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6th SEPTEMBER, 1867.



PROCEEDINGS

AT THE

CONSTABULARY DEPÔT, PHOENIX PARK,

6TH SEPTEMBER, 1867,

ON CONFERRING THE TITLE OF

"ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY,"

AND

PRESENTING MEDALS AND REWARDS

TO

MEMBERS OF THE FORCE,

&c., &c.



DUBLIN :

PRINTED BY ALEXANDER THOM, 87 & 88, ABBEY-STREET,
FOR HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE.

1867.

DUBLIN CASTLE,

3rd October, 1867.

THE LORD LIEUTENANT being desirous that the proceedings which took place at the Constabulary Depôt, Phoenix Park, on the 6th ultimo, when by command of HER MAJESTY the QUEEN, He conferred on the Force the title of the "ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY," and presented Medals and other Rewards to several of its Members who distinguished themselves during the late insurrectionary movements, should be promulgated throughout the Force, His Excellency has therefore caused this book to be compiled, and has directed that a copy be forwarded to each Constabulary Barrack in Ireland.

MAYO.

"ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY."

DUBLIN, SEPTEMBER 7, 1867.

A CEREMONY of deep interest and significance took place yesterday in the Phoenix Park, when the officers and men of the Constabulary who distinguished themselves during the late outbreak were presented with honourable tokens of their Sovereign's approval. There is no body of men in the service of Her Majesty more capable of appreciating the wise and generous policy which has promptly recognised their fidelity and courage in the hour of trial. The Constabulary are essentially an Irish force, with all the distinctive qualities of the national character, but with the baser elements refined by discipline and the nobler ones trained and elevated for a worthy purpose. The loyalty they have displayed is not a principle peculiar to themselves, but is deeply rooted in the minds of the peasant

class from which they spring, though it is too often perverted by demoralizing influences. In their case, however, urgent considerations of interest and constant habits of duty combine to fix it steadily upon its legitimate object.

At 3 o'clock all the force stationed at the dépôt were drawn up in hollow square in front of the barrack, with Colonel Hillier, Deputy Inspector-General, at their head. In the centre were the officers and men to whom the special marks of favour were to be presented. The following are their names, the services they rendered, and the decorations awarded :—

1. Sub-Inspector ROBERT GARDINER.—In command at Drogheda, who on the night of the 5th of March, attacked and dispersed a large body of armed Fenian insurgents assembled in that town, taking many prisoners and a considerable quantity of arms and ammunition—a medal.

2. Sub-Inspector DOMINICK F. BURKE.—In command at Tallaght on the same night, when the Fenian insurgents were defeated, many taken prisoners, and a large quantity of arms and ammunition captured—a medal.

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3. Sub-Inspector OLIVER MILLING, who proceeded on the morning of the 6th of March, from Kilfinane to Kilmallock, with a small body of Constabulary, to the relief of the party attacked by the Fenians in the police barrack, and with them routed the assailants—a medal.

4. Head-Constable RICHARD ADAMS.—In command of the party surrounded by the Fenians, in the barrack of Kilmallock, who sustained the attack during several hours, until relieved by Sub-Inspector Milling—£70 from the Government, and £50 private subscriptions.

5. Constable JAMES O'CONNELL.—In command of the party who bravely defended their barrack at Castlemartyr against a large body of armed Fenians, shooting their leader, and putting the assailants to flight—£20 from the Government, and £15 private subscriptions.

6. Constable GEORGE FORSYTHE.—In command at Ardagh, when an armed body of Fenians attacked and fired into the barracks and broke open the door, the Constabulary within returned the fire, wounded one of the assailants, and compelled the whole to fly—a chevron.

7. Constable PATRICK DERWAN.—In command at Emly, when the Constabulary resisted the attack of a large party of armed insurgents, who fired into the barrack and threatened to burn it if not surrendered—a chevron.

8. Constable MARTIN SCARRY.—In command at Gurtavoher, when the Constabulary repulsed a large body of armed insurgents, who surrounded the barrack, fired into it, and demanded its surrender—a chevron.

9. The ninth case was that of Mounted Constable WILLIAM DUGGAN, who, on the night of the 13th of February, was conveying official despatches, and was called upon, near Glenbeigh, by a large body of insurgents, to stop and deliver up those documents, which he refused to do, but proceeded with courage and fidelity on his journey, when he was fired at, and severely wounded and disabled. The Constable is still suffering from the effects of the wound, and was in consequence unable to proceed to Dublin to receive the medal that has been awarded to him.

At half-past three o'clock His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant and the Marchioness of Abercorn, accompanied by Lady Maud Hamilton, and attended by Mr. Gregory, A.D.C., arrived in an open carriage-and-four, preceded by outriders. In a second carriage were the Chief Secretary for Ireland, Lord Frederick Hamilton, Lord Ernest Hamilton, and Captain Wodehouse, A.D.C. On the arrival of the Viceregal party, the Constabulary presented arms, and the band played

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the National Anthem. The officers and men who were to be decorated were then presented to Their Excellencies by Colonel Hillier, and a brief statement given of the nature of their services. The Marchioness, as each drew near, affixed the symbols of honour to his breast with a graciousness which seemed to heighten the value of the gifts.

