

The Weekly Colonist.

Tuesday, April 19, 1864.

THE ECONOMY OF POLITICS.

Statistics are sometimes as amusing as they are interesting. In looking over the record of the time expended by our Members of Assembly during the present session, we find that from the 3d of September, (the opening of the House) to the end of March there were 92 days on which our legislators met, and did something (we mean literally); 11 on which they met and did nothing—no quorum having been present; and 60 days (exclusive of Sundays) on which they neither met nor did anything. In September, there were 9 days on which the House met; in October there were 18 days; in November, 10 days; in December, 9; in January, 11; in February, 17; and in March, 18. The number of hours consumed on the average was one and a half each day, making 138 hours during the past six months. But to carry out figures, a little further; we find that in order to give this hour-and-a-half attendance, the members are obliged to make a further sacrifice of three-quarters of an hour each day in going to and returning from the legislative building. Thus in order to perform the daily labor of an hour-and-a-half, the legislator is obliged to expend two hours and a quarter—or in other words to devote a number of hours in going and returning during the session equal to half the actual time taken up in the House of Assembly. Was there ever anything more thoroughly profligate than this? Legislation must surely seem to our Assembly-men a luxury that cannot be indulged in very much at a time. Their delicate intellectual appetites must not run the risk of satiety with food of such rarity and richness. A few crumbs per day of this ambrosial diet are all that can be taken with safety. Other legislative bodies may have the temerity to indulge extensively in the delicacy—may rush at it with a vulgar vigor that indicates a plebeian health—but our refined law-makers will nibble and sip as gently as the tiniest troutlet.

It is strange that we cannot, in the absence of ability to improve on other countries, at least content ourselves with imitating them. There is no want of legislative examples. From the "first deliberative assemblage in the world" to the smallest provincial parliament on the other side of the American continent,—from the least of the Australian Assemblies to the California Senate,—we have abundant instances of legislative labor. In each and all of these bodies we shall find an earnestness displayed in getting through the work of a session, and we shall see despatch the "order" of every day. Legislation does not "dwindle down to an hour and a-half's irrelevant twaddle, but rises to the highest and most important vocation of man. We shall have to follow in the footsteps of our superiors in knowledge and experience. Our members of Assembly will soon lead to the execution of this preliminary work, the result of which will enable all parties to form a more satisfactory estimate than is possible at present of the expense and practicability of the proposed undertaking.

The condition of the vast region lying to the north-west of the settled portions of the Province, is daily becoming a question of greater interest. I have considered it advisable to open this subject with a view to the Imperial Government, with a view to the Imperial Government, at a precise definition of the geographical boundaries of Canada in that direction. Such a definition of boundary is a desirable preliminary to further proceedings with respect to the vast tracts of land in that quarter belonging to Canada, but not yet brought under the action of our political and municipal system.

The paragraph in reference to the finances indicates that the government intend adhering to their programme of bringing the annual income to an equality with the expenditure. Of course, this is indicative of more taxation. What these taxes are to be levied on is not yet stated.

The speech also recommends the enlargement of the canal, so as to ensure a large share of the western trade. There is no doubt if we can open a highway of sufficient capacity to pass ships of sufficient burthen to cross the Atlantic in safety, we will secure a large share of the carrying trade of the Far West. Much of the future prosperity of Canada depends on the adoption of some such policy.

From the reference made to the North-west territory, and from the course His Excellency has taken on this subject, doubtless, the whole question of boundary, settlement, rights, &c., will be brought out, and good cannot fail to result from any judicious inquiry made about this interesting portion of British territory. You ultra mountaineers cannot fail to take deep interest in the paragraph above quoted; I hope it indicates a determination to open up that vast region for settlement, and that it will soon be the home of a hardy multitude of Anglo-Saxons. I hope yet to see, and that soon, the two iron bands uniting Canada and British Columbia, and bear the locomotive waking up the echoes in the gorges of the Rocky Mountains, when we shall have the pleasure of seeing our transmontane friends joining us on the banks of Ontario, in celebrating our national holiday, the 24th of May. Long may that day be our national fête day.

