

THROUGH A MONOCLE

THE ETHICS OF SPENDING MONEY.

WHAT I want some political history "sharp" to show me is a case in which a Government, or a majority in a City Council, or even the leaders of a County Council, in a growing community have been hurled from power because they "spent money." There may be such cases, but I do not know of them. I am seeking information on the point. I am ready to believe, of course, that there are school boards which would rise in their might and pinch to death any one of their number who proposed to pay the teacher a decent salary. They would be especially vindictive if it happened to be a lady teacher whom it was sought to enrich and make proud by adding ten dollars a year to her stipend. But, apart from school boards, do you know of anybody in a progressive and prospering country which ever became unpopular by spending the people's money? If so, I would dearly like to have their names and addresses; for I would cheer their hearts by sending them copies of Hansard containing the annual "growl" by the Auditor-General's brigade in the House of Commons over the travelling expenses of Cabinet Ministers.

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WE have always had men in Parliament who thought it their duty to see that the Ministers did not "get gay" with the hard-earned taxes of our poverty-stricken and penurious—not to say, parsimonious—people. The Liberals had them, and now the Conservatives have them. There seems to be no way in which a working Opposition can escape them. They think that they make a great point for their party when they show that the reckless and riotously extravagant Minister of This or That took a cab from the station to the hotel when he might have got there for five cents on a public street car—good enough for anybody—and carried his suitcase with him. But, as a matter of fact, they only succeed in arousing the apprehensions of the country as to the capacity of their own party for the government of a rising young nation. If there had been any notion among the Canadian people that the Liberals would have turned the financial control of the country over to the "peanut" section of their old Parliamentary party, they would never, never have got into power.

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THE Canadian people are not "mean." They do not travel in a "mean" way themselves, and they do not want their representatives to do so either. When Mr. Fielding and Mr. Paterson went down to Washington last January, every last man of us in Canada hoped that they stayed at the best hotel and had just as many cabs as they could comfortably use. If we had heard that either of them tried to save a few cents by carrying his "carpet bag" to the depot, it would have hurt the Government more than to have put 23 bad items in the reciprocity schedules. We want to be proud of our officials; and we want them to give us the best opportunity for this enjoyment of a sinful pride. One of the reasons we like Sir Wilfrid Laurier to go to London is that he looks so well and acts so well when over there. Canada does not have to take "a back seat" to the biggest Peer in the puddle when Sir Wilfrid arrives amidst the plaudits of the company.

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NOW we pay our Cabinet Ministers far too low salaries. We do not want to do this; but Cabinet Ministers have shown an astonishing reluctance to take the responsibility of raising their own wages. And, under the constitution, no one else can raise them. I believe it would be a popular move for a group of confirmed "back benchers," who can never hope to attain Cabinet rank, to get together and press upon the Front Benches of both parties the wisdom of increasing the pay of members of the Government. If the "back benchers" on both sides of the House joined in this effort, they could succeed; and the people would thank them for it. Men of such broad vision might, indeed, induce the people to think that they were too good for the "back benches" after all. Certainly they would stand a far better chance for promotion than members who cavil at the cab fares of our official representatives.

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THE judges are another class of public servants who should be paid better. We cannot afford a cheap judiciary; and that is precisely what we would have, if so many of our best lawyers were

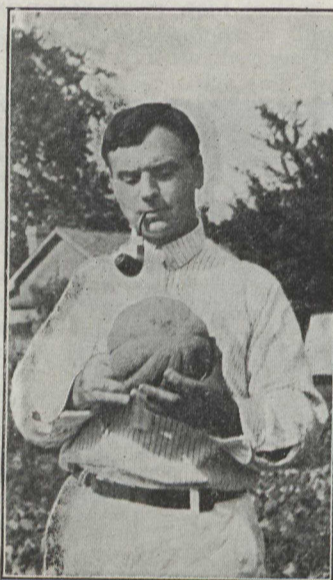
not willing to count the honour or the position as worth a very considerable amount. Still this country is not asking for charity from its public servants—we should pay them in cash what their services are worth. I would like to see our cities pay their rulers a good salary—I mean a really good salary which would attract the best talent. We could get along with fewer of them; but the few we had should be capable of sitting down and doing business with the heads of railways and the biggest brained men in the country. The people cannot afford to be more poorly served than the corporations which they have created. Reverting to the question of the judges again, we cannot afford to have more legal ability at the bar than on the Bench. That is not the way to get justice.

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OF course, when it comes to school teachers, I know it is useless to waste words. We have decided in this country that the job of least importance is the education and training for life of our children. We insist that they shall have good food.