COLONEL HILLIER, on the part of the Constabulary, thanked Her Excellency, and expressed regret that Constable Duggan was unable to attend, to receive in person at her hands the honour which had been awarded to him.

HIS EXCELLENCY then said:—

“Colonel Hillier, officers and men of the Irish Constabulary, it has given me very great pleasure to be a witness, in common with you all, of the distribution of the rewards of merit so worthily bestowed; and I felt that, given by the hand of Lady Abercorn, they would be more gratifying to those who so well deserved them than if they were conferred officially by me. I regret to say that one man on the list—I mean Police-Constable Duggan—is still unable to attend on this occasion, in con-

sequence of the injuries he received in the very gallant discharge of his duties. And let me say also that I consider these rewards have been given for no common services. You, the brave men who have received them, have each, in your several degrees, whether officers or constables, rendered no ordinary good service to the State. Shut out, as you were, from any assistance, dependent on your own courage, and in number infinitesimally fewer than your assailants, you yet showed most effectually what loyalty and discipline can accomplish. I do not exaggerate when I say that to your courage and determination are owing the successful resistance in the first instance to the Fenian insurrection, and the instantaneous collapse which it met subsequently, under the irresistible and admirably organized military power brought against it. (Applause.) You have had the satisfaction of knowing that your services have been specially recognised by both Houses of Parliament, and that even Her Gracious Majesty herself has not been unmindful of you. You have also the additional gratification of knowing that while your own individual conduct has been thus appreciated you have been able to reflect honour on the force to which you belong. I believe that gallant and loyal as was the conduct of those who received rewards, it was but the reflex of what would have been the conduct of the whole body of the Irish Constabulary in every part of the country if a like occasion had called for a display of their devotion. This is not my opinion alone. It is the opinion of the Government, and, above all, of

our gracious Majesty, who shall be pleased to inform you of the fact that your devotion, and the command that shall be given to the Royal Irish Constabulary, shall be the badges of your loyalty in making the country more sincerely and men, the appreciation of the successful through the very difficulties upon them.

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our gracious Sovereign, and I am now authorized to inform you that, as a proof of Her Majesty's satisfaction of the gallant conduct of the Irish Constabulary, and of Her confidence in their loyalty and devotion, She has been graciously pleased to command that the force shall be henceforth called 'The Royal Irish Constabulary' (applause), and that they shall be entitled to have the harp and crown as badges of the force. (Applause.) Colonel Hillier, in making this announcement, I congratulate most sincerely the Royal Irish Constabulary, both officers and men, on the distinction they have earned and on the appreciation which they have met with universally throughout the country in the discharge of the very difficult and dangerous duties which devolved upon them." (Applause.)

Lord MAYO then addressed the assemblage. He said :—

"May it please your Excellency, Colonel Hillier, and the officers and men of the Royal Irish Constabulary, I can assure you it gives me the greatest pleasure to have been present this day, and to have heard the eloquent words in which His Excellency has expressed sentiments which, I believe, are shared in by every loyal man in the United Kingdom. (Applause.) It has been my good fortune upon three different occasions, in the discharge of the duties of the office which I have now the honour to hold, to have been a witness to the unvarying good conduct, high character, discipline, and loyalty of the men of the Irish Constabulary

Force. I am sorry to say that it is now a good many years since first I entered on official life. The force was then under the command of your old and tried friend, Sir Duncan M'Gregor, who for so many years distinguished himself by devoting the whole of his time, talents, and energy to the more efficient development of your splendid force. (Applause.) On the second occasion I found you commanded by Sir Henry Brownrigg, a distinguished officer, who was brought up in your own ranks; and now, when for the third time I am brought into official connexion with you, I find you commanded by a man who has been distinguished in Her Majesty's service in every quarter of the world, and than whom there could not be found a more suitable officer for so high and responsible post. Your present Inspector-General was in early life well known in Indian warfare as one of the heroes of Jellalabad; he afterwards distinguished himself in the Crimea, and he has now found a worthy occupation in the command of the 12,000 gallant men who compose the Royal Irish Constabulary. (Applause.) I am sorry that Colonel Wood is not present to take part in this interesting ceremony. I know he is enjoying a short but well-earned holiday, and I can answer for this, that during the whole time I have had the honour of being connected with him I have found him devoting himself energetically to the discharge of his important duties. I believe there never was a man more determined to do his duty to the great force which he commands, without fear, favour, or affection, than Colonel Wood. His object has always been and

