The Weekly British Colonist.

Wednesday January 26 1870.

The Approaching Struggle.

Never in the history of this colony has its Legislature been convened under circumstances calculated to impart so much interest and importance as those which exist at the present moment. Sessions there have been in which issues all important to individuals or particular communities were to be decided; but in the present instance issues must be decided which most intimately concern the entire colony, if not the nation of which it forms an infinitesimal part. But the coming session derives particular importance not alone from the nature of the questions themselves, but also from the new circumstances under which these questions will be considered It must be admitted, it has been painfully felt that Legislative proceedings have hitherto been little better than a farce Under more favorable conditions a house composed of two-thirds Government Officials could not be expected to be a very independent body. But here, with a despotic form of government, where the will of the Governor can make and unmake councillors, the case is even worse. On all Government questions—and somehow most important questions have assumed the form of Government measures—voting in the House has, of course, been a humiliating farce, a mere matter of 'Simon says thumbs up.' The representative members might 'have their say,' they might protest, they might even go to the extent of withdrawing in a body, as was done upon one occasion during the last session; but they were only sneered at for their pains. Legislation went on only the more smoothly for their absence. Perhaps of all the phases presented by our hybrid Legislature the most painful was that of 'Voting the Supplies.' To witness members of the Government not only voting themselves additional salaries, but standing up in their places in the House and piteously pleading for more in the form of allowances, was a sight but too well calculated to bring the entire Government into disfavor and contempt. To such a length was this little game of raising salaries and increasing allowances and pickings carried that one official who started with £250 a year found his income growing till it reached the handsome figure of £1,500. Although we see no reason for thinking that any constitutional improvement has been made either in the composition of the House or in the form of our Government, yet we venture to think that the working of these institutions will be greatly ameliorated under the management of the present Governor. In all probability, he has not the power to introduce a larger representative into the Legislative Council, but he has the power to render more effective the modicum of representation the people now possess. He can make a reality of what is now a sham. It is questionable whether the official members will not be relieved from the delicate service of voting upon their own salaries. In any event, we are not without hope that there will be fewer salaries to vote upon. The country expects that, whatever else may be left undone, the Governor will divert to much needed and highly reproductive colonial works a portion of that stream of revenue which has so long uninterruptedly flowed into the seemingly bottomless breeches pockets of the officialdom. If he does this the colonists will look with a lenient eye upon everything else. If he does not do this all else will utterly fail to satisfy public expectation and public need. Altogether, apart from impending constitutional changes, a sweeping measure of retrenchment is expected at the hands of the present Governor. To speculate upon the probable form in which the question of questions—Confederation—will come before the Legislature would scarcely tend to much profit. In little more than a fortnight public anxiety on that score will in all probability be set at rest; but we have not yet been able to divest ourselves of the conviction that the people are remiss in their duty in not making the conditions upon which this colony must enter the Dominion the subject of discussion and resolutionising. It is greatly to be regretted that the unofficial members, upon whom so much responsibility must devolve in regard to this question, should in some instances go to the House presumably ignorant of the views and wishes of their own constituents. One subject of very great importance which is certain to occupy the attention of the Legislature is that of the Judiciary; and we are greatly mistaken if the representative members at all events will not be prepared to act with greater determination to attain some practical results during this than during any previous session. There must be no more attempts at cramming inoperative bills, cooked up in the Colonial Office, down the throats of the people's representatives. The time has arrived when individual interests and nice points of personal etiquette must be made to yield to the public good. Very general regret will be felt on account of the inability of His Excellency to open the Legislature in person, both on his own account and in the general interest, and the colonists will doubtless be prepared, in judging of the Governor's policy, to make considerable allowance on account of the unfortunate position in which he has been placed.

