

THE LEAP OF ROUSHAN BEG.

Mounted on Kyrat strong and fleet,
His chestnut steed with four white feet,
Roushan Beg, called Kurroglou,
Son of the road and bandit chief,
Seeking refuge and relief,
Up the mountain pathway flew.

Such was Kyrat's matchless speed,
Never yet could any steed
Reach the dust-cloud in his course;
More than maiden, more than wife,
More than gold and next to life,
Roushan, the Robber, loved his horse.

In the land that lies beyond
Erizoum and Trebizond
Garden-girt his fortress stood;
Plundered khan, or caravan
Journeying north from Koordistan,
Gave him wealth and wine and food.

Seven hundred and fourscore
Men-at-arms his livery wore,
Did his bidding night and day,
Now through regions all unknown
He was wandering, lost, alone,
Seeking without guide his way.

Suddenly the pathway ends,
Sheer the precipice descends,
Loud the torrent roars unseen;
Thirty feet from side to side
Yawns the chasm; on air must ride
He who crosses this ravine.

Following close in his pursuit,
At the precipice's foot
Reyhan, the Arab of Orfah,
Halted with his hundred men,
Shouting upward from the glen,
"La il Allah! Allah-la!"

Gently Roushan Beg creased
Kyrat's forehead, neck, and breast;
Kissed him upon both his eyes;
Sang to him in his wild way,
As upon the topmost spray
Sings a bird before it flies.

"O my Kyrat, O my steed,
Round and slender as a reed,
Carry me this danger through!
Satin housings shall be thine,
Shoes of gold, O Kyrat mine!
O thou soul of Kurroglou!"

Soft thy skin as silken skein,
Soft as woman's hair thy mane,
Tender are thine eyes and true;
All thy hoofs like ivory shine,
Polished bright, O life of mine,
Leap and rescue Kurroglou!"

Kyrat, then, the strong and fleet,
Drew together his four white feet,
Paused a moment on the verge,
Measured with his eye the space,
And into the air's embrace
Leaped as leaps the ocean surge.

As the surge o'er sill and sand
Bears a swimmer safe to land,
Kyrat safe his rider bore;
Rattling down the deep abyss,
Fragments of the precipice
Rolled the pebbles on a shore.

Roushan's tasselled cap of red
Trembled not upon his head;
Careless sat he and upright;
Neither hand nor bridle shook,
Nor his head he turned to look,
As he galloped out of sight.

Flash of harness in the air,
Seen a moment like the glare
Of a sword drawn from its sheath!
Thus the phantom horseman passed;
And the shadow that he cast
Leaped the cataract underneath.

Reyhan the Arab held his breath,
While this vision of life and death
Passed above him "Allah-hu!"
Cried he: "in all Koordistan
Breathes there not so brave a man
As this robber Kurroglou!"

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

[This is the latest poem of Mr. Longfellow, published in the January *Atlantic*, and conclusively showing that his lyrical spirit and descriptive fire are by no means on the wane.

Ed. C. I. NEWS.]

THE ANCIENT CAPITAL.

The House adjourned at half-past five this morning, is the statement that is in everybody's mouth, and why it sat to that hour is a matter of speculation. There was not the slightest effort at obstructing, every member who spoke did his best and interested his hearers, so that when at 5 o'clock the members were called in, not a single seat in the House was vacant, the first time such a circumstance has occurred since this Parliament was elected; indeed I am informed not only the first time since Confederation, but the first time such a circumstance ever occurred.

Now of course it will be news to no one to state that the debate which occupied the attention of the members to so late an hour was upon the railway resolutions brought down by the Hon. Attorney-General Angers on Wednesday last, and which have caused considerable stir throughout the Province since their provisions have been made public, so much so that the Quebec papers do not hesitate to call upon the people to rise up and violently expel the present Government, though how it is to be done by violence is more than any of them enter into. Let us see what these "terrible" resolutions contain and why the House is asked to make them law. I shall not enter into a history of the North Shore and Northern Colonization Roads from their inception till the present day, as many hon. members did last night and this morning *ad nauseam*, but merely state that the Quebec Government, having taken over the two roads, were bound to complete them at any cost. The whole credit of the Province was at stake. In order to finish them the Government effected a loan in England, which, together with the subsidies granted by the various municipalities

