

held it to be "reasonable." The Liberals contended that this was the most radical legislation in Canada for the protection of the farmer from corporation lawyers, and yet they held that the judges could be trusted to do the machine companies justice. The Opposition seemed undecided whether to approve or oppose the measure, but it added materially to the sum total of Liberal votes.

What about the Alberta and Great Waterways bungle? It is doubtful if that unfortunate matter reversed a single constituency. The people of Alberta are more interested in the problems of the future than the mistakes of the past.

And lest the Eastern reader, who always has a certain bugaboo convenient for such occasions, be led to attribute the result to the "American" vote, let him be reassured by the knowledge that the

cities of Calgary, Lethbridge and Medicine Hat, which are largely peopled with ex-Americans, are all found in the Conservative column. Strictly speaking, there is no American vote. No foreign-born citizen votes in a provincial contest in Alberta until he has sworn allegiance to King George, and the day he does that he becomes a Canadian, and in many cases as good a Canadian as any reader of these lines. Whatever may be true of arrivals of a few months' standing I have found no pro-Americanism in our naturalized citizens. On political issues they divide much as do native Canadians, particularly on matters of tariff; the city-dweller, with a picture of great industrial centres in his mind, favours protection, while the farmer reads of the price of oats in the United States and votes for reciprocity.

If the Provincial or the Federal Government grid-ironed each province with national highways, the municipalities would still have room enough to do their mean-spirited muddling in the local cross-roads and minor "concessions."

IN the same way, I should like to see the great and important guild of school-teachers added to the civil service. Then they would get decent salaries. Each community, instead of striving to see how little it could pay and still look itself in the face—and it is marvelous how much can be accomplished in this way by constant practice—would be eager to boast that it had the highest-priced teaching staff in that section of the country. Why shouldn't it have the best? The money didn't come out of the local pocket. It would actually lose money when it hired a cheap teacher—or when it permitted the pundits at Ottawa or the Provincial Capital to put it off with one of the less costly variety. Wouldn't it be fine to see the school boards agitating for high salaries for the young men and women who are entrusted with nothing more important than the mental creation of your children? If they had to feed the pigs now, it would be different. Pigs lose value when carelessly fed.

ANOTHER job I would like to see turned over to the indirect taxers is the making of city parks. There is a place in which lavish expenditure would be the truest economy. And we should get lavish expenditure if these parks were bought and ornamented with "found money." A number of other things will doubtless occur to you which should be done by this system of fooling the people into the belief that they are not paying for them. Here is a little game of illusion which should be played to the limit. Instead of grumbling because people are careless about the "wasting" of indirect taxes, we should take advantage of it as newly-found gold-mine, and so outwit our natural and universal meanness.

THE MONOCLE MAN.

Once More the Band

FROM now until the middle of September the band occupies the musical stage. Canada has several hundred bands. No doubt every band is a good one. No doubt that the band at A B C is better than the band at X Y Z. All depends on whether a man from A B C or one from X Y Z does the judging.

Certainly the bands in many of our smaller cities and towns are much better according to the chance they have than big city bands. There must be a good reason. Is it better players, better bandmasters or better support from the public? It may be a little of each. It never would do for the hoomperhorn player in a village band to play too badly out of tune, or he would become unpopular with his best girl, who is sure to be somewhere on the green. And there are always critics enough round the village bandstand to keep all the players up to the standard, and the bandmaster is probably too busy playing the cornet to take much notice of anybody but the drummer. In the big city crowd among the peanut stands nobody cares much about who's who in the big band in the centre. As long as there's ragtime enough to get the good music "across" everybody is satisfied. People who can't afford to pay high prices to hear symphony orchestras during the winter season, can't afford to be critical about the band when they hear it for nothing. Years ago the band crowd in the park used to be the same average crowd that went to concerts in the city. Now it's different.

Through A Monocle

How to Beat Our Meanness

A CURIOUS "kink" in human nature is revealed by our different attitudes toward the expenditure of public money when that money is collected by direct or by indirect taxation. The very same people who will be as mean as misers in spending money on hiring school teachers, for example, will be as lavish as spendthrifts in urging the expenditure of money on federal public works. Why? Not because they think that it is more important to have a mansard-roof on their post office than a polished mental top-piece on their "young hopeful." Not a bit of it. They know that education means more to them, personally and as a family, than a striking building on the Main Street. But they also know that any money which is spent in paying the "school-ma'am" comes right out of their own pockets; while the money which builds a post office falls from heaven and is so much "clear gain" to the town. Economists can talk until they are black in the face; but they will never convince the average citizen that he pays the indirect taxes just as surely as he pays the direct—and that he pays ten times as much for the collection of the former as for that of the latter.