Extraordinary rumors are afloat as to the sudden changes among members of Parliament. It is alleged that Currier, Alonzo Wright, Poupon, Conger, and F. Jones will support the government, and that Dunkin will not support any act of confidence motion, but will try the ministry by their measures. It is said the ministers are confident

OUR CANADA LETTER.

[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]

CANADA WEST, Feb. 25th, 1864.

OUR FINANCES.

Hon. Mr. Holt, our minister of finance, is giving great satisfaction. He has sent \$1,555,000 to London to pay the full amount of interest on Debentures due January 1st. Also \$175,000 on account of claims of Messrs. Baring, Glyn & Co., the financial agents of the Province, and \$800,000 has been paid on Debentures due in Canada next fall. Our finances have not been in such a healthy state for the last ten years.

FINANCIAL COMMISSIONERS.

The Commissioners have issued their second report, fully confirming the statements in their former report and bringing to light a great number of the most nefarious transactions. Foote has been charging most outrageous prices—pen knives, \$58 per doz.; paper per ream, fols. \$20; post, \$12; note \$8; blotting, \$12; wrapping, \$8. Large amounts were paid in advance to the Mercury, of which Foote was the proprietor, and prices charged for advertising that would make you newspaper proprietors lick your lips.

The Hamilton Spectator drew largely in advance—about \$1600—to make accounts square, charging three or four times the usual prices for printing and advertising. The London Prototype has also had a finger in the pie. Mr. Baby, the French contractor for Lighthouses, Tugboats, etc., has fed deliciously at the public crib. A full account of all these peculations you will get in your columns, and leave you to draw your own conclusions from it. I may remark, however, that the speech suggests several measures of great practical importance. I hope the opposition will judge it proper to discuss and dispose of these questions on their own merits, although from the animus they displayed last session I am afraid that "might will make right" will be the only bearing on either side. The following paragraphs from the speech may be of interest to your readers, as in connection with the Overland Route:

"Unforeseen obstacles have retarded the survey of the proposed railway between the Province and the sister Colonies of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Arrangements are, however, now in progress, which I trust will soon lead to the execution of this preliminary work, the result of which will enable all parties to form a more satisfactory estimate than is possible at present of the expense and practicability of the proposed undertaking.

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they will be supported. The opposition leaders are widely disturbed and far from content. These rumors must be received with caution; for my own part, I have little faith in them, time will try, "as frost tries green kale."

The Quebec correspondent of the Globe is quite of opinion that the government will be sustained, without counting a single one of the Ottawa men, who have been the subject of so many rumors, and his statement, besides being reliable in itself, is fully corroborated by the tone of the opposition press, and by the hesitating tactics of the opposition leaders. The correspondent has every facility for knowing the truth in these matters, and I most sincerely hope he is right.

THE WAR IN NEW ZEALAND.

BATTLE AND DEFEAT OF THE NATIVES. GREAT LOSS OF BRITISH OFFICERS AND MEN.

Intelligence, in anticipation of the Overland Mail, of a great battle in New Zealand, has arrived. The Auckland correspondent of the Sydney Morning Herald writes on the 30th November:

The news which I am able to send you by the present mail is, without exception, the best that I have had yet to send. The disappointment sustained at Mere-Mere has been more than made up for by the unexpected success which we have experienced at Rangiriri. I scarcely looked for a stand of any kind to be made by the Maories after they deserted Mere-Mere, which I well knew to be naturally one of the strongest places in New Zealand—at all events, until they were starved out of their stronghold, whose possession of their lands and their resources, I never, it is clear, was reckoned upon, and in this case they pursued a totally unexpected course. On Friday, the 20th Nov., just four weeks after the Manukū fight (our last serious brush with the enemy) the General moved out of his camp at Rangiriri with the steam gun-boats, which were marshalled in the march by land in the same direction. The march by land is about 14 miles, while the windings of the river make it considerably more by water; consequently the afternoon was well advanced before either our troops or the Maories reached the famous Maori intrenchments. These had been the work of about nine months of native skill and labor, and experience has shown (what was not believed) that they were very ably constructed, so as to offer the very greatest obstacles to the assailants. Contrary to the common expectation, the place was fully manned. Great numbers of Maories were along the line of earth-works that frowned in defiance at the level approach, and were as well constructed as those of the Russians in the Crimea. It now appears that the whole of the Ngatāwa (or proper Waikato) tribe was in the place—a tribe which has had no fighting since the Maori wars. There were small detachments of other tribes, but the troops of those present belonged to this tribe and comprised every man of note in it, including both Thompson and the King (Matuaere). Rangiriri was well chosen for defence, as being backed on two sides by the Waikato Lake, it gives great facilities for escape by water in case of a reverse. The Maories had been rendered as strong as all the resources of native engineering talent could make it in the best part of a year.

