

which was that the Company be placed in the same position as other companies, with relation to the building of branches, and the other, that Parliament should not endorse the monopoly clause. Still another public gathering, this time a mass-meeting, was held. It seems to have been engineered by the local Conservatives, but despite that fact, there was a good deal of talk about the streets of Winnipeg of passing a resolution, asking for the "dissolution of Parliament," owing to the objectionable nature of the contract. That resolution was not passed; the knees of the faithful gave away at the last moment, and it was smothered. The following excellent resolution was presented by Mr. (now Mr. Justice) Killam, and was adopted by a large majority vote:—

"That the unlimited power proposed to be given to the C. P. R. to build branch lines of railway from the main line to any point in the Dominion, without the consent or control of Parliament or the executive, affords an unfair and unjust advantage over other companies, and will tend to prevent the formation of new companies to build lines connecting with the C. P. R. or any portions of the Northwest Territories, and will thereby paralyse private enterprise, and prove disastrous to the best interests of the country.

"That in the opinion of this meeting a tariff of railway rates cannot be efficiently regulated without the Government retaining the power to grant charters eastward, giving independent outlets to competing lines, and that the Parliament of Canada should not by any agreement with a private company divest itself of its sovereign right to authorise the construction of any railway lines when and where it may consider the interests or necessities of the country require or will be served by them."

According to the published report—

"Mr. Killam went on to say that these resolutions were directed at two clauses in the contract which had caused such an extreme commotion in Winnipeg during the past few days. These clauses provided that the syndicate should have the right, without going back to Parliament for a charter, to build branch lines anywhere they saw fit, and secondly, that Parliament should not, for twenty years, authorise any line to be built south of the main line, except in a southwesterly direction or a direction west of south-west."

So much for the history of the effect which the fear of impending monopoly had upon Winnipeg and Manitoba. The people of the city and the representatives of the province in the Legislature did all in their power to rid the contract of the monopoly clause. On every side it was regarded with strong disfavour. Sir George Stephen's assertion that "hardly a voice was raised in objection to the so called monopoly clause," therefore, is thoroughly untrue.

It is evident that the people of Manitoba believed that the monopoly clause applied to their province, and that they did all in their power to escape from what they regarded as an intolerable yoke. It is also evident that their protestations had a powerful effect at Ottawa. They were from time to time communicated to the House of Commons, and the champions of Provincial autonomy there suffered no chance of impressing them upon Parliament to escape. The result was that when the contract came up for ratification in February, 1881, Sir John Macdonald and Thomas White, the latter now Minister of the Interior, gave the explanations of the monopoly clause which have since become notorious. Sir John, denying that Manitoba had any cause to fear, said:—

"In order to give them a chance we have provided that the Dominion Parliament—mind you, the Dominion Parliament; we cannot check Ontario, we cannot check Manitoba—shall, for the first ten years after the construction of the road, give their own road, into which they are putting so much money and so much land, a fair chance of existence."

And Mr. White added—

"But we are told now that because of the fifteen miles there never can be any other railway in this country. To what does that apply? Simply to the territories over which the Dominion Parliament has control. There is nothing to prevent Manitoba now, if it thinks proper, granting a charter from Winnipeg to the boundary line. This provision does not take away from Manitoba a single right it possesses. In fact, this Parliament could not take away those rights. It has the same rights as other provinces for the incorporation of railway companies within the boundary of the province itself, and there is nothing to prevent the Province of Manitoba from chartering a railway from Winnipeg to the boundary to connect with any Southern railway. The only guarantee which this Company has under the contract is that the traffic shall not be tapped far west on the prairie section, thus diverting the traffic away from their line to a foreign line. But there is nothing to prevent a railway being built to Manitoba, within the province, that would carry the traffic to any railway that may take it from the American side. This is the position with respect to this matter."

I might quote further utterances, as for instance Sir Charles Tupper's statement during the debate of February, 1884, when Parliament was asked for the \$30,000,000 loan, and Mr. White's words to the Junior Conservatives of Winnipeg last March, but all these quotations have by this time become sufficiently trite. I will only add the assurance given by the

Minister of Justice to the Manitoba delegates on the 3rd of May last, which was as follows:—

"There is no legal constitutional reason to prevent the province chartering railways to the boundary; it is a question simply of the Government's trade policy."

