

with withering scorn (1) the ascent of Mr. Ashdown from the tinsmith's bench, as he reflects with pride upon his own wonderful descent. But to a sordid Plebian mind this comparison brings a recollection of the conversation said to have taken place between Alexandre Dumas, French novelist, and a negro-hating Yankee.

"Guess there's nigger blood in you. What was your father, Dumas?" asked the meddlesome westerner.

"A quadroon," was the short reply.

"And your grandfather?" was the second question.

"A mulatto," said the novelist.

"And your great grandfather?" persisted the inquisitive Yank.

"A negro, sir," answered Dumas.

"Ah! I knew I was right," chuckled the insolent tormentor, "and what was your great-great-grandfather?"

The novelist hissed out the reply, "an ape. My pedigree commenced where yours has ended."

Yet this "membah" for Birtle is only one of a number of sheriff-proof but egotistical jack-an-apes who strut around in our Provincial Legislature, and Mr. Ashdown is only one of the number of honest, solvent and industrious business men, who have to submit to the slanders of such social parasites. Truly we need one with the force of a Cromwell to free us from the yoke our politicians have fastened around our necks.

### THOSE DISCRIMINATING FREIGHT RATES.

All over this province we are having the question of discriminating rates against Winnipeg discussed by the local press, and very frequently discussed in a manner which shows an unpardonable ignorance of the whole question, and even of the request of the merchants of Winnipeg, although the same has been plainly stated in the circular recently issued by order of the Winnipeg Board of Trade. There are some journals, however, which seem to take a moderately clear view of it, although biased on some points, and among the number is the Portage la Prairie *Tribune-Review*. There is one great point on which this journal is radically wrong, and that is that the claims of the Winnipeg merchants imply injury to the Portage and other towns west of this city. The *Tribune* keeps reiterating this statement like some other journal, but as yet has not produced a single argument in support of the same, unless the

old "dog in the manger one," that the injury of Winnipeg means the benefit of every place west of it.

It does seem to us superfluous to have to state, once more, that no one in Winnipeg asks, or has asked, that the people of any town west of here shall pay one cent more of freight on the goods brought through direct from the east. But the Winnipeg merchants and the Board of Trade ask that the towns west of this shall pay less for the freight brought from Winnipeg. Had the *Tribune* editor taken the pains to read the reports of the joint meeting of the council of the Board of Trade and the Winnipeg city council, which sent a deputation to Ottawa and Montreal, to look after this and other matters of local interest, he would have seen that the Board's delegates were clearly instructed to oppose any raising of the through rates from the east to points west of Winnipeg, as gain and not loss to every place in the Northwest is the aim of this Board, composed mainly of men who know well that upon the prosperity west of this depends in a great measure their own success in business. As we stated in a former issue, the Winnipeg Board ask for a just concession, which it secured cannot be withheld from other points west of this city. That we were right in this statement is made plain by the nature of the concessions now shadowed from C.P.R. head quarters. These are not definitely fixed, but one principle is settled and a principle of justice too, and that is that other towns in the Northwest will share equally with Winnipeg in any benefits the concessions may confer. If Winnipeg merchants meant such terrible injury as the *Tribune* suggests to Portage and other places west, it would be in order for the Board of Trade to petition and protest against any concession being made to towns west of their own city. Instead of that there is we believe scarcely a member of that Board who does not rejoice over the fact that its (the Board's) efforts have, or are likely to secure advantages to others, which are only part of one concession to the Northwest as a whole, and one staggering blow to a wrong under which our country suffered that eastern interests might be profited.

The *Tribune* has admitted that it is not the duty of the Winnipeg Board of Trade to attend to the trade wants of Portage and other western towns, but claims that

it would have been quite within its demands "by the insertion of a ten-line prayer for Portage, Brandon and other western towns," then adds: "If the board are not our opponents in this matter, they would willingly accept our terms of co-operation, even if we haven't a board of trade like Winnipeg."

Like our contemporary we have great faith in short prayers, but unlike it we remember well the old adage, that "Mind your own business comprises one half of success in life, and the other half is contained in let other people's alone," and we know that railway managers remember, and are ever ready to quote the adage when it suits, and we therefore commend the Winnipeg Board for abiding by its precept in pressing its claims. As for the co-operation talked of by the *Tribune*, it is the purest balderdash. The Winnipeg Board is not foolish enough to beg for assistance from a source from which it received unprovoked, determined and unreasonable opposition.

There is one statement which we regret very much the appearance of in our Portage contemporary's columns, and that is that it has "grave doubts about the sincerity of THE COMMERCIAL," when it states that the Winnipeg Board will not be enemies, if not friends, in any similar movement made by the Portage. As this is a matter in which only the judgment, and not the sincerity, of this journal can be called in question, we feel inclined to be generous and credit the *Tribune* with a simple mistake in the choice of a word. As a matter of judgment the facts stated about the present action of the Board and the promised results of their efforts, indicate that we were correct in this judgment. In the same issue our contemporary struggles to fight a losing battle on the same question with the *Liberal*, a local journal, which admits the truth of our former article, which the *Tribune* condemns, and it is very natural that the latter would feel a little riled and rather reckless. It may be, however, that our contemporary wishes to emulate the London cab-driver, who was convicted a third time of being drunk and brawling, and on being told by the presiding magistrate that he was incorrigible, replied in choice Billingsgate logic: "Ye're a liar, yer worship, I hain't."