

# THROUGH A MONOCLE

## ONE MAN RULE

WE can talk about our dead-level democratic institutions and "rule of the majority" and "government by the people" until we have achieved sore throats, but the truth is that the most democratic communities in the world still love to be ruled by ONE MAN. It is the strong leader who dominates; and is very hard for this sort of "king" to do any wrong. Take, for example, our good friend, Teddy Roosevelt. He had the free and independent people of the American Republic hypnotised while he was at Washington; and it was only after he had persevered in his intention not to seek a "third term" and had got Taft actually nominated by the Republican Convention, that the duly elected legislators for that free and independent people—the members of Congress—dared to call their souls their own after Roosevelt had indicated the way in which they should walk. As he went out of office, we heard a lot about his troubles with Congress; but they were all troubles which dated from the nomination of Taft. If Roosevelt had been coming back to the White House, Congress would have remained as docile as per usual.

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AND now they are talking of nominating Roosevelt for Mayor of New York. If he is nominated, Tammany might as well make it unanimous. There is no reason to believe that Roosevelt has any particular knowledge of the municipal situation in New York City or that he would be able to master the intricates of the most difficult civic problem in the world; but the New Yorkers—in common with the rest of the American people—probably believe in his magic power to make the plunderers of the people "back up," and they would elect him Mayor with a "whoop." People are criticising President Taft because he does not take the Senate by the back of the neck and shake a lower tariff out of its pockets; but they forget that Taft has no such plenary powers as Roosevelt possessed. Would the people support him in a war with both Houses of Congress? No one knows, and least of all, Taft. But if Teddy, the Terror, had wanted a lower tariff, he would have had Congress coming around to offer it to him on a silver plate. Republican Congressmen would not have cared to go back for re-election next year with Teddy's stamp on them—"Opposed my policies."

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AND the same thing is true of the bluff and bull-doggy British people. They love to be governed by a MAN; and they generally have been. Those of us whose memory runs well back can remember quite a succession—Palmerston, Disraeli, Gladstone, Salis-

bury, Chamberlain. Just at present, they seek a MAN; and British politics are in a welter because of his absence. The differentism of Balfour may look very pretty from the gallery; but a great people feeling their national life at stake at every turn, do not lean upon "philosophic doubt" with any degree of confidence. Rosebery might lead them if he only were stable and dependable as well as brilliant; and Lloyd-George might lead them if he had a wider vision of Imperial duty. As it is, they are at a loss whither to turn; and the determination of the militant group of Tariff Reformers seems to be the most solid point in the whole morass.

