

THE WAR-TRAIL!

CHAPTER LVIII.—(CONTINUED.)

These did not linger. Two hours had been allowed them to perform their errand; but long before the expiration of that period, we heard the double tramping of their horses as they came galloping across the plain.

In a few minutes they rode up, and we could see in the hands of Le Blanc three whitish objects, that in length and thickness resembled stout walking-canes. We recognized *les chandelles magnifiques*.

"Voilà! mon capitaine!" cried the Canadian, as he rode forward, "voilà les chandelles! Ah, mon Dieu! c'est un big sacrifice, et je suis bon Chretien—buon Catolico, as do call 'im ze dam Mexicaine; bien—ze bon Dieu we forgive—God ve pardon vill pour—for the grand necessitie; sure certaine he vill me pardon—Lige et moi—ze brave Monsieur Quack'osh."

The messengers had brought news from the village. Some rough proceedings had taken place since our departure. Men had been punished; fresh victims had been found under the guidance of Pedro and others of the abused. The trees in the church enclosure that night bore horrid fruit.

The alcalde was not dead; and Don Ramon, it was supposed, still survived, but had been carried off a prisoner by the guerrilla! The rangers were still at the rancheria; many had been desirous of returning with Le Blanc and Quackenbush, but I had sent orders to the lieutenants to take all back to camp as soon as their affair was over. The fewer of the troop that should be absent, the less likelihood of our being missed, and those I had with me I deemed enough for my purpose. Whether successful or not, we should soon return to camp. It would then be time to devise some scheme for capturing the leader and prime actor in this terrible tragedy.

Hardly waiting to hear the story, we lighted the great candles, and moved once more along the trail.

Fortunately, the breeze was but slight, and only served to make the huge waxen torches flare more freely. By their brilliant blaze, we were enabled to take up the tracks, quite as rapidly as by the moonlight. At this point, the horse had been still going at full gallop; and his course, as it ran in a direct line, rendered it more easy to be followed.

Dark as the night was, we soon perceived we were heading for a point well known to all of us—the prairie mound; and, under a faint belief that the steed might have there come to a stop we pressed forward with a sort of hopeful anticipation.

After an hour's tracking, the white cliffs loomed within the circle of our view, the shining selenite glancing back the light of our tapers, like a wall set with diamonds.

We approached with caution, still keeping on the trail, but also keenly scrutinizing the ground in advance of us—in hopes of perceiving the object of our search. Neither by the cliff, nor in the gloom around, was living form to be traced.

Sure enough the steed had halted there, or, at all events, ceased from his wild gallop. He had approached the mound in a walk, as the tracks testified; but how, and in what direction had he gone thence? His hoof-prints no longer appeared. He had passed over the shingle, that covered the plain to a distance of many yards from the base of the cliff, and no track could be found beyond.

Several times we went around the mesa, carrying our candles everywhere. We saw skeletons of men and horses with skulls detached, fragments of dresses, and pieces of broken armor—souvenirs of our late skirmish—we looked into our little fortress, and gazed upon the rock that had sheltered us; we glanced up the gorge where we had climbed, and beheld the rope by which we had descended still hanging in its place: all these we saw, but no further traces of the steed!

Round and round we went back and forward, over the stony shingle, and along its outer edge, but still without coming upon the tracks. Whither could the horse have gone?

Perhaps, with a better light, we might have found the trail; but for a long hour we searched, without striking upon any sign of it. Perhaps we might have found it, even with our waxen torches, but for an incident that not only interrupted our search, but filled us with fresh apprehension, and almost stifled our hopes of success.

The interruption did not come unexpected. The clouds had for some time given ample warning. The big solitary drops that at intervals fell with plashing noise upon the rocks, were but the *avant couriers* of one of the great rain storms of the prairie, when water descends as if from a shower-bath. We knew from the signs that such a storm was nigh; and while casting around to recover the trail, it commenced in all its fury.

Almost in an instant our lights were extinguished, and our bootless search brought to a termination. We drew under the rocks, and stood side by side in sullen silence. Even the elements seemed against me. In my heart's bitterest, I cursed them.

TO BE CONTINUED.

PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE.

BUDGET SPEECH!

A SATISFACTORY EXHIBIT!

ASSESSMENT NOT WANTED

One of Mr. Sullivan's Best Efforts.