Thursday Jan 20

THE OVEREND-GURNEY CASE—EFFECT OF THE VERDICT OF ACQUITTAL.—It is difficult, says the London *Times*, to describe the scene which ensued when the verdict of not guilty was pronounced in the Overend-Gurney case. Immediately the most enthusiastic cheers burst from the crowded audience, which it was in vain endeavoured to prevent. In vain the Lord Chief Justice held up his hands and the officers of the Court shouted for silence. The cheers drowned all other sound, and became each minute louder and louder, until they became almost deafening in effect. Peal after peal of cheers succeeded, and the whole scene was one of the wildest excitement. The cheers were caught up by the vast crowd without waiting for the verdict, and the echoes of the cheers seemed to arouse fresh enthusiasm in the audience, and then broke out in cheers louder than before. Meanwhile, the scene in Court was most impressive. The effect of the verdict upon the defendants and their friends was almost electrical. Some started to their feet and shook each others hands warmly, and uttered exclamations of joy and delight, which, however, were inaudible amid the thunder of those frantic cheers which drowned all other sounds. Some seemed overwhelmed with emotion and more than one burst into tears. The leading counsel present, the Solicitor General and Sir J Karslake, had their hands seized and warmly pressed by their grateful clients, and all this being observed by the vast crowd—all upstanding and cheering—only added to the excitement, and elicited still louder bursts of cheering. At last the violent excitement so far calmed down that the cheers ceased, only to be renewed outside, however, when the defendants appeared, and then they received an ovation strangely contrasting with the howls of execration which were heard at the Mansion House when, amid much popular excitement, they were committed.

HENRI ROCHEFORT.—The name of Henri Rochefort is inseparably connected with the present crisis in French politics. The following is an account of the reception at the *Corps Legislatif* by the brilliant assemblage present at the opening. Even the Emperor and the little Prince Imperial appear to have 'larked' immoderately when the great radical's name was called:—Henri Rochefort' is called for. A shriek of laughter is the only answer. The grave Judges take it up, the Marshals and the Judges holding their sides the while. The Senators show their bald pates, or the golden wires forged by D. Evans, in their efforts to give out the loudest notes in this laughing chorus—all laughed to order. Ladies utter and jump on their seats to see if Rochefort is coming, and the Princess Metternich, who is in her old place in the gallery, grins like 'Miss Lucy' in the song, the households of the Imperial personages present evince their readiness to go into convulsions, the childish piping laugh of the Prince Imperial is mingled with the coughing and expectorations, which this burst of hilarity has occasioned among his seniors. The Emperor emits a 'guffaw' like the rest, which emboldens M Duvergier, the *Guarde des Sceaux* (Minister of Justice), to cry out a second time—'Henri Rochefort.' Rochefort was near the door, looking in at the comedy. He wore a paletot, and had come in search of 'impressions' for his two *sous* journal—the *Marseillais*—which comes out on the 2d of December. A vast number of persons recognized him, and the *mouchards* directed to watch him sneered at him, threw up their hats, and gave the signal for a tumultuous chorus of *Vive l'Empereur.*

CHLORAL, THE NEW ANÆSTHETIC.—The discovery of the anæsthetic powers of ether, followed close by chloroform, was one of the great events of this century. It was an immense step in surgery, for it not only diminished pain but it made many operations possible which before could not be performed on account of the restlessness of patients. But the anæsthetics now in use soon lose their influence and something more durable in its power is wanted. Several medical journals of Germany say the want has been supplied. 'Chloral,' discovered by a Dr Liebrich is, according to them, a fluid which if injected under the skin in small quantity, creates an entire insensibility that lasts six or eight hours and leaves no headaches or unpleasant feeling such as follow the use of ether or chloroform enough to produce insensibility for fifteen minutes. If these statements are true chloral will soon become one of the most important articles in our Materia Medica.

ARRIVAL OF THE MAIL STEAMER.—The mail steamship California, Capt C E Lyons, arrived at 5 o'clock last evening, having left San Francisco at 7 p m on Saturday, and made the run in three days and 22 hours from wharf to wharf in the face of a head wind on the first day out. The California is much improved in appearance. Since her last visit to this port, her upper deck has been cut down and a range of staterooms removed. It is probable, therefore, that her well-earned reputation as a roller has departed from her and that she may now be classed among the light heels and steady heads. Fifty passengers, the English and American mails, and 120 tons of freight came by the California.

The late frosts were destructive to the grocers' stocks of potatoes, onions, &c. A great many tons of vegetables, though under cover, were hopelessly nipped on Sunday and Monday and reduced to pulp by the thaw of yesterday.