We confine the narrative from the letter of the Southern Cross's special correspondent.

I have no doubt many will think that our loss is very severe considering the advantages gained. In one sense the loss is great; but those who have seen the place, and witnessed the withering volleys that were poured upon the intrenchments, only wonder that the casualties were not still greater. It should be borne in mind that our troops were standing open, and the enemy encamped in comparative safety behind his entrenchments. The total force at the General's command (exclusive of blue-jackets and Marines, whose assistance, in case of need, was always to be relied upon), amounted to 48 officers and 1,145 non-commissioned officers and men, who started for the scene of action as follows:—From Mere-Mere the Royal Artillery with two guns, Royal Engineers, 12th, 14th, and 65th, with 75 men of the 40th Regiment; the remainder of the 40th, were conveyed up the river in the gun-boats; and the force by water being intended to cut off the retreat in rear—a movement which, from unavoidable causes, only partially succeeded. The arrival of both parties was, as regards the time, everything that could be desired, and at the time that the guns on shore opened fire the steamers were just opposite the landing place; but after the Pioneer had cast off the small gunboats, which had materially assisted to steer her on the passage up, it became a matter of great difficulty to get the remainder of the 40th, on account of her great length the effect of the wind and current was so great as to render her almost unmanageable. During all this time the gunboats and Captain Mercer's battery were keeping up a heavy fire of shell upon the enemy's position, to which they replied by firing their pieces, sometimes singly and again in volleys, doing no damage, our men being far out of range. Seeing from the position of the steamer that it did not appear likely that she would soon be able to effect a landing of the troops, and the afternoon being very much advanced, the General ordered an advance. The 65th, being told off for the storming party, advanced in the following order:—No. 1 Company, under Lieut. Toker, in the centre; No. 2, on the right, under Captain Gresson, and No. 10, under Lieut. Talbot on the left. No. 9 made up 100 support, about 100 yards in the rear. From the deck of the steamer the advance was plainly visible, but the nature of the ground prevented the most impregnable part of the position, which was over the brow of the hill, from being seen. On the bugle for the advance being sounded, the men rushed forward, and the officers, covering the distance which lay between them and the object of their attack at a rapid pace, considering that a thick scrub covered the whole ground, and under a heavy fire from the enemy gained the first line of pits, over which numbers of them were driven, and engaged the enemy. In the advance, Captain Gresson, his second, and when the command of the company devolved on Ensign Spiller. The remainder of the land force came up shortly afterwards, and the enemy were driven from the outer works, and took refuge in the heart of the position. On

