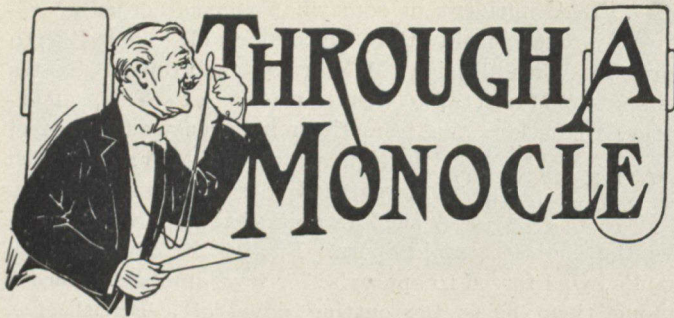




THIS Monocle of mine is made of Canadian glass. And there is no better in the world. It is as clear as crystal—usually. But, of late, I have begun to distrust it. Some most extraordinary distortions have been appearing through it occasionally; and, even when I take it off and rub it, they will not always disappear—unless I look in some other direction. For instance, I have got so that I simply dare not turn it on that estimable constitutional official, the Governor-General. Now the governor is all right. Everybody knows that. He is deeply interested in us and our domestic movements; for which we are all deeply grateful. In activity for our good, he has only been beaten by Lady Aberdeen; and no mere man could expect to keep up with that splendid woman who had all the prestige of Vice-Royalty and none of its duties. Yet do you know—and I hope you will treat this revelation as confidential—that when this pesky Monocle of mine gets Lord Grey before it, the firmly marked lines of the Constitutional Governor begin to waver. The Constitution—that bulwark of our liberties—that refuge of every perplexed politician—behaves itself like a dissolving view.

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Now this bothers me; for I have hitherto trusted in the Monocle. What can it all mean? Yet—be the cause what it may—I cannot for the life of me always discern the Constitutional outlines of the Gubernatorial office. They will dissolve into mist—say, about the time the Governor-General goes down to New York to make a speech—and all I can see is a very excellent and admirable British nobleman who wears the air of a man serving Imperial interests as he sees them in an outlying corner of His Majesty's dominions. Now, of course, everybody knows that the Governor-General is a constitutional Governor, and has no official opinions except those which are supplied him by his constitutional advisers, the Federal Ministers. He has no business, whatever, for example, to interfere in the settlement of any questions in dispute between this country and the United States. That is entirely the business of his Ministers. He must confine himself to saying what they put in his mouth, and saying it when they tell him to do so. And, of course, that must be what he is doing. My Monocle needs re-grinding.

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Or perhaps it has got out of focus trying to watch the game of "cross tag" which has been going on between Secretary Root and the two most prominent Britishers on this Continent—Earl Grey and Mr. Bryce. They have been enjoying a lively game of it; but I cannot quite get over the apprehension that poor little Canada will be "it" when the game is over. There is no use pretending to ourselves that we are so important that a couple of British representatives—I use the word "British" in the restricted sense of British Islander—and the American Government cannot succeed in jockeying us into a position where we will simply have to lose the race. We were mad clear through, from Laurier to the Canadian Club, when Lord Alverstone gave away a bit of our territory in the West; but what could we do about it? The time for Canada to put a stop to a repetition of that episode is before we get caught in the warm clasp of "the hands across the sea"—not afterward.

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Did you notice how they reached out for Your Uncle Sir William Mulock when they got into real trouble in the coal regions in the West? They had to get a man whom the coal miners would trust; and Sir William proved to be the man. All of which goes to show that Sir William was not wasting his time during those arduous and oft-criticised years when he was establishing a Department of Labour and working in his quiet way for the labouring man. It has always seemed to me to be a thousand pities that Sir William was permitted to retire from the Federal Government. It may have been true that his health would not permit him to go through

all the drudgery entailed in the management of a department; but he certainly has had enough health to play his part as a member of the Government and to exert an influence upon the progressive policy of his party. There are plenty of pretty good departmental men in Parliament who could have taken over the post office; but there was only one Mulock who had the creative mind, the daring optimism and the confidence of the people.

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Moreover, Ontario needs a leader in the Cabinet. No one will pretend that it has one now. Cartwright and Scott are magnificent, but they are too old for war. Aylesworth is learning his trade; but a Parliamentary leader cannot be improvised even from the political section of the bar. Paterson is an excellent Minister of Customs and a good Christian; but he is not a political leader of genius and prestige. Mulock is the one hopeful man we have had since David Mills died; and he has been permitted to retire because he was not equal to the duties of a first-class clerk. The truth is that there is not a strong man in the Liberal Parliamentary Party to-day west of the Ottawa River; and only two East of it—if we put Bourassa in the class of spring sprouts. Now this is no way for a Government party to leave itself. It would be in real danger if the census of strong men in the Opposition party were any larger. But there, my Monocle is playing me false again. I cannot even see that it is as large.

Were Fond of Cats

OF the millions of people who have a kindly propensity toward cats, few probably, have any idea how much might be written about their pets from the side not alone of human association but of distinguished companionship. A French writer who has been devoting himself to this aspect of pussy's history brings together quite an imposing list of great names of both sexes as lovers of the cat tribe. That tabby always falls on her feet, like some careless bipeds, is a proverb, but not many, perhaps, have heard that this enviable faculty is a miraculous privilege bestowed by Mohammed. Richelieu, it seems, kept twenty cats; Tasso had the "fancy," and merely to mention Baude- laire, Chateaubriand, Victor Hugo, Beranger and Mau- passant, one almost regrets to learn that Petrarch, after so far departing from the spiritual tone of his sonnets to Laura as to half cherish thoughts of suicide on her death, finally found consolation in the caress of a cat, whose skeleton may still be seen in the museum at Padua.—London Globe.



HOMING!

—Punch.