along the line of the railway, was quite sufficient for the purpose. The Government has succeeded in completing ready for use nearly three-fourths of the entire road, and although several demands have been made yet the municipalities have persistently refused to pay over the balance of their subsidies. This was one serious question that had to be dealt with. The other was a revival of the old jealousy that has been so long existing between Quebec and Montreal. Quebec required that the line should not pass through Montreal on its western course, but connect with that city by a branch at St. Therese. Montreal insisted upon the line going through the city, or in other words that the terminus of the two roads should be there. Some Montrealers insisted the line should go in to that city by way of Bout de l'Isle and, with the usual disinterestedness of so-called patriots, invested heavily in real estate along the supposed line of route, and now finding that the Government have changed the route so as to come by way of Terrebonne, these speculative patriots are crying aloud that Montreal is ruined and that the Government have broken faith, &c., &c., and have cried to such effect that up to the present time they have succeeded in staving off off the payment of the balance of Montreal's grant. "Desperate diseases require desperate remedies," so it is evident the Government believed. It would never do to allow it to go forth to the outside world and especially to the English money market that the municipalities of the Province of Quebec had granted subsidies, and that when due had refused to pay them. It was also necessary to settle once and for all the vexed point between Quebec and Montreal. So the Government have adopted vigorous means to compel the payment *bon gré mal gré* of that which should have been paid long ago, and to settle the difficulty between the rival cities, resolutions for that purpose providing,—1st. That the line should run from Quebec to Terrebonne, from Terrebonne direct to Montreal, and from Montreal to Ottawa. 2nd. As doubt had been raised regarding the validity of the by-laws by which Montreal and Quebec had promised to pay their million dollar grants, these by-laws are declared valid, legal and binding. 3rd to 13th declare when the grants are payable, if any of the municipalities still refuse, the chief of that municipality shall be authorized to sign the bonds, and if he refuses, the Government shall appoint a syndic who shall sign them. They also provide for the payment of interest on the debentures being compelled summarily. The last three resolutions refer to the abolition of the Railway Commissioners, and over these there was no discussion whatever. All were united in opinion that the sooner they were abolished the better. Such is the effect of these resolutions, and let it not be forgotten that if the municipalities would only pay up their proportions when due, they need not fear them, and I was authoritatively informed this morning before the conclusion of the debate that the resolutions were especially meant for Montreal and Quebec, and that the effect of them had been that before the end of the week he believed a satisfactory settlement between the Government and those two cities would be arrived at. If that be so, the resolutions will have attained their required object. Now as to the debate on them. On Tuesday afternoon Mr. Angers brought them down, and on the motion to go into committee on them he made a masterly logical address of nearly three hours, laying the whole facts of the case before the House. In the evening Mr. Joly replied in usually polished manner, and was followed by Mr. Tarte and several others till nearly midnight, when the debate was adjourned. One of the speakers in the course of that evening's debate was Mr. Sidney Bellingham. He came in late and was dressed in full evening costume. I have heretofore had occasion to remark on this gentleman's palpable bitterness (politically I mean) towards those on the Treasury Benches, and what glaring blunders he has hitherto fallen into when indulging his weakness, but that night he fairly eclipsed himself. He attacked the Attorney-General and then the Treasurer, who he charged with nepotism, and suddenly found out it was the Provincial Secretary he meant. He has been "coaching" for the budget speech, and I suppose has attacked the worthy Treasurer so often during his rehearsals, that unwittingly he made the mistake. He made statements concerning the voting in Montreal upon the million dollar By-law, which have since been totally denied and proved to be untrue.

On Wednesday afternoon the debate was resumed by Mr. Duhamel from Ottawa, who was followed by Mr. Alley, the newly elected of Quebec West, whose maiden speech was devoted to explaining why he differed from his colleagues (who sit and vote on the opposite side) in voting for the resolutions. Mr. Alley has had long experience in public speaking, and proved himself in every way as good a speaker on the floor of the House as he is in court. Shortly after six o'clock Mr. Taillon of Montreal East took the floor, which (with the interval for dinner) he kept till after nine o'clock after dinner. The galleries were crowded. The articles in a little one cent sheet called the *Telegraph* had excited a belief that there would be an early vote taken, or perhaps there might be a disturbance, so the galleries remained crowded till after midnight, when speech after speech, and explanation after explanation, from member after member, representing the interested municipalities still continuing, and there being no sign of the great guns on either side intending to rise, those in the galleries slowly at first, but swiftly when Mr. Wurtele commenced