the advance of our men a number of the enemy retreated from the first line of pits to the rear position, and as the attacking force increased, those who had a way open for escape made off to the rear, towards the swamp. To cut these off, a party of men of the 65th, under Lieutenant Pennefather, was detached, and, after skirmishing through the tui-ree after the flying enemy, they poured in a fire among the bush just on the edge of the swamp where they were seen, to their great numbers. The effect was to drive them into the water, into which they plunged, and to the number of more than 100 commenced wading and swimming to the other side, a distance of a mile. At this time the steamer had succeeded in getting alongside, and the troops were quickly ashore, a party taking the course round the right, by the swamp; these the rebels being seen to sink, to rise no more alive. Only a comparative few escaped by some shelter in the different patches of scrub that were scattered about here and there. The scattered parties of the enemy were disposed of, the whole of the troops were disposed around the intrenchments, just over the brow of the hill on the swamp side. In this position a number of the enemy were posted, and several attempts were made to break through the line, but the peculiar formation of the intrenchments, which were either killed or dangerously wounded. The only means of access was by a narrow opening through which only one could enter at a time, thereby rendering it impossible for those in rear to follow up quickly in support. It was on these attempts that the greater part of our loss was incurred. The General received his wound here. Midshipman Watkins of the Curacoa (who, I should have mentioned, was with Lieutenant Alexander of the same ship, also wounded, had charge of a 6-pounder Armstrong, and marched on the Mer-Mere with the land force, met his death leading on his men, and Commander Mayne, in leading on the blue-jackets, was also wounded, and several other officers were wounded in like manner. The Maories evidently knew the importance of this inlet, and defended it with great resolution. The hour was now getting late, and the General, finding that the Maories were taking the place by storm were only intended with loss to the troops without any advantage being gained, gave orders for the parapets to be undermined and blown up, and the attack to be deferred until daylight in the morning. Accordingly, the whole force was disposed round the parapets, occupying the trenches immediately around. The digging was commenced, but from the nature of the soil, a loose sand, it was found impossible to drive in any distance, as the earth fell in before making much progress. However, it had the effect of reducing considerably the parapets on the side operated upon, and would have afforded a better road of ingress for the storming party which was told off to attack in the morning. During the whole night our troops lay around, the enemy keeping up a fire and shouting and yelling in a most frightful manner. But, notwithstanding all this, they had fallen, that the trap into which they had fallen, that they were plotting each a temporary one, and that the morning would see the attack renewed, for soon after day-break the head chief, bearing a white flag, stood up upon the parapet, and called for some Pakaha who could speak Maori. A Mr. Pennefather, interpreter for the force, advanced, but in the meanwhile our men had crept up, and the whole of the party were surrounded before they were hardly aware of it, so that whatever terms they might have been disposed to surrender upon were rendered useless, an unconditional one being their only resource. Their lives were therefore spared upon this condition, and they were committed by the General upon the brave deed they made. The party on being brought out was found to number 185, including one or two women, with 175 stand of arms. A guard was put upon them, and strange as it appears, but in war it is always so, the men who had an hour before were plotting each other's destruction were now chatting and laughing together, the Maories appearing quite happy and contented, and sensible that their lives were perfectly safe in our hands. Among the prisoners are some chiefs of note, the names of whom I will endeavor to ascertain; twelve of the party were wounded, but not seriously. Soon after the surrender a party of natives, to the number of about 30, were seen advancing over the hills from the direction of the King's place. They carried a white flag, and halted occasionally, as if undecided in their movements. Mr. Edwards, the interpreter, went on to meet them, and found that it was a party of 400 men who, with William Thompson at their head, were coming to the rescue; but seeing the white flag and our flag flying on the parapet, concluded that the garrison had surrendered, and that peace had been made. The messenger sent by Thompson to meet Mr. Edwards inquired the conditions which were disposed to accept, and was of course told that of unconditional surrender, and laying down their arms, on which terms I understand that Thompson was willing to come in himself, but some among the party would not agree. However, Thompson sent his whole force here to the General, which, I believe, signifies submission, and then the whole party turned back on the road they came. The number of bodies found in the trenches after the place was taken amounted to 24, one of them being that of a white man, who was recognized as a deserter who had been in the Artillery, the 65th and 12th regiments. He had met the fate he so richly deserved for his treachery. Another white man is reported to have been among them, but he had effected his escape. It is to be hoped that vengeance may yet overtake him. While on the subject of escape I may mention, that, notwithstanding that the place was so surrounded, William Thompson, who was in the trenches during the whole of the day, managed, with a small party, to effect his escape during the night, and swam the swamp, his object being evidently to fetch a reinforcement, which, however, arrived too late. To return to the subject of the enemy's loss. In addition to the twenty-four bodies in trenches, others were found in the scrub, and some wounded. Since then parties have been digging in the trenches and seven more bodies were exhumed to-day; besides these several bodies have been recovered from the swamp, among them some women, which swell the actual known casualties to 41, which is far

below the actual number. When the swamp dries up, or the bodies begin to float, then much better estimate can be arrived at. But then the wounded are not included, and it did not do so accurately. During the engagement the Pioneer lay alongside the engagement, and the wounded were conveyed on board as fast as they could be brought down from the scene of action. There they were attended by the medical officers, and disposed in the cabin below, every attention being paid to their comfort. The numbers being so very great that it was found necessary to convey some on board the Avon, and the cabins of both vessels were filled. The church was set apart for those who had fallen, and on the morning following the bodies were disposed around the church, and viewed the bodies as they lay in the last attitude of violent death. The sight of one's own countrymen lying cold and stiff, who only a few hours before had been filled with life, is but a sorry sight, and I made a short stay of it. The only consolation that I had was that all had fallen in the cause which every Englishman considers his own, that of upholding the cause of his country, even at the expense of his life.

