



Joffre in Montreal

Even after he had gazed up at the skyscrapers of New York, thinking what a mark they might make for German shells, Gen. Joffre saw something of great interest in old Montreal. At his left is Hon. C. J. Doherty, representing the Government.

Joffre with a Pinkerton man. But in Montreal among his own race-men, he was safe enough. The greatest Frenchman that ever saw the St. Lawrence since the days of Montcalm.



voice, but with a fluency—a flowing, liquid quality which seemed so perfect as to belong to nature, to rivers and to currents of the sea rather than to mere man with his usual imperfect, halting, irregular and inadequate flow of speech. Viviani had been one of the Prime Ministers of France, since the beginning of the war. When we heard him it was during the Premiership of Briand, but the influence of Viviani was still very great.

"You are so fortunate," our Parisian friend told us. "You could not come to the Senate at a better time. Viviani is to speak." He was representing the ministry that day, on the subject of relieving families of Poilus from paying rent. A commission had been appointed to deal with the matter; it had made an interim report, and now Viviani was giving the views of the ministry. He was treating the question from an economic viewpoint, but occasionally there would come a torrent of colour and feeling, irresistible and yet held perfectly in check, as he painted the immortal achievements of the French privates. The seriousness and reserve of Viviani in the Senate was typical of the Paris and of the France that we saw—the Paris of the boulevards, as well as the trenches of the front.

We heard another Senator—Edouard Herriot—"Senator from the Rhone," and apparently perpetual Mayor of Lyons. In one of the many recent Cabinets he was "Minister of Alimentation" (Food Control). He is one of the constructive thinkers and patriots of France, and he, too, spoke with a moderation and a calmness, not with the same supernatural fluency as Viviani, but with equally trained and sound judgment.

In one of the front benches that afternoon sat an old man. We noticed him first when he rose and walked over to talk with a colleague. He was a white-haired old gentleman, very tall, but bent under the weight of age. We saw him later in his own private bureau and realized then that something else besides age was weighing him down. At this time we did not know who he was and asked our friend. "That is the Minister of Finance, Ribot," was the reply. That old man, at a time of life when rest and retrospection in some villa of Normandy

should have been his natural lot, was bearing the load of financing France through the long-continued crisis of the war. Since then a still greater responsibility has come upon him—he is now Premier of France.

FURTHER light on the character of this great man is given by the New York Sun as follows:

Viviani has written into the French laws more statutes that are socialistic in their essence than any other of his comrades in the party. What is more, these laws have been taken up and adopted by other countries where socialism has been a dead letter so far as politics is concerned.

Furthermore, contrary to the doctrines of socialism, he has been an ardent militarist. Years before the world-war he besought preparedness, and when the war came he plunged into the military activities with an ardour that amazed those who knew his previous capacity for work. His career in public life has been the briefest among the principal emissaries, but it has been a vivid flash across the pages of the history of his country.

One of Viviani's great resources is his intense optimism. From the first dark hours, even when the Germans were knocking at the outer gates of Paris, his faith never faltered. There came criticism of the country's policy from the Chamber of Deputies, which harbours as many malcontents as our own Congress.

"This is no hour for pessimism," an-

nounced Viviani, in a ringing speech. "Let every man be at his post."

Viviani never has tried to throw a veil of secrecy over the blunders of his country. He told the Deputies frankly that mistakes had been made, mistakes that took tremendous toll in blood. But he went further than that. He asked the men of the Chamber to help point out the mistakes, to constitute themselves as inspectors of the military organization. He guaranteed them full opportunity for a view of the lines. It is significant that since that time the carping has stopped.

When Viviani throws his heart into the effort there is little withstanding his eloquence. He has gained the reputation of being one of the foremost spellbinders of his country. His skill in debate is the standard of all new members of Parliament.

AND now Papa Joffre, the Generalissimo, beloved of all France and all the friends of France, upon whose thick and cheerful shoulders fell the task of turning the French nation against the great enemy of mankind; who for two years organized the French nation into a great army and the army into a silent, heroic unity that held against the worst foe that ever descended and ravaged a beautiful land; who against the deadliest war machine ever known kept his army nibbling and holding and never giving way except when it was good strategy to do so; who steadied emotional France into a great resisting people inspired by memories of Napoleon, but more by the presence of the plain, silent and unconquerable Joffre.

This man was only a few hours in Montreal. It was a great compliment to Canada—especially to French Canada—that he came at all. The pictures on this page are a few episodes in that visit of Sunday, May 13, 1917, never to be forgotten in the Canada that has France for a mother land in history.

And of Joffre's work as a soldier in this war, Frank H. Simonds says, in the New York Tribune:

The problem of Joffre on the morning of the Great War was the greatest problem that had ever fallen to a single general. With insufficient armies, ill-equipped; with a northern frontier defenceless and open; with willing but weak British Allies, he had to stem the flood of a German invasion organized over forty years for the blow that was to destroy France.

The measure of the man Joffre is best taken in the fact that he failed frequently before he won completely. His initial offensive in Lorraine broke down under German heavy artillery. For the same reason his attacks in the Ardennes and at Charleroi failed. Mobile heavy artillery on the German side triumphed over gallant infantry, unsupported save by field-artillery, and in the third week of August Joffre contemplated a situation (Concluded on page 20.)



Joffre took off his coat once in Europe before the Battle of the Marne. He puts it on here in Montreal—a bit chilly after the southern airs of Washington and New York. To the left is Mayor Mederic Martin, in magisterial regalia.