THE POET AND THE MELON

A WEEK or so ago we made reference in this paper to the alleged muskmelons being grown by Arthur Stringer on his fourteen-acre farm in Kent County, Ontario. There may have been a note



"Alas poor Yorick! I knew him well. A fellow of infinite jest."

of scepticism regarding the allegation that the said Montreal melons were already well-formed. At any rate the author has found it necessary to furnish a photograph of himself and a Montreal melon which he has sent to the office for corroboration. It is said that photographs, like figures, never lie. Unfortunately figures are frequently made to lie; and a photograph may also lack veracity. For instance, there is the matter of focus. A year ago the Toronto *Globe* published a camera reproduction of Lord Northcliffe holding out a fish at arm's length in front of the lens, so that the fish looked half as large as the Lord. Notice that Stringer keeps his Montreal melon well to the fore. Still it is a very pretty melon. Its corrugations are well defined. It fits the poet's hands very admirably. No doubt long before this the same poet has found a much more fitting spot for the contents of the melon.

But we require to be convinced that the camera which took this picture of a poet and a melon did not take that picture in August, 1910, instead of July, 1911. In the interests of nature-faking in general and Canada-faking in particular we must have explicit testimony on this point. There may be such a thing as poetic license extended to muskmelons. How far is this justifiable? Where does it cease to be a principle and begin to be an expedient? And above all what license has any poet to raise melons which other people cannot eat? If an author can raise melons maturing in July that retail in New York restaurants at a dollar a slice, would he not be conferring on humanity a greater boon than by writing poetry at a dollar a line, or stories at ten cents a word? Would he not be keeping closer to nature?

We speak with premeditated apology. People differ so confoundedly in the matter of taste when it comes to stories and poetry. They agree so much better on melons. None but a man of no taste would prefer a plain watermelon to a muskmelon of the

We will pay all sorts of money to get them startling clothes. They must be as well dressed as the little "kids" next door, or else Daddy's credit will flatten out. We want to be proud of them when they walk out on the street. It would be terrible to see them in shabby hats—but, as for shabby brains, why, who will ever know? And "failed" business men or "plucked" candidate for a profession, or boy or girl looking out for a better job, are good enough for school teachers. That is our creed in Canada; and it is useless to kick against the pricks.

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IN Germany, it takes a genius to be a school teacher. He must be carefully trained; and he regards it as his life work. But then the Germans are "over-educated." That is what the English youth say when young Germans come over to London and take their jobs away from them. I noticed a gleeful paragraph in an American paper to the effect that Germans, when they settle in America, lose their studious habits in one generation. This is much more comfortable for the other Americans—they do not feel so ignorant. But some day we will be confronted by German competition on this continent; and then we may realize that our industrial and commercial "Waterloo" was won years before in the school-rooms of Germany.

THE MONOCLE MAN.

Montreal variety—especially when cultivated by a poet who makes most of his money writing stories and plays.

This is a mere suggestion.

Even Hamlet, were he living to-day, might as lief contemplate a real live muskmelon as the skull of a dead Yorick.

William J. Clifford.

A YOUNG mechanic living in Toronto, a member of the Tenth Royal Grenadiers, went over to Bisley this year for the second time and set a new world's record in rifle-shooting. There has been much talk of the ability of the Boer riflemen in South Africa, but if any of them think that they can beat this little Canadian, a match may easily be arranged. Private William J. Clifford won the Prince of Wales' and the King's Prizes in the same year, a feat unequalled in the history of the National Rifle Association. And Canada is proud.

In the first stage for the King's Prize, Clifford did nothing remarkable, making only 93 out of 105. Nevertheless he qualified for the "three hundred" to shoot in the second stage. Here he did much better, scoring 95 of a possible 100. Even then he did not look to be a winner, as there were quite a number of scores above 188. Two other Canadians had more. In the third and final stage, Clifford showed his mettle. At 800 yards, 49 is a wonderful score. At 900 yards, 45 is an excellent score. At 1,000 yards, 37 is an average score. Totalling it all up, Clifford had 319 out of a possible 350, and was six points ahead of the next competitor.

Hayhurst and Perry, our other two King's prizemen, were English-born, and Clifford is Canadian-born, but all three have added to Canada's glory as a nation of marksmen.

Long Time

To S——

By RODEN KINGSMILL

GIRL of the True Heart, you and I
Have waited long through all the years.
We've seen the tide of human tears
That ebbs into eternity.
But what care we for mortal fears—
The present love will always last.

Our bark will ride the billows whether
The gales of life breathe loud or low:
Our sail will stretch to sunny weather,
Love holds the helm; though storms
may blow.
But you and I through ev'ry clime
Shall voyage till the tide is low
And anchor in the Port of Time,
'Tis love enough; and this we know.