speaking in English (a language that always thins the galleries) left, till but a baker's dozen or so remained till the termination. One o'clock came and still the private members spoke on, as seriously as though it were mid-day. Half-past one and the House was enlivened by a short sharp and decisive "spat" between Hon. Mr. Garneau, Mr. Joly, and Hon. Mr. Chapleau. This over, Mr. Chapleau rose and in one of the most eloquent speeches ever given in this House, lasting for nearly two hours, he proved argument after argument, till all wavering members being thoroughly convinced of the righteousness of these resolutions, joined heartily in the cheers that accompanied the Hon. Minister's address throughout its delivery. Three o'clock came and past, and Mr. Chapleau still had the floor. Members were seen passing in and out of the chamber. The Restaurant was in full operation. Hunger must be appeased especially when talking is such a provoker of appetite, so that when shortly before half-past three Mr. Bachand, member for St. Hyacinthe, rose to reply to Mr. Chapleau, there was little over a bare quorum present, and those in the galleries, roused up by the force of Mr. Chapleau's eloquent speech, settled themselves down for a good nap and were to be seen in a few minutes stretched out on the benches wooing Morpheus in a series of extraordinary attitudes common to worshippers of that fickle but refreshing heathen deity.

Mr. Bachand is a man of highly intellectual appearance, short in stature, spare in build, with a refined face that bears signs of much study and considerable thought. He smiles most kindly, is of rather nervous temperament, his complexion is pale and his hair and whiskers black as a raven's feathers. As a lawyer his ability is unquestioned, and as a debater he has proved himself to be far ahead of any one on the opposition Benches. He speaks firmly, clearly, and decisively with pleasantly modulated tone of voice that can be easily heard all over the House, and is generally listened to with much interest by a full House, so that the sudden exodus of the House was not that they did not love Bachand a little, but that they loved their inner man more. Many of them, however, have regretted their absence, as Mr. Bachand delivered this morning the most logical and carefully worded speech he has ever made in this House, and that opinion I have received from members on both sides of the House. Shortly before four o'clock Mr. Mathieu rose and spoke till after the hour, when he was followed by Hon. Mr. Laframboise and Messrs. Lynch and Watts, who filled up the time till 4-50 a. m., when Mr. Angers, after a short wait, replied to the arguments against his resolutions, which, however, were neither numerous nor weighty, being disposed of in less than fifteen minutes. At five minutes past five the usual uproar preceding a vote having passed, the members were called in, the last to enter being Mr. LeCavalier, the Conservative whip, to whom the credit is due of "whipping in" every member of the House, a circumstance to which I have previously called attention. As the vote proceeded, the faces of the opposition became longer and longer, and those of the ministerial side brighter and brighter, till when the totals were announced,—Yeas 41, Nays 23; majority for the Government, 18—the applause was deafening. After a few routine proceedings the House adjourned at 5-20, and the tired out members went home to bed.

I cannot help comparing last night's work with that of a somewhat similar night four sessions ago, the principal difference being that whereas last night the debate was seriously maintained and the later the hour the better the speeches became, on the previous occasion, the talk was against time, one speaker, Mr. Marchand, remaining on his legs for over three hours.

It was during that three hours speech of Mr. Marchand that an amusing incident occurred. Mr. Blanchet, who was then Speaker, retired for a few minutes while Mr. Marchand was consulting some blue books, and called Mr. Houde of Maskinonge to occupy the chair. Now Mr. Blanchet was a young man of handsome and neat appearance, while Mr. Houde is an old man somewhat resembling Sir Hugh Allan in face and figure, and was clad in grey Canadian homespun tweed, with a red cardigan vest buttoned across his chest. Mr. Marchand (who had been speaking for over two hours) on raising his head to continue, observed the change that had taken place, and ever ready as he is said, "Mr. Speaker, I had no idea I had been speaking so long. When I commenced you were a young man with black hair and upright stature, now I see your locks are grey, your beard white, and you stoop with age." This of course brought down the House, and no one joined more heartily in the laugh than the jolly old member for Maskinonge, who is himself no mean wit, and never rises but keeps the House in the best of humour.

Last night a somewhat similar affair happened, but with this difference, whereas the former was simply amusing, that of last night was rather questionable. Mr. Speaker Beaubien retired while Mr. Marchand was speaking in reply to Mr. Taillon and was criticising remarks made by the member for Montreal East, when the latter gentleman, to the surprise of all, was called to fill the Speaker's place, thus closing his mouth till the return of that gentleman, and he had no sooner resumed his seat when Mr. Taillon took occasion to contradict the assertions of Mr. Marchand. The calling on Mr. Taillon was "unfortunate," to say the least of it.