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always will be to recognise and reward true merit, and the only difficulty that he experiences is to select the most worthy from so many who are deserving of promotion. (Applause.) In my place in Parliament it has been my duty to bear witness on some remarkable occasions to the sense that I and my colleagues entertain of the services of the Irish Constabulary. Immediately after the present Government came into office, it became my duty to move the introduction of a Bill into the House of Commons, and subsequently to assist at the passing of the measure through its various stages, which had for its object the increase of the pay of the force. I do not pretend to take all the credit to myself for this, as the leading features of the measure were determined upon by my predecessors, and it was only my good fortune to have the honour of carrying it through Parliament. By that measure the general pay and allowances of the force have been increased to a very large amount, and no less a sum than £100,000 a year has been added to the Constabulary estimate, the whole of which is spent in additional pay. It gives me the sincerest gratification to find from the reports of Colonel Wood and your other officers that, as the effect of that measure, contentment prevails in the force, and that recruiting is progressing most satisfactorily both as regards the number and quality of those who are daily entering your ranks.

The next duty I had to perform in connexion with your body was to move last April that the House of Commons should vote £2,000 to certain members of the Constabulary for signal services performed by

them during the late Fenian rising—services in consequence of which some of you are here to-day to receive an honorary and well-merited reward. I may safely say that there never was an occasion when a sum of money was voted by the British House of Commons with greater alacrity, with greater willingness, or with greater unanimity, than the vote which placed at the disposal of Colonel Wood that sum of money, to be distributed to those who took an active part in the suppression of the abortive attempt at insurrection on the 5th of March. It has always been the wish of the present Government to do justice in every respect to the officers and men of the force; and, therefore, on a late occasion, when, by the unfortunate illness of Major Esmonde—one of your distinguished commanders—a vacancy on your staff occurred, the Government felt it their duty to recommend that that vacancy should be filled up by an officer from your own ranks; and, departing from what had been on former occasions the custom, we selected one of your most worthy. County Inspectors, and placed Mr. Duncan, of the county of Cork, as Assistant Inspector-General, in command of your head-quarters dépôt. (Applause.) Again, it became my duty, at the desire and request of His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, to bring before Lord Derby His wish and desire that some signal mark of royal favour should be conferred on your entire body. I can truly say that the Prime Minister, as soon as he was made aware of His Excellency's wishes, communicated with the greatest willingness those wishes to his

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Sovereign, and I am in a position to state that Her Majesty, without the smallest hesitation, signified Her gracious intention that the word 'Royal' should be added to your present designation, and expressed Herself to Lord Derby, in the highest possible terms, as to the pleasure and readiness with which Her Majesty conferred on you this honourable distinction. Officers and men of the Royal Irish Constabulary, the reward which has been this day bestowed upon you is one of the highest which the Sovereign can bestow. The word 'Royal' is borne by some of the finest regiments in Her Majesty's service, and has been conferred as an acknowledgment for distinguished service; when, therefore, you assume for the first time this epithet, you assume a name which is known from one end of the world to the other—which has been associated with the greatest and most glorious deeds of arms, and has only been given as a testimony of honour, fidelity, and loyalty. (Applause.) And, indeed, the other special honour which has been conferred on some of you to-day has been bestowed in no common manner. It has been given in a way which brings one's memory back to olden times; for I believe that in the days of chivalry and romance no fitter hands ever bound the reward of constancy and valour on the brows of a fortunate cavalier than the hands which attached those medals to your breasts to-day. They were attached to your breasts by one whose many virtues have served throughout her life but to add lustre to her exalted rank—by an illustrious lady whose grace is only equalled by her goodness. It is a signal honour which has been conferred upon you, and I

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believe you will do your best in afterlife to act up to that high standard of merit which such a distinction demands. Officers and men, I shall scarcely allude to the unfortunate events which have been the occasion of your good conduct. I should rather wish to draw a veil over the occurrences of the last year, and endeavour to forget, if one could, events which are discreditable to our country. I should be only taking up your time if I were to enlarge upon the wickedness and insanity of the Fenian conspiracy. But I will say that the wickedness of such a movement can only be estimated when we recollect that an attempt was made to kindle civil war among a people who enjoy the greatest blessings that a free constitution can bestow—in a country where every man is free to speak, to think, to write, to act as he sees fit, and where a degree of liberty is enjoyed which is almost unknown in any other country in the world : and if the wickedness of this movement is scarcely credible, its insanity is still more incomprehensible (cheers), for we can regard it as nothing less than the extremity of madness when we hear of men appointing a certain day to appear in rebellion without leaders, with scarcely any firearms, and without any of the appliances of war, to oppose the military power of the greatest nation in the world. The one bright spot in this unfortunate affair was that among all classes and all ranks of men of respectability and intelligence there was but one spirit evinced, and that was a spirit of willingness to support the Government of the country. That was evidenced by all the better classes of the nation, irrespective of politics and religion. But one spirit