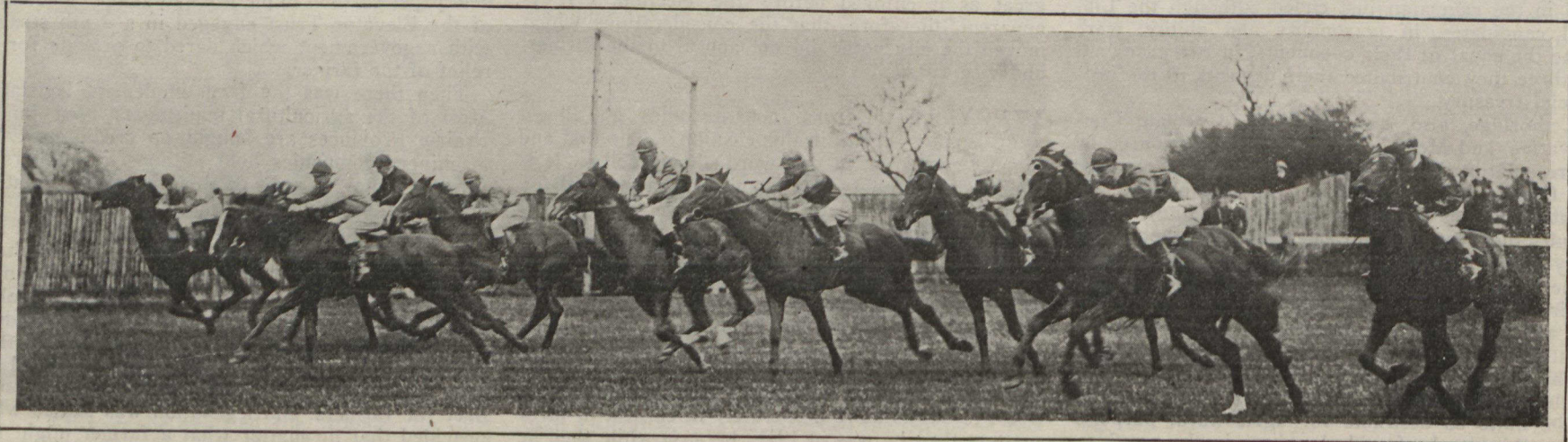
THAT is a little weakness of ours. And it always seems to me that we should recognize it and take advantage of it, instead of trying to cure it. We don't waste time trying to "cure" the force of gravitation—we simply harness it for our service. So, having found out that our people will pay any amount of taxation, indirectly, but will not pay a penny more than they can help, directly, why should we not arrange to have all really important public services performed at the cost of indirect taxation? Take this question of "good roads." We all know the kind of roads that the farmers will pay for themselves. I do not know to what extent they still work out their road-tax by "statute labour"; but they did a lot of it when I was a boy. And it was valuable road-making, I don't think. The consequence of this local control of road-making, however, is that Canada has about the worst country roads in the civilized world. Her farmers lose more in ruined vehicles, worn-out horses and arti-

ficial "distance" from the market, than would pay for the finest highways many times over. And they will continue to do so, exactly as long as the cost of road-making rests upon the local rates.

BUT what a difference we should see if the Federal Government made the roads. Federal and Provincial Governments are now trying to do something by way of assistance and advice. But this is no more than a beginning. The local bodies must still go down into their own pockets and contribute a good deal; and it hurts them like sin to vote a red cent. We get something, of course, from the stirring up by the provincial officials and the proffered contribution of outside money; but the drag of local parsimony is still a fatal hindrance to the real and speedy "civilization" of our country highways. What is wanted is that a thorough road should be built exactly as a post office is built. If the Federal Government said to a town—"We will contribute so much toward a post office in your burg, provided you contribute so much more, and we will send you an architect to tell you how to build it," there would be some very dubious rejoicings over new post offices throughout the country—and much fewer and much worse post office buildings. But when a post office comes as "a gift from the gods," why, then, it cannot be too good and cannot visit too many municipalities.

IN France, the Federal Government builds the national highways, and keeps them up. The consequence is that they are worth more to the country than the railways. They march across the land, straight and smooth and hard, cutting through the hills and bridging the valleys—and always in order. An army of men live beside them, like the track-men of an English railway, and patch the first appearance of a flaw in their perfect surfaces. They are real engineering feats; and their value to the various rural producers of France is beyond measurement. Covering the whole country, in proportion to population, and paid for out of the national revenues, they are equitably distributed among the people who are taxed for them—but the people do not know that they are taxed, that is all. Why shouldn't we do the same thing in Canada?

AGAIN COME THE OPENING DAYS OF THE SPORT OF KINGS



"They're Off!"—the Start of the Westminster Plate at Epsom, England, April 22.