THURSDAY, March 23. The Order of the Day for the House in Committee of Supply having been read:

HON. MR. SULLIVAN moved that the House do now go into the Order of the Day, and said that in doing so it became his duty to make a few remarks respecting the financial position of the country. When the present Government undertook the management of public affairs, they declared it to be their intention to reduce the public expenditure to the lowest possible amount compatible with the public interests, and to husband the resources of the Province as much as possible. How well they had performed what they undertook to do, appeared in the Public Accounts for the past year, which had been laid on the table of the House. Hon. members would see for the first time since Confederation, that there was a Balance at the end of the fourth session to the credit of the Province. On the transactions for the past year, these Accounts showed an excess of receipts over expenditure of \$14,104.83. After paying all bills against the Government, and all the indebtedness left by their predecessors in office, there is a balance on hand of about \$12,000. This is a satisfactory state of affairs, and the Government may congratulate themselves and the country respecting it. Supporters of the Opposition outside the House have found fault with the Government because a balance of \$14,000 appears to the credit of the Province, and declare that the whole revenue should have been expended. They further assert that there is no balance to the credit of the Province. He did not know by what process of reasoning or by what system of finance they came to that conclusion. He held in his hand the Speech with which His Honor the Lieutenant Governor opened the Session of 1878, and there found that his Honor was advised to say: "I am rejoiced to be able to assure you that the receipts for the past years have not only met the expenditure, but have left a small surplus." He thought it probably that the hon. gentlemen of the Opposition would be amused and surprised to learn that the statement put in the mouth of the Lieutenant Governor at that time, was not borne out by the facts. Of course it had reference to the Accounts for the year 1877. By referring to those Accounts for that year, it will be found that the total receipts were \$326,274.64, and the expenditure \$331,632.13, leaving a deficit of \$5,357.49. That is to say, that instead of there being a small surplus for the year 1877, there was a deficit to that extent. This fact was clear on the face of the Accounts tabled by the late Government during the Session of 1878. He would not have alluded to this matter, were it not for the fact that hon. members of the Opposition, and their supporters outside the House, have stated that the Government have placed in the mouth of His Honor the Lieutenant Governor a statement with respect to the finances of the past year, which is not true; in other words, that the statement in the Speech, at the opening of the present Session, respecting the surplus for the past year, is false. Now, the Public Accounts for the year 1881 show the very opposite to be the fact, and that, not only is there a surplus of over \$14,000 for that year, but that there is about \$12,000 to the credit of the Province. When the present Government came into power they found a large indebtedness left them by their predecessors, and, therefore, began their administration of public affairs under great difficulties. They undertook to reduce the public expenditure to the lowest possible sum consistent with the public interests, and the efficient performance of the public service. He need scarcely say with the accounts of the past year before the House and the country, that they had kept that pledge to the people, and that the result was satisfactory. When they came into office, they had reason to believe that the deficit left them by their predecessors was between \$30,000, and \$40,000, but when the Accounts were carefully examined, and all the outstanding claims against the Government came in, the amount was found to be \$81,000, as the Public Accounts would show. They, therefore, found that not only had they to meet the ordinary expenditure for 1879, but to meet that large amount of indebtedness. This had been accomplished gradually, until the end of the past year, when it was entirely blotted out. Looking at this fact, he thought the Government had fulfilled their pledge to the people in that respect. When this Province entered Confederation it was, for many years, in receipt of a very large revenue, but the Government had several large undertakings on hand, and found it necessary to carry them through to completion. It was not expected that their large expenditures would have to be continued for any great length of time. The result was that when they went out of power there were no Public Works of any importance to be undertaken beyond the construction of the Hospital for the Insane. For the construction of that building the present Government have expended large amounts of money, and at the same time have maintained all the other public works of the Province in at least as good condition as under their predecessors. During the very year they came into power, a storm took place during the month of October, which destroyed bridges and wharves to such an extent as to require an expenditure of upwards of \$20,000. This was an expenditure never anticipated; but it was nevertheless made, and the public works placed in good repair. He had before him a comparative statement of the public expenditure under the present Government, with that under the late Government, and would quote from it in order to show how the former had kept their promises to the people of this Province. The late Government came into power in September, 1879. He therefore thought that the revenue and expenditure of the year 1878 might fairly be taken as a fair standard for comparison with that of 1881, and desired to call the attention of the House to the results of that comparison.

