

Through a Monocle

BORDEN has again "come out of the West," and brought back with him safely Joseph G. Horace Bergeron, the Beauharnois Boy. This is worth recording; for it is said that they rather like Horace in the West. I notice that one paper says that he has "magnetism"; but I am inclined to think that what the editor means is "bonhomie." Of the latter, the Beauharnois Boy has plenty; but it requires a more serious person to have magnetism. No one would accuse De Wolf Hopper of possessing magnetism; while Willard fairly radiates it. Bergeron is, moreover, a good mixer, and was a capital choice as Mr. Borden's companion-in-arms for the Western tour. He is built on the generous scale of all things Western, and carries with him a fair share of that gift of all French-Canadians, the power of pleasing. Still it is not likely that the West will select Horace to do any serious work for it. It likes him better than it values him as a Statesman. It would rather hear that he was made a Senator than a Minister; and it would probably think him better fitted for a Lieutenant-Governorship than either.

It seems doubtful whether we quite get all out of our Lieutenant-Governors that we should. The office is nothing if not ornamental. Unless the Lieutenant-Governor is a Social Hub, and Government House a rallying-centre for Society, then we are wasting money on the position. So far as usefulness goes, a Lieutenant-Governor is about as useful as a rubber stamp. That is, he is as useful as a good rubber stamp so long as he is careful to do nothing; but occasionally a Lieutenant-Governor takes it into his head to "get busy," and then we would make a splendid bargain if we could trade him off for even a poor rubber stamp. But as a Social Leader, he ought to be it. That is where he should come out strong. What can Society do if it does not have a court in which to strive for precedence, and a "drawing room" in which to influence Public Men? If it were not for Government House, where could the Elite come into contact with the Elect of the mere people, and mould their opinions? Obviously our constitution would cave in at the top and possibly sag at the middle if we did not have Lieutenant-Governors. They are the Link between Fashion and Force.

Earl Grey is making a remarkably active Governor-General; and yet he is not fussy. He is not getting on the nerves of the country as certain other occupants of Rideau Hall have before this. He seems to be more like a Canadian citizen who is taking a genuine interest in our affairs. He does not insist upon appearing only where a brass band is awaiting his arrival and the streets are crossed with bunting bidding him welcome in five-foot letters. He just travels about and looks at whatever interests him so quietly that half the time we do not quite know where the Governor is. Some Governors kept off our nerves by immuring themselves at Ottawa and only peeping out of their shells when their official duties made it necessary; but Earl Grey is seldom at Ottawa. He knows that he must be there long enough to get to know that city pretty thoroughly; and he spends his spare time getting to know something about the rest of us. He could not be making himself more at home if he were a born Canadian whom we had chosen ourselves for the position.

Now that President Falconer has been in a "hustle,"

the boys will feel that their Freshman President has been properly initiated at last. Close contact with the boys will not hurt the President either. The more of youth that a pedagogue keeps in his blood, the better he is; for it requires close sympathy with the taught to enable a man to teach. Let anyone try to talk to a class across any sort of a gap—a gap of separate sympathies, the gap of snobbishness, the gap of intellectual uppishness—and he will find that his ideas will not carry. The framework of his teaching may be visible across the chasm; but his spirit, its flesh and blood, the best of it, will be lost. Every man who has to do with an institution of learning should never permit himself to grow old in soul or mind. The reason why our old friend, James L. Hughes, is so good a school leader is because he has never grown up. He has always been a glorified boy, and he always will be.

The same is true of the clergyman—with a difference. It is the pew and not the boy that the clergyman should come in contact with; for it is to the pew that he ministers. Clergymen who hold themselves aloof from the pew may be eloquent—they may be cultured and learned—they may be pious and fervent—but they will not be effective. A physician must understand the disease of his patient if he is to cure him, even if he be a physician of the soul. Circumstances conspire to fence the clergyman away from the people. Few laymen are quite natural in their converse with clergymen. They do not talk to them as they talk to each other. Hence it is all too easy for the clergyman to get a wholly wrong map of the layman's mind. The layman is probably not at all what the clergyman thinks he is, except at certain moments of exaltation when he is in his Sunday clothes, mentally as well as sartorially. The consequence is that when the clergyman goes gunning for the layman, he fires in the wrong direction. The rifle is often delicately carved, the cartridge is of the latest fashion, and the detonation is terrifying. But the direction is entirely wrong. A clergyman should take particular pains to break through the reserve with which a layman surrounds himself in the presence of his pastor. There is far less danger of the clergyman losing his dignity than of his losing—or never getting—his touch with the people.



Clergyman (by way of consoling despondent parishioners): "Just consider how you have been guided and provided for all these seventy years." Parishioner. "Sixty-nine, if you please."—Punch.