The Maori King movement is considered as extinguished. William Thompson has addressed the Governor, suing for peace on any terms, all his tribes except about 40 being killed, wounded, or prisoners. Governor Grey replied, "The General must be consulted by Ngaruawahia. The Queen's flag must be hoisted there. Then I will talk with you." Latest accounts say that General Cameron had rapidly pushed through the Waikato country, and that before the Maories could recover the blow given them at Rangiriri he had reached Thompson's head quarters at Rangiriri. The troops made simultaneous movements from Kohoro, Mere Mere, and the Queen's Redoubt. A portion was supposed to be intended for the occupation of the successful ranges of Hanau and Wanku. Colonel Austin, 14th Regiment, has died of wounds received at Rangiriri. The other wounded officers are expected to recover. The expedition to the Thames had constructed a line of strong redoubts, completely cutting off the upper country from the forest ranges of Hanau and Wanku. When Te Wheare arrived at Ngaruawahia he found Ngaruawahia preparing to cut down the King's flag staff, to prevent its falling into the hands of the British. Thompson and the Waikato would not permit this, and gave possession to Te Wheare, to surrender to the General.

OFFICIAL RETURN OF KILLED AT RANGIRIRI, NOV. 20, 1863.

(From the Government Gazette, Nov. 30.)

- Royal Artillery—Bombardier William Martin, gun-shot wound through head; Gunner—Cultwell, gun shot wound left chest; Gunner—Keren, gun shot wound left leg and chest. 1st Battalion, 12th Regiment—Lieutenant W. L. Murphy; Private Richard Needham; Private Thomas Osborne; Private Darby Shea; Private George Smith. 2nd Battalion, 14th Regiment—Private Thomas Balfour, gun shot wound through head; Lance Corporal Charles Barrell, gun shot wound through head; Private Richard Nolan, gun shot wound through head; Private Robert McGrooy, gun shot wound through head; Private Henry Rossell, gun shot wound through heart. 40th Regiment—Private Edward Longhlin, wounded in head; Private Benjamin Barber, wounded in neck; Private Edward Hone, wounded in chest; Private Edwin Goldsmith, wounded in chest; Private William Usher, wounded in chest; Private John Daley, wounded in abdomen; Private John M'Nally, wounded in head; Private John Jones, wounded in head. 65th Regiment—Private William Johnston, Private George Bell, Private Alexander McClelland, Private Thomas Blackham, Private Robert Clarke, Private Alexander Hepburn, Private Jonathan Neat, Private John Cavanagh, Private Thomas Roberts, Private Patrick King, Private Peter Manley, Private—Mooney, Private James M'Connell, nature of injury not known. Royal Navy—Midshipman—Watkins, Curacoa; Quarter master J. Woods, Curacoa; A. B. William Tidy, Curacoa; A. B. Fredrick Osborne, Harrier; nature of injury not known. Marine—Private Richard Downer, Harrier; nature of injury not known.

RED RIVER ITEMS.

From the Nor-West.

THE FIRST LINK OF THE OVERLAND RAILROAD.—The St. Paul and Pacific Railroad was opened to Anoka on the 18th January. The event was celebrated at Anoka, with all the honors. In the evening a large number of excursionists from St. Paul sat down to supper in the International Hotel. There was much speechifying in the course of which the Hon. Edmund Rice made the following statement, which will interest our readers:—The wires are already in Montreal for a telegraph line from Pembina to Paget Sound, and it is proposed by the St. Paul and Pacific Railway Company, to construct a telegraph line from St. Paul to Pembina. The same interest has offered to the managers of this road to take it from Watub to Fort Garry.