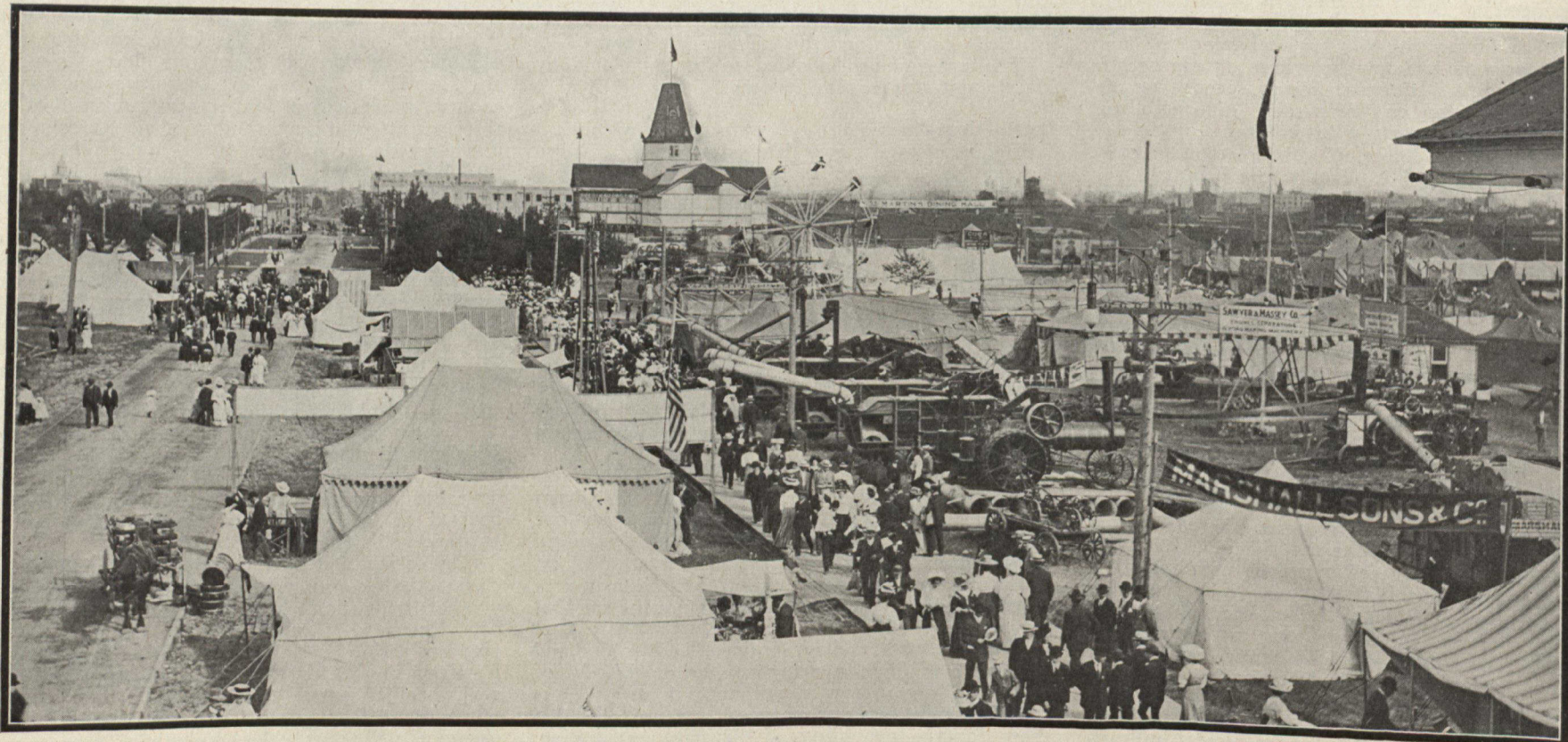
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AS for the French democracy, it has always been susceptible to the lure of "the man of horseback," because such a figure looks to a nation of military glory most like a MAN. The present generation however, is turning to the man at the office desk. Clemenceau is the latest figure which has impressed itself upon the people; but it is now to be seen whether or not the daring cynic has not presumed too far. To blaspheme the national susceptibilities by taunting Delcasse on his martyrdom was to come very near to profanation of the holy of holies. The dominance of the MAN in monarchical countries with few constitutional restrictions, is, of course, the expected. Yet he is by no means always the monarch. Bismarck and Buelow had each their hour of supremacy—the former a long hour. Where there is no popular voice, as in absolute monarchies, it cannot be raised for anybody or anything; and where it is cut up by race distinctions, as in Austro-Hungary, its cry is difficult to interpret. But my point is that the freest and most untrammelled democracies love a MAN quite as certainly as the most absolute monarchies.

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NOR is Canada any better. For years, Sir John Macdonald governed us much as he chose. There were precious few things that Sir John could not have done. It is all very well to say that he governed in the temper of the people; but he had a vast amount of influence in making that temper. Sir Oliver Mowat had very much of a free hand within his narrower field; and he has left his personal impress upon our ideas and institutions. Quebec broke away from the Conservative fold under the magnetism of Mercier; and Sir Wilfrid Laurier is to-day the master of Canada in a sense which he himself hardly seems to appreciate. The truth is, that Laurier has never appeared to realise his power. Tarte said so when they were in Opposition together; and he shows no appreciation, now that he is in power, of the mandate-in-blank which this country has given him. Yet a Premier who has lost Tarte and Blair and Mulock and Sifton without shaking his position, ought to know fairly well how firm his footing is. If I were a party in Opposition—which is like saying: "If I were a mob or a mountain range"—I would seek first a MAN.

THE MONOCLE MAN.



A General View of Winnipeg Exhibition, held July 10th to 17th