Surely these facts should settle the question whether the monopoly clause applies to Manitoba or not. It is abundantly, and redundantly, evident, so far as the statements of the Ministers are concerned, that it does not.

It is also evident from the clause itself, obscurely worded and indefinite as it is. Let any one glance at it, quoted at the commencement of this article. The clause singles out no province whatever. If therefore it applies to old Manitoba, which was a full-fledged province at the time the contract was ratified, it must also apply to Ontario, Quebec, and British Columbia, but no one has yet put forward so foolish a contention. The latter portion of the clause proves this even more clearly; why was it necessary to provide that "in the establishment of any new province in the Northwest Territories" the monopoly clause was to apply, unless Parliament was well aware that the erection of a portion of the territory into a province would relieve it of the monopoly clause, if a definite provision to the contrary were not made? The words are "no line of railway shall be authorised by the Dominion Parliament." As the Dominion Parliament has absolute control of railway construction in the Northwest, Parliament could undertake not to authorise the building of railways there, and the words would be properly used. But as the provinces do not consult "Parliament" when they build their railways, and such a thing as "Parliament" authorising an act of a Provincial Legislature is unheard of, the words would have no meaning at all if applied as the monopolists ask us to apply them.

F. C. W.

Winnipeg.

THE HUMOUR OF MOLIERE.

In *Macmillan's Magazine* we find an excellent analysis of Molière's dramatic works, the principal points of which are here given. It opens with the statement that most French people, not only the reading public, but professed critics, are prone to deny that Molière is a humourist because humour is now considered as especially a northern product, of which England is the home. Nevertheless, says Mr. Tilley, there is plenty of it in France. The old writers of fables and farces, Rabelais, La Fontaine, Le Sage, Balzac, to mention only a few names that immediately occur to me, are all what we should call humourists. So is emphatically Molière, though indeed Carlyle says that his humour is chiefly of the understanding, which is tantamount to saying that he has no humour at all; for the great difference between humour and wit, as branches of the ridiculous, is, I take it, that wit is an affair of the understanding or intellect, while humour is connected with the feelings and the imagination. The first play of Molière's in which real humour is exhibited is *Sganarelle* or *Le Cocu Imaginaire*, written when he was thirty-eight. It is a noticeable fact, though not one to be wondered at, that no man has written a great work of humour until he has neared, few before they have passed, the middle point of our allotted space of threescore and ten years. Cervantes was fifty-eight when he gave *Don Quixote* to the world. Sterne wrote *Tristram Shandy* at forty-six; Scott, *The Antiquary* at forty-five. The first instalment of *Pantagruel* appeared when Rabelais was thirty-eight. *Vanity Fair* when Thackeray was thirty-five. Fielding was the same age when he wrote *Joseph Andrews*, and even Shakespeare had to wait till he was thirty-four to create Falstaff. So much experience, and often so much suffering, is required for the production of a work of genuine humour. Of Molière's life up to the time when he returned with his troupe to Paris, nineteen months before the production of *Sganarelle*, we know little except that after studying the humanities and philosophy in the Jesuit College of Clermont, the son of Jean Poquelin, upholsterer to His Majesty, had at the age of twenty-one abandoned the law for the stage, acted for three years with a small troupe at Paris, and for twelve years had wandered from province to province in the triple capacity of playwright, actor, and stage manager. At any rate his experience must have been rich and varied; he must have drunk deep of the cup of life, and the after taste must have been sometimes bitter. In his two first regular plays, *L'Etourdi* and *Le Dépit Amoureux*, both written during his provincial wanderings, he had already given proofs of his genius for comedy, of his exquisite sense of dramatic situations, of his vigour and gaiety and good taste, and of the astonishing ease and power of his versification. *Les Précieuses Ridicules* revealed Molière not only to others, but to himself. But to return to *Sganarelle*, inferior to its predecessor, *Les Précieuses Ridicules* as a whole, it is remarkable for two things, the excellent fun of the situations and the character of the hero. The name *Sganarelle* henceforth appears frequently in Molière's plays, and whenever it does we know it was the part played by Molière himself. The impudent and brilliant Mascarille of *L'Etourdi*, for ever associated to us of this generation with the name of Coquelin, had been succeeded by a far humbler and unassuming Mascarille in *Le Dépit Amoureux*, who is a foretaste of his successor,