It never rains but it pours. Notwithstanding the lateness of the sitting on Wednesday night and Thursday morning, the Budget speech was delivered on Thursday evening. The after-

noon sitting was finished at 4 o'clock, when the Speaker rising gravely stated, "I declare it to be 4 o'clock, and the House took recess. At 8 o'clock the House re-assembled and the Hon. Treasurer Church delivered his Budget speech, which lasted two hours and fifty minutes." I shall not weary your readers with even a synopsis of it, but I must compliment the Treasurer on the care and labour he must have bestowed in order to produce such a financial statement, that it leaves nothing to be desired. Had any other member in the House undertaken the delivery of that speech it would have lasted over four hours, as Mr. Church speaks nearly twice as fast as any one I ever heard. The most important points are that there is a deficit of about \$175,000 and that two new taxes have been imposed to cover it. Over one there must be weeping and gnashing of teeth in St. Francois Xavier street, as it imposes a tax of ten cents per hundred dollars on every transfer of stock of an incorporated body or Joint Stock Company, the other of 25 cents upon each hundred dollars of the nominal value or amount of all contracts or agreements entered into for any purpose whatever, with the exception of those mentioned above, when the thing to be done or promised is of any appreciable value, including such transactions as deeds of sale, transfers of any kind, obligations, &c.; exemptions being made in favour of Bank Bills, Promissory Notes, but not the protests thereof, Bills of Lading, Warehouse Receipts, Customs and Excise Bonds, Charter parties, receipts and releases, certified copies and extracts from the Registrars of Civil Status, policies of Insurance and Assurance Receipts, Wills, donations between parents and children, and also all other contracts excepting those having reference to transfers of stock where the value of the matter or thing contracted about is less than \$200.

Among the notable arrivals in town this week is Sir Francis Hincks. Of course his arriving on the morning of the day on which the Budget Speech was delivered it was expected so thorough a master of finance as Sir Francis would have been present on such an occasion, but to the surprise of all he did not appear, but remained in his room at the hotel the whole evening.

The absence of one member from his seat in the House during the delivery of the speech was remarked by all, especially after the very marked manner in which he has been attacking the Treasurer on the financial condition of the Province. I refer to Mr. Bellingham, member for Argenteuil, whose absence was the more marked as the Treasurer referred especially to some remarks made by the hon. member some days since anent the financial condition of the Australian colonies as compared with that of this Province. It remains to be seen how he will criticise a speech he has never heard.

During the last week the Report of the Railway Commissioners has been distributed to the members, but as its contents have been either published or commented on in nearly every newspaper in the Dominion, I will simply state that the progress of the work seems to be most satisfactory, and that, all going on well, the whole line from Quebec to Ottawa, via Montreal, will be completed and in full working order before the end of the year at a total cost of about ten millions of dollars.

The Quebec *Morning Chronicle* has been publishing for the last few days a carefully prepared criticism of the pictures, works of art, and curiosities exhibited in Morin College, of which I wrote you in my last letter. It is evidently the work of one who understands the subjects he writes about, and has had no small effect in increasing the benefit of that exhibition as it has been crowded daily, the price of admission having been reduced to ten cents in order to place it within the reach of the poorest.

The back is now broken of the serious work of the session, and for the future night sessions will be the rule.

The Private Bills Committee has commenced its sittings, so from now we may expect the arrival of deputations and delegations, and the lobbies will be crowded with people interested in the passing of public and private measures. Let it be hoped that the disgraceful scenes of the last Parliament will find no place during the present session.

KRIS KRINGLE.

ROUND THE DOMINION.

MAPLE sugar in London, Ont.

ENGLISH mails are to close on Thursday instead of Friday, throughout the Dominion.

THERE are fifteen tenderers for leasing the North Shore Railway.

AN amalgamation of the Protestant Societies of Montreal is spoken of.

THE Nova Scotia Legislature will meet for business on the 21st inst.

THE Orange incorporation question has come up in the Ontario Legislature.

WINNIPEG talks of a street railway, and a pontoon bridge over the river to St. Boniface.

FOR full particulars about Quebec Legislature see Kris Kringle's letter in another column.

TENDERS will at once be called for the construction of the new docks at Levis.

THE memorial to the Quebec Government praying for the raising of the jury standard in that Province is being signed by men of all positions, parties, creeds and nationalities.

IT is rumoured in Toronto that the Dominion Government is bringing a suit against the Bank of Montreal to recover the Secret Service money paid on Sir John Macdonald's order after his retirement from office.