SUIT FOR DAMAGES AGAINST A CITY COUNCILLOR.—It is stated that Harry Richardson, late acting pound-keeper, has commenced an action against one of the Councillors of Johnson street Ward to recover damages for alleged slanderous statements, made by the Councillor some ten days ago, when the Pound By Law was 'on the carpet.' The damages are laid at $10,000.

Do you wish to 'drive dull care away?' Yes! Then go to Frank Campbell's Corner and buy one of the Fivaro Espartero Britannicas, or Pumariegas received by him yesterday. A single cigar is warranted to cure the most desperate case of the blues; a box, to make a man happy for the balance of his days.

HARRIS' POND was the scene of much enjoyment on Tuesday night. Skaters mustered in strong force and remained until a late hour. Messrs Piper and McNiff erected a board shanty on the bank of the pond for refreshment of the 'inner man' and woman and were liberally patronized. The sudden thaw of yesterday, however, melted the ice and put a stop to the enjoyment.

STEAMSHIP MOVEMENTS.—The Gussie Telfair, Capt Lyons, will sail on Sunday morning at 8 o'clock for San Francisco direct. The California, Capt N L Rogers, will sail for Portland on Saturday morning at 7 o'clock.

FOR OMINECA.—Several Peace River miners started up in the Enterprise yesterday. From present indications, one-half the able-bodied men now in Victoria and on the Sound will be off for the New California before the first of May.

THE FIRST RIPPLE.—Ten miners for Omineca, or New California, arrived on the California. They form the first ripple of a mighty wave of immigration soon to reach these shores.

SOOKE.—The inhabitants of Sooke—an important and growing district—are about to petition for the establishment of a post office, and a mail carriage at least once a week. The wish ought to be gratified.

DISAPPOINTMENT.—The U. S. steamer Newbern declined to take a mail or express hence yesterday, much to the disappointment of everybody. Churlish.

BROKEN LEG.—Dr. Davie was called yesterday to attend a laborer at Upland Farm who had broken a leg.

THE ship Marimon will sail to-day from Muir's Mills, Sooke, with a cargo of lumber for Australia.

THE U S steamer Newbern arrived at the mouth of the harbor at noon yesterday, landed her pilot, and sailed immediately for San Francisco.

The steamer Enterprise got off at 8 o'clock yesterday morning with 30 passengers and a small freight.

The Road Tax.

EDITOR BRITISH COLONIST.—Where can I see the published list of defaulters under the Road Tax Act? I am agent for two estates of absentees, yet I am unable to ascertain whether my clients owe anything or not. Will you not, if you can get hold of the list, print it in your widely circulated paper, and thus save many of your patrons from expense and annoyance? INQUIRER.

[The list may be seen in the *Government Gazette*. The request of our correspondent is, we think, unreasonable. If he have any complaint to make of the nonpublicity of the notice he should make it to the Government; but he surely cannot in reason, expect the COLONIST to publish advertisement-matter gratuitously or to supply, without pay, the paucity of circulation of the *Government Gazette*.—ED. COLONIST.]

Opening of the French Chambers—The Emperor—Rochefort—The Mob.

An American, writing from Paris, gives the following account of the opening of the French Chambers, which, in view of the recent tragic event in Paris, possesses more than ordinary interest:

Precisely at 1, in the direction of the Tuileries, I heard a blare of trumpets, and looking up I saw from the central pavilion of the palace a soldier waving the flag of the country. Immediately following came the concussion of a heavy discharge of artillery stationed at the Invalides, about two miles distant. All Paris was thus advised that the Emperor was en route. A faint buzz and the uneasy surging of the crowd beyond, advised me that the supreme moment was near. First a squad of horsemen, then two or three carriages with occupants, the horses gaily decked and the vehicles trimmed with gold. 'There he is!' shouted a few. 'No, no!' answered the police and others. Another detachment of cavalry, followed by a coach of glass and gold, drawn by magnificently comparisoned steeds, the driver and footmen shining gorgeously in their gold lace and other finery. Loud cheers arose around me, and peering over the heads in front I saw the Emperor, a stoutish-looking man, with thin grey hair, seated easily in the carriage, dressed in soldier's uniform and frequently lifting his hat to the multitudes. Beside him sat a little, gentle-faced boy, the Prince, who also acknowledged the cheers by raising his hat. I stood with a little knot of Americans and we all felt disappointed at the apparent lack of enthusiasm in the crowd. Once, in fact, we gave a hearty '*Vive l' Empereur!*' to show them our respect for the brave man who was passing by, for however much our democratic instincts may revolt at the abstract Imperial tyranny, and however much we may feel like deriding such glaring pomp as marked the cortege that passed before us, we can not restrain our admiration of so wise and intrepid a ruler as Napoleon III.