The Hudson Bay Company have bought the steamer which was placed on the Red River by Burbank & Co., of St. Paul. The Red River country continues to be inundated with hordes of predatory Sioux, who act with great insolence, helping themselves to the goods of the settlers without the least compensation. Serious troubles are anticipated between them and the Saulteaux Indians. Little Six, a famous Sioux chief, who boasted that he had killed fourteen white women and children, in the Minnesota massacre, has been captured in British territory by American troops, and taken to St. Paul for trial. A good deal of excitement has been caused in the settlement by this act, as being a gross breach of international law. The Nor-West however, commends the course pursued by the American authorities.

The snow had altogether disappeared on the road between Pembina and St. Paul, on the 1st of February. Major Kimball, U. S. A., and another gentleman, drove a pair of horses through from St. Paul to the settlement, a distance of 600 miles, in ten days.

The Weekly Colonist.

Tuesday, April 19, 1864.

LOCAL INTELLIGENCE.

FISHER'S CASE.—Charles Fisher yesterday brought up on remand, being in possession of stolen goods, the property of Mr. J. H. Turner. My posed that his store on Langley broken into and robbed on the 6th December last. He identified pieces of goods and articles of value produced, as his property appeared for the prisoner, and the witness very quietly as to the goods, but failed to shake Sergt. Wilmet proved the arrest and the acquittal, and in the premises the articles produced Prisoner stated to him after the that he had been trading in Juan Packet, and had brought goods from the Sound, where they at a sale. Mr. Wright action of the officer narrowly. Officer of Sergt. Smith, the prisoner, squaw Kitty were further ready.

REPORTED LOSS OF THE SIE.—The following, from the Igonian, is what gave rise to report which gained currency the total loss of this steamer board.—The steamship Sie which recently left for Oregon ed on the Columbia bar, and perted lost. She was freighted number of passengers for mines. The above starting from the Mining and Scientific 26th, ult., is news to us. Nevada left this port on the days after the publication of she was in fine trim, and showed the terrible ducking above all.

SUPREME COURT.—The case of Cording came off in the Supreme day, and resulted in a verdict the plaintiff, being \$700 more of which had been paid into the

WAGES SUIT.—Jackson v. Defendant was sued for \$40, wages alleged to be due. The that it was a monthly agreement, and after the first week's defendant gave plaintiff notice to not require his services. The held that it was a monthly agreement defendant was entitled to a month's therefore made an order costs.

THE EMBURGE ON COMORAN.—Kinnow, a Queen Charlotte Indian, a Hydah, were yesterday evening concerned in the disturbance street, in which officer O'Connell, and were ordered to take be of good behavior.

We understand that will proceed in one of the gu Juan to make enquires into which have recently occurred with Indians and others.

STILL MISSING.—Nothing of Mr. George Roberts and his left this city on Wednesday last in a whale boat. They took quantity of flour, bacon and oil, and the boat had a mast, sail, and when found she contained which were under the three suspicion or rather the hope that they had encamped some secured the rest of the gear and to land and that she had been by the wind or tide. Further anxiously waited for by the parties, and we may perhaps suggest that means be at on authorities to clear up the making a search around the Island harbor.

A "DIFFICULTY" ON FOOT.—terday afternoon Fort street a considerable state of excitement "difficulty" which occurred Attorney General Cary and Mr. As the whole affair will be the Police Court it is sufficient state that the learned gentlemen to seek reparation for some grievous instrumentality of a he reckoned without his host accordingly second best. Mr. O much damaged.

TRADE WITH CHINA.—Messrs. Stuart, the brewers, have shipped the Napoleon III, to China, a their Colonial brewed Ale, to it will stand the test of whether it can find a market friends. A passenger on boat instructions from Messrs. Dun of this city, to procure orders ment of lumber and spars.

TROUBLE IN THE LEGISLATIVE.—We are credibly informed that ble Alfred Langley has resigned in the Legislative Council said that Hon. Roderick intimated his intention of resignation. Reputed cat the part of these gentlemen ent composition of this dist

GOV. SETMOUR ARRIVED.—the new Governor of British Dr. Birch, Colonial Secretary, Home, Private Secretary, by the steamer Panama.