POINCARE AND DELCASSE---PRESENT AND PROBABLE FRENCH PREMIERS IN CONTRAST

By Henri Ferrer.

PARIS, Feb. 10.—The present French ministry is not expected to hold together, and speculation is rife as to the probable make-up of the next cabinet. The Franco-German situation alone is responsible for the holding together of the cabinet as it is now composed. And, as it is to-day, it