

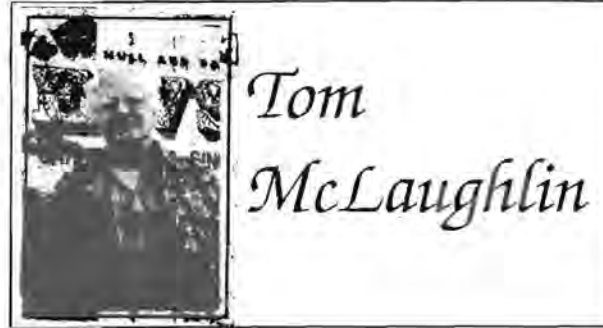
## THE MIGHTY MONARCH

Have you ever had the urge to own a phenomenon? I mean the all consuming, have to have it, nothing else will do obsession? I believe I came very close to owning one once. It all started way back in the nineteen twenties, when I was very young growing up on our farm at Venosta, Quebec.

I was six or seven, or maybe even eight, when I first heard of the thing. This new information was carried into the area on the lips of a visitor, a cousin I think, from the city. It was a pretty well established fact in our environment at the time, that if you were from the city, and wore new looking clothes you knew everything. When the word phenomenon dropped from our visitor's mouth no one seemed interested in picking it up and examining it, for which I was glad. I determined then and there that I was going to be the first in the area to own one.

I was at a blatant disadvantage. I didn't know what one looked like, I couldn't even pronounce the name properly. And I didn't dare ask questions, lest someone else find one first. I won't bore you with the devious and difficult route the search led me on. But it seemed to me that the best place to start was in our guest's suitcases.

I took the opportunity to search our guest's belongings when he was out someplace. I was just



getting started when father and our guest returned unexpectedly. All hell broke loose. My father grabbed his razor strap and turned it loose on my backside.

This unfortunate incident stunted my search somewhat. But there was no way that I could be stopped. I meant to have a phenomenon of my very own. If I had just worked my cards right the visitor would very probably have been very glad to explain what a phenomenon was and what it looked like. And maybe even show me a real one, and maybe even how it worked. But I had blown that possibility. I couldn't face our visitor for the rest of his stay. The very name of the what-ever-it was, and the fact that no one around seemed to have one, spurred me on in my relentless search.

I would like to tell you more about my long

and futile search for this phenomenon, but I worry that my editor will cut me off at the ankles, because of my excess wind. Suffice it to say I didn't find an answer then, and it wasn't until the summer of 1991, some sixty years later, that I was to witness a phenomenon that seemed a little removed from the ordinary. Which brings me to the question in question.

Have you ever witnessed some colossal phenomena that occurred when you were alone with no witness to back you up? And you didn't dare repeat what you saw lest you be ridiculed? Isn't that a horrible position to be in?

Like watching a flying object, for instance, from a snug hiding place in the dense forest on the side of a mountain. They seem to appear mostly at night, when all the observer can see are flashing lights and shadows. Have you ever experienced the eerie feeling, and downright terror lest you be discovered? Have you had the opportunity, or misfortune, if your like, to watch the movement of alien creatures as they scooped up earth and vegetation samples, to take back to their distant laboratories to examine? And then watched in awe and relief as they zoomed away?

Well, I haven't either.

But I did witness an incident in the summer of 1991 that I believe bears telling. And I have a very credible witness. ( To be continued next week.)