thought that those now growing up would find, if necessity required it, that the navy would protect them against any inroads which an enemy might be daring enough to attempt. He believed that those who came after us would be as well protected by the navy as those who went before us had been (renewed cheering.) He returned his grateful thanks to the Highland Society of London, and to the Highlanders of Scotland, of whom they were the representatives, for the manner in which the toast had been received, (loud cheers.)

The Chisholm said, that the last toast which they had drunk was "The British Army and Navy," but there was another army which comprised in it many British soldiers and officers, whose services had of late years been no less remarkable than the services of the Queen's regiments (hear, hear.) He was proud to see among them that evening, two general officers of that service. They had all heard of the glorious deeds which that branch of the service had performed (loud cheers.) They had all read of the sufferings of the Highland regiments at Kurra-choe. He therefore proposed, and he was sure they would drink the toast with enthusiasm—"The British and Native Soldiers of the Indian Army."

The toast having been drunk with three times three.

Major Gen. McLeod returned thanks. The Chisholm, in alluding to the enthusiasm with which the last toast had been received, said, that the one which he was about to propose was calculated to excite somewhat different feelings. It was emphatically the toast of the evening—"The Memory of Sir Ralph Abercrombie and the Heroes who fell with him at Alexandria." The Highland Society had selected the anniversary of that battle for their annual meeting because they considered that on that day their countrymen had gained more than usual honor (hear.) He saw among the members present some who had shared in the glories of that battle, and they doubtless knew of the act of bravery and cool courage exhibited in that battle by a Highland regiment, which he was about to relate—an act which, however much it might be admired, could never be properly appreciated by civilians. During the battle of Alexandria a thick fog enveloped both the Highland regiments. The British troops were drawn up in two lines. A French regiment advanced under cover of the fog, and passed into the interval between the two regiments, so as to occupy the rear of the front line and the front of the second line. That front line consisted of a Highland regiment, which was thus engaged in front and rear at the same time. They bear their opponents both in front and rear (cheers.) Now he appealed to the officers present if that was not an instance of cool courage almost unparalleled? (Loud cheers.) It was that coolness in the hour of danger that made the British Highland soldier the glory of his country. But while they thus rejoiced in the glory acquired by their native troops, it behoved them to remember the dear price which they had been called upon to pay for it (hear, hear.) They should recollect the many heroes which on that occasion had been lost to the service. Abercrombie fell covered with laurels in the arms of victory (cheers.) He fell gloriously. Many of his companions, who had exhibited equal prowess, and were an equal honor to the service, had lived to reap the reward of their services; and although they might feel that they had received the full reward they were entitled to, yet it was some satisfaction to them to know that their countrymen appreciated their services and were willing to do them justice (loud cheers.) They usually appreciated the services of

those who had fallen in the defence of their country.

"For them e'en banquets fond regrets supply
In the red cup that crowns their memory."

(Loud cheers.) He called upon them, therefore, with that solemn feeling of respect which was befitting the occasion, to drink the memory of Sir Ralph Abercrombie and his brave companions in arms, who fell with him in 1801, on that day of which that was the anniversary, at the battle of Alexandria.

The toast was then drunk in solemn silence, after which the bagpipes played a lament.

The Chisholm said it had been usual on these occasions to invite every officer who had been present at the battle of Alexandria. He now craved the attention of the company for Colonel Elwin, who would explain how it happened that so many Egyptians were absent on the present occasion.

Colonel Elwin spoke as follows—"Mr President; on looking around me, I regret much to see so small a portion of my military companions assembled to do justice to the occasion that has called us here together. It may probably be accounted for simply, for two reasons—several members, especially of the United Service Club (*all old Egyptians*), being, at this time, out of town, and many more having, of late, been called "to that bourne from which no traveller returns." These may be, perhaps, deemed the best excuses that can be offered for the smallness of the numbers met this day to commemorate the battle and victory of Alexandria, under our gallant chief and veteran commander, Sir Ralph Abercrombie. I feel happy, however, still, in noticing the full meeting of the gentlemen composing the old established institution of "the Highland Society of London," and most sincerely do I hope that on every future occasion, and so long as an anniversary of this day is continued, that they may assemble with the same elasticity of spirits and good health as on the present occasion, and also without any apparent diminution of their numbers. I have no apology to offer for the absence of naval Egyptians, they have all received a summons which will, ere long, call us all from the festive pleasures of the Highland hospitality."

Song, Mr M'lan, "The Old Highland Gentleman."

The Chisholm trusted that all had filled bumpers to do honor to the toast which he was about to propose. It was the health of a brave and noble Highland British soldier, who from the time he had entered the service up to the hour when he had quitted China, had been always found whenever his country required his services, and had always acted as a true-hearted British soldier, (hear, and cheers.) That Society was under peculiar obligations to him, for he was among the best, if he was not the very best President they had ever had, (cheers.) He gave the health and long life to Lord Saltoun, (immense cheering.)

Drunk with the Highland honors.
This toast was followed by a reel.

The Chisholm said the next toast was one which he would rather had been proposed by any other individual, as it was the health of a near and dear relative of his own (cheers.) He would not, however, shrink from the performance of his duty, but would propose the "Health of the President of the past year," (cheers.) His defence of Hougoumont would never be forgotten (cheers.) At a late period of the day General McDonnell had received a wound from a splinter, which had for a moment stunned him and he fell. The word was passed round, "Macdonnell has fallen, the command devolves upon Saltoun." But the blood of the Glengarry rallied—and with far more energy than politeness, when he heard "the command devolves upon Saltoun," he exclaimed, "No, I'll be d—d if it does." When on a subsequent occasion the great Captain of the Age drank to Lord Saltoun, as the defender of Hougoumont—Lord Saltoun got up, and with the spirit of a true British soldier replied, "No; I had only the honor to belong to the regiment, and to obey the orders of my superior officer, General Macdonnell (loud cheers.) He