His Majesty passed on and entered the grand Hall of the Louvre, where he delivered his short address of not more than fifteen minutes reading, and then returned by the same route to the Tuileries. From Minister Washburn, who was present at the delivery of the address, I learn that the Emperor read it in a full, round tone, with great deliberation and emphasis. At one point in it where he said, 'France is anxious for liberty, but accompanied by order; for the latter I answer,' the cheering was immense. Another incident is of some interest. When the Deputies were announced and the name of Rochefort called, there was a very decided laugh of derision in the assembly, followed by hearty cheers for the Emperor. Rochefort is one of those brass-mounted fellows upon whom no incident of this kind would have any effect. The man knew very well that he was not in the house of his friends, and probably consoled himself by the reflection that if the 18,000 voters who returned him from the First Circumscription of Paris could have a fair shake at my Lords and Ladies' of the galleries and benches around him they would make short work of their laced coats, cocked hats and other gewgaws of state. The temper of the 'roughs' who collected to see the show was shown in their treatment of the distinguished personages who attend the Emperor on all state occasions. The aristocratic worthies in leaving the palace were obliged to pass out of the court into the Rue de Rivoli on the one side and the Qui de l'Ecole on the other. These street were so jammed with people that the carriages containing the Lords and Ladies were frequently choked up and stopped for minutes at a time, during which rough men and women crowded against the wheels and peered impudently in at the windows. At one moment a knot of mischievous Americans, by way of experiment, started a groan, which the crowd quickly caught and continued it for some time, winding up with cheers for Rochefort. The behaviour of the dignitaries under all this rudeness and insult was a picture of nonchalance. They were used to it, I suppose.

Canadian Mail Summary.

