

On the next day orders were given that the council would be held at the junction of Horse creek and the North Platte, thirty-six miles to the southeast, and thither the whole company proceeded. There is a ludicrous disparity in the estimates of the number who gathered there, some persons saying 8,000 and some 60,000. But even with the minimum figure, it was a tremendous convention for the frontier. Representatives of most of the plains tribes were present. The Sioux, the Cheyennes and the Arapahoes came in the greatest numbers, the Crows and Shoshones perhaps next; there were also Assiniboines, Minnetarees or Gros Ventres (Hidatsas), Mandans and Arikaras and doubtless small parties from other tribes. The government was represented by Colonel D. D. Mitchell, Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the Central Superintendency; Thomas Fitzpatrick, the noted trapper and "mountain man," now indian agent for the upper Platte and Arkansas; Colonel Samuel Cooper, Adjutant-general of the army; Colonel A. B. Chambers, editor of the Missouri Republican, who acted as secretary, and B. Gratz Brown, correspondent of the Republican, who also assisted with the secretarial work. A troop of the First dragoons, two troops of the Mounted rifles and a company of the Sixth infantry, in all some two hundred and seventy men, commanded by Captain R. H. Chilton, represented the military arm of the government. Robert Campbell, the fur trader, and Edmond F. Chouteau were present, and so also, as already stated, was Father De Smet, who to broaden the scope of his missionary work had travelled all the way from his Flathead mission.

When the council session began, the Shoshones demanded that before the peace pipe be smoked, the Cheyennes should return the two scalps taken in the recent attack near South pass. Reluctantly the trophies were returned. Later it was the turn of a Cheyenne woman to demand justice of the Shoshones. The correspondent of the Republican, writing from the "Treaty ground near Fort Laramie" on September 8, thus pictures the scene:

"A Cheyenne squaw, leading a horse, with a boy, about ten or twelve years