

the sacred right of an Ottawa Government to administer Northwestern affairs with a complete contempt for the will of the people of that country. Ottawa politicians found in Mr. Hugh Sutherland, M.P., a much more easily handled tool, and, perhaps, a more profitable one, for the securing of his vote lends color to the assertion, that Northwestern interests were taken into consideration in the matter. But, in giving this Hudson's Bay Railway Charter to Mr. Sutherland and his friends the Dominion Government were shrewd enough to know that they had thoroughly burked the whole project for years to come. They selected as it were the most impecunious gang of Charter pedlars they could find, and now, rest satisfied, that in twenty years Mr. Sutherland and his associates could not raise enough cash to build fifty miles of the road. Judging from Mr. Sutherland's past record, these calculations are not far astray. His connection with the Southwestern did not accomplish much for the public good, and corporations of a more private description with which he is connected do not seem to flourish under his control, as a considerable proportion of the mercantile community in Winnipeg are well aware. In short, although he has had probably more chances of success than any other man in the Northwest Mr. Sutherland figures like Sybils, with the curse of Mephistophiles clinging to them, seemed to have withered whatever they touched. In such hands the construction of a Hudson's Bay Railway is pretty sure to be a work of the distant future.

Political cynics must have chuckled as they watched the progress of the Hudson's Bay Railway Bill in Parliament, and they must have come near to risible explosion as they saw the earnest, honest gullability of the member for Marquette in his efforts to guard the interests of the Northwest as he thought. The game of Sir John and his associates was too deep for such pupils in politics. They have burked by subtlety and seeming liberality a project they had not the courage to oppose openly. The hardened old Scotch hangman on seeing a condemned culprit weep, remarked soothingly, "Dinna greet mon, I'll be as cawny as I can wi' ye." With equal soothing have Sir John and his associates burked the people of the Northwest out of a Hudson's Bay railway for at least six years to come.

THE MODERN GAMBLER.

People of an ultra sentimental turn of mind are apt to look back upon the gambler of the past with something approaching to a shudder, and express thankfulness that such individuals are now barred by law from intruding with their reprehensible practices upon society. They consider the world is now blessed with laws, which prevent such polished scoundrels as the Tom King of romance from recklessly squandering their funds at the gaming table, and, pistol in hand thereafter replenishing their cash account on the "Stand and deliver principle." Well, no doubt the outlawed spendthrift is an individual of the past, and society is benefitted by his non existence; but we are coming to conclusions too hasty if we believe that the gambler does not still exist, and even when we admit his existence we are far from being on the right track when we look upon the disreputable, poor devil, who mixes in a brace game of f. ro, manipulates their cards to the astonishment and loss of his dupes, or steers the tenderfoot to a den of duplicity as the legitimate (if we may use the adjective) successor of the gambler of the past. No! it would be an insult to this royal rascal of romance to insinuate that his race had degenerated into the sneaking fraud, who, oftener than otherwise, fills the treble calling of steerer, stool pigeon and pimp.

The gambler of the present day has often all the polish of his aristocratic predecessor, although it is not so frequent that we find him with the same reckless courage. We can find him on the stock or grain exchange, nominally a business man, but in his transactions as purely a gambler as the devotee of poker or loo. But the conventionalisms of the day throw an air of respectability around his calling, and even when he reaches financial ruin he is only considered one of the unfortunate ones, and is pitied and allowed to pay his losses in ten, twenty or thirty cents on the dollar, and to start again in his old reckless career.

In the Northwest where stock and provision exchanges have not yet taken root, the gambler is to be met with in other spheres. During our boom he was the most important among us, and since he has been the recipient of many a ruined man's curse. At one time in the history of our city the number of speculative loafers or real estate gamblers out of a population of less than 25,000 could not

be less than 3,000, and even to-day we have several hundred left, who are no more nor less than parasites upon the industrious portion of the community they live in, and the number includes many men of great aspirations and pretensions, some, even with parliamentary initials behind their names, yet all are simply gamblers waiting for some new turn in events, which will enable them to gamble upon the efforts of more industrious people.

But the most important type of gambler in this country, and one who is not unknown in Eastern Canada, is the charter-monger. Some little influence in either the Dominion or Provincial Parliament, or at least some skill in lobbying around them, is necessary for success in this branch of gambling. In this manner great public undertakings become a mine of carrion for such vultures to feast upon, and almost every great public improvement has to pay them "Backsheesh." Among this class of gamblers, M.P.s and M.P.P.s are not scarce, and recent developments would indicate that to be an adept in charter manipulating is an almost necessary qualification for either position. In the possession of such individuals a railway or other charter empowering the carrying out of some important public work means a small mine of gold. The interests of the public may demand the work being carried out without delay and at as small cost as possible, but the possession of the charter to do so by a gambling and unprincipled charter-monger will just as surely demand the "Backsheesh," and almost as surely drag into his clutches, or effectually block all progress until his demands are satisfied. The gambler of this type while by far the most dangerous to the public welfare for his winnings must of necessity be to the loss of the public, is also the most cowardly, for while possessing all the subtlety of the sneak thief, and all the dishonesty of the highwayman, he has not even the courage of the former, but shelters his dishonest practices under a perversion of law, not unfrequently secured by the purchased dishonor of those whom the world call honorable.

But it would be useless to attempt to enumerate all the different types of the modern gambler. It is safe to state, however, that the poor card, dice or dominoe sharper, usually termed such, is badly misnamed. The gambler of the present day is a much more respectable individual generally, often being a society leader, and, while as stated, he is possessed of much more subtlety, and quite as much dishonesty as his prototype of the last century, he is altogether deficient in the dare-devil pluck which was one of the prominent characteristics of the latter.