son. The first item to which he would refer, was the cost of the Administration of Justice. This was a department which, under the late Government, as well as under the present Government, was under the control of the President of the Executive Council for the time being. The expenditure under the late Government, for the year 1878, in that department, was \$29,536.77, and in the present Government, for 1881, \$29,675.33, showing a reduction in favor of the latter of \$8,861.44, or nearly \$9,000. This was a considerable reduction for the Government to make in a service of this kind. Looking at the large expenditure in that department for 1878, he could not see how the late Government expended so much money. During the past year, peace, happiness and contentment prevailed throughout the Province, and in order to bring about that satisfactory state of affairs, the present Government expended \$9,000 less than had been expended for similar service under their predecessors. With reference to the office itself, which he himself was connected with, not more than \$20 or \$30 had been paid for any assistance for counsel for the Government in the Administration of Justice. During previous years, under the late Government, large sums, amounting to about \$2,500 were paid for services over and above those of the Attorney General. He did not, however, attach any blame to the late Attorney General on that account, as the state of the country may have required it. But it was a course which the present and future Governments should not follow. He would now call attention to the expense of Public Printing for the two years alluded to. In 1878, the amount paid for printing and stationery was \$10,185.09, while in 1881 the expenditure for the same purposes was only \$5,425.00, showing a reduction in favor of the latter year of \$4,760.09. The sum expended in 1881 included \$1,259.15 brought down from previous years, so that the actual expenditure was only about \$4,200 for that year. This would show a reduction in the cost of those items in favor of 1881, of no less than \$8,017.39. This is a very large saving. Reference had been made by hon. members of the Opposition, during the present session, to the Prince of Wales College and Normal School. When the present Government came into power, they amalgamated those institutions, and thereby undertook to effect a saving to the country of between \$2,000 and \$4,000 per year. The result of the working of the amalgamated institution shows that they were correct in their estimate. In 1878, the cost of working the Prince of Wales College and Normal School was \$8,309.94, while the cost of those institutions, amalgamated, was \$5,262.22 in 1881, leaving a balance in favor of the latter year of \$3,047.72. This statement could not be gainsayed by any hon. member of the House, and showed that a very considerable saving had been effected by the amalgamation. It would not be asserted either inside the House or outside of it, that the institution is not as efficient and giving as good satisfaction as the separate institutions of 1878. In his opinion, it is now much better managed, and the country is receiving more satisfaction from it than ever before. The Government had frequently been told by the Opposition that they had curtailed in many expenditures where they should not have done so. He was prepared to show that such was not the case. Comparing the expenditure upon Education in 1878, with that of 1881, it would be seen that the present Government had expended a much larger sum in that department than was expended during the former year under the late Government. The subject of Education in this Province is a very important one, and it is very necessary that the utmost liberality in dealing with it should prevail. Hon. members will see by the Public Accounts for the past year that no less than \$93,489.46 had been expended under that head, against \$50,456.62 expended in 1878 by the late Government, showing an increase of expenditure in favor of last year of over \$36,000. At the close of 1878, the last quarter's salary due the Teachers was carried forward by the late Government to 1879, and charged against the latter year. The same course was pursued almost every year while they were in office. He now came to the Public Works Department. With reference to the construction and repair of roads, bridges, culverts and wharves, the Government can safely say that while the expenditures upon them has been less than in 1878, the requirements of the country have been more fully met during the past year, than they ever were under the late Government. The roads, as hon. members are aware, were last year in very good condition, the bridges in a very fair state of repair, the wharves in good repair, and the people were afforded all the facilities necessary for the trade and commerce of the country. This is a satisfactory state of matters. No complaints have been made of any neglect on the part of the Hon. Commissioner of Public Works. It was true that hon. members sometimes called that hon. gentleman's attention to works requiring necessary repairs, and of the opening of new roads, &c., but this was customary under all Governments. Looking at the condition of our roads, bridges and wharves, there is good reason for saying that they were never in a better state of repair, nor better maintained, than during the term they have been in charge of the present Government. When the Government undertook the management of the Public Departments they determined to effect a considerable saving in connection with their working. They, therefore, reduced the salaries of the Heads of Departments, and amalgamated the Office of Provincial Secretary and Treasurer with that of Commissioner of Public Lands. This course was thought necessary and advisable under the then existing circumstances, and the result has proved that the Government were right in pursuing it. Not only has there been a saving in connection with each department, but there has been a reduction of expenditure to the extent of one salary of \$1,600 per year; and the management of the amalgamated Departments has been placed on a better footing than before. That the latter is the case is shown by the increased receipts at the Land Office. This must either be attributed to the change or to the better circumstances in which the farmers throughout the country may be placed. Probably both causes had their influence in bringing to the Public Treasury a larger amount of receipts than had been received for many years previously. In 1878 the late Government received from that source upwards of \$78,000 and the sum of \$122,000 as subsidy from