The overland mail brings us two days' later exchanges from the Dominion. On the 18th December a conference of the judges was held at the residence of the Chief Justice of New Brunswick, to consider the reserved points in Munroe's case. On the 20th Judge Allan informed the prisoner's counsel that none of his objections could be admitted. On the 21st the sentence of death was passed upon Munroe, the judge at the same time advising him to abandon all hope of mitigation. The execution has been fixed for the 15th February. The prisoner is represented as being utterly prostrated. It is stated that he has not slept since the verdict, and that he refuses food. The local legislature was in session at St John. An official statement of the Post Office Savings Bank for November shows amount on deposit to be $2,690,653 15. The statement of the Bank of Montreal shows liabilities $21,253,248, and assets $29,961,084 21. It was reported that Capt Cameron had been shot at Red River, but the report was generally discredited. The Toronto *Leader's* Ottawa despatch of the 18th says: It is not unlikely that vigorous measures will be taken to restore the authority of the Hudson Bay Company in the territory. Col DeSalaberry was the bearer of a proclamation from the Governor-General to Governor Macdougall. There seems to be no doubt that a reaction has taken place. The English and Scotch half-breeds are determined to stand by the Canadian Government, and Governor Macdougall, with Surveyor-General Dennis, is advancing at the head of a strong force. It is believed that he will meet with but little opposition and that the agitation will soon die out. A dispatch was received at Ottawa from Mr McDougall on the 21st stating that affairs remained much the same, and that Colonel Dennis' force consists chiefly of Scotch and English half-breeds. The *Leader* offers the following remarks upon the subject, the tone of which would lead one to suspect that our contemporary was in possession of later news than he has published, as we fail to detect anything 'very reassuring' in that:—'The latest Red River news is not very reassuring. Colonel Dennis, acting upon what instructions we do not know, is said to have organized a party of some 200 Swamp Indians and their half-breed relations and entered upon a campaign to secure Mr Macdougall's entrance into Fort Garry. Mr Macdougall is said to be a party to the arrangement. Captain Cameron will, of course, be a leading man in the undertaking. We very much question the wisdom of this movement. We feel confident it is not authorized or encouraged by the Canadian Government, which as yet has no authority in the territory. Perhaps it is inspired by the Hudson Bay Company, with a view to getting their £300,000 as soon as possible. In any case we look upon this armed assault upon the man Red and his associates as exceedingly ill-timed and dangerous; though it is quite possible, that at this distance from the scene of action we may not be able to judge correctly of the affair. Of this only we have the strongest belief, that the first shot fired to take Fort Garry by force, and the first drop of blood spilled in the venture will be the signal for a war of extermination which will extend to the very base of the Rocky Mountains. We shall be glad to find that the latest published news shall prove to be incorrect. Of course, our government has no control over the Hudson Bay Company people, and if Mr McTavish had been imprisoned by the insurgents there would, no doubt, be a strong feeling aroused, in which our representatives on the border might feel they were sufficiently interested to take a hand. We can only hope that nothing rash will be done; although we all know that Mr Macdougall himself is often imprudent, that Captain Cameron is exceedingly hot-headed, and that Colonel Dennis has no small warlike ambition. Conciliatory measures, and not the shedding of blood, are what is required. The insurrection could have been put down by conciliation, we are satisfied. We are not so certain that the *vi et armis* policy will prove quite so effective. But we shall see what we shall see.' The Dominion Parliament has been summoned to meet for the despatch of business on the 15th February. The Ontario Parliament was to have been prorogued on the 31st December. The defaulting Rittenstein was brought up for examination on further charges on the 23rd.

THE *Memorial* gives the following details on the subject of an infant presenting the most remarkable electrical phenomena ever yet reported:—We are not suprised to learn that there will be given to the Imperial Academy of Medicine of Paris, an elaborate and intelligent communication of Dr. C***, of Lyons, who with two others, went to St Ursula and had the scientific satisfaction of witnessing the dying agonies, for the child is unhappily dead, of the poor little sufferer. It would seem that the last moments of the electrical infant presented some truly astonishing phenomena. For nearly two weeks before its death electrical lights manifested themselves with a vividness that confounded the scientific men who 'only saw fire,' according to the not very respectful language of our correspondent. No one could occupy the space around the cradle, he says, and the shocks were sometimes strong enough to knock down all who approached it. Two cats and a dog, boarders in the house, were compelled to leave. This state of things was aggravated from day to day, and hour to hour, until the termination of the malady, which occurred on the 8th of November at half past eleven in the evening. The infant expired without the least pain or convulsion, sweetly in perfect repose and as if it sank to sleep, while the furniture and occupants of the room were seized with an indescribable agitation. At the last moment the emanations of light from the body of the dying child became three times more intense than they had ever been seen before and lasted several minutes after death. It is not known, at least to the public of what disease the child died. The electrical infant was born on the 12th of February, 1869, and died on the 8th of November, having lived nine months. Science must tell us if it can, the meaning of this electrical phenomena.

THE lucid intervals of the Empress Carlotta are becoming rarer and rarer, and she tries to deceive her attendants with the most consummate cunning. A short time ago she tried to mount the horse of an orderly who had brought dispatches from Brussels, and Colonel Van der Velde had to prevent her by main force. All horseback exercise is forbidden to her for fear she might flee. This restrain worries her terribly, and it sometimes drives her frantic. In her calmer moments she uses the telegraph office in the Castle Tervueren in order to complain to the different Sovereigns of Europe about her imprisonment. These dispatches are sent but only to Brussels. The Empress waits personally for an answer and spends in this manner whole days in the telegraph office. Still afraid of poison, she never eats at the general table, but eats at a small table in her bedroom, and the officer on duty must eat his dinner standing, as he does not find room at the small table. Her nights are restless and often she does not get a wink of sleep until morning. Only a very strong constitution like hers would be able to bear up under such a state of feverish excitement.

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