the Dominion Government. With these two large items of receipts, and a much larger amount from the Assessment on Real Estate and Poll Tax than had been received by the present Government, the late Government came out at the end of that year with a balance against the Province of over \$5000. The Government had been told by hon. members opposite that they should not use the receipts from the Land Office in the way they have used them, and in the way their predecessors have used them, viz., as ordinary revenue. Well, he could not agree with them in that opinion. The sum of \$800,000 was given us by the Dominion Government, on our entering Confederation, in consideration of our having no Crown Lands. If we had possessed Crown Lands, and had sold them, what would we have done with the proceeds? We would do the same as the other Provinces have done with the sums realized from the sale of their lands. In Nova Scotia, the Government sell and lease their Crown Lands, and the proceeds are paid into the Provincial Treasury, and used as ordinary revenue. In what other way could they use those moneys? Well, they did precisely what the Government of this Province are now doing with the sums realized from the sales of our Public Lands. These lands, which were purchased by the Local Government previous to Confederation, were purchased out of the ordinary revenue—out of the taxes raised from the people at large—and not out of any special fund provided for the purpose. The proceeds arising from the sale of those lands were used as ordinary revenue. The sums now received at the Land Office, derived from the sales of our Public Lands, are used in the same way. It would certainly be an advantage to fund those moneys and use only the interest of them, if the Province were in a position to do so; but in years past it had not been thought advisable by any Government to do that, and in his (Mr. S.'s) opinion no Government would ever be able to do otherwise than to use them for ordinary revenue. It will be a great many years before that fund is exhausted, and when it is all used up, some other means of raising a revenue must be adopted. In comparing further the expenditures of 1878 and 1881, he found that the present Government had effected a saving to the country in almost every item. For example, in the cost of telegrams alone, the decrease for last year from the outlay for 1878 was \$119.03. It would thus be seen that even in the smallest matters there had been a saving of the public funds under the present Administration. All know from experience that it is in small matters waste frequently takes place, and that economy must always begin there. The total expenditure for 1878, omitting railway land damages, and sums paid for estates, was \$331,306.57, and that for 1881 was \$257,873.48, showing a decrease of no less than \$73,433.09. But this was not all. The late Government, in addition to the large expenditure for 1878, carried forward into 1879 about \$61,000, to be paid by their successors. Why they did this he did not know; but it was well known that in the Autumn of 1878, the gentleman who was then Commissioner of Public Works, instructed the Supervisors that they must draw slowly from the Treasury for such sums as they required. The result was that a large sum was carried forward, as had just been stated, amounting to no less than one-fifth of the whole expenditure of that year. That was a system of financial kite-flying which was certainly not creditable to that or any other Government. By adding the sum of \$60,071.95 carried over to 1879 to the expenditure of 1878, as set forth in the Public Accounts for that year, the total expenditure will be found to be \$391,378.52. If, therefore, the late Government had paid all the Accounts against the year 1878, within that year, they would have come out with a deficit of over \$20,000. The Expenditure under the present Government for 1881, leaving out Railway damages, and sums expended under the Land Purchase Act, was \$257,873.48. Although the Government made every effort to have all the Accounts against that year presented to them in time for payment, a few remained out, although the closing of the year's Accounts was delayed as late as possible, in order that all Bills might be paid, and included in the expenditure of the year. It was found that only about \$6,000 remained to be carried forward to 1882. By adding that amount to the expenditure for 1881, the total will be \$264,322.95. Comparing this expenditure with that of 1878, as already shown, it will be found that there is a balance of \$127,055.57 in favor of the past year. That is the amount of saving which has been effected by the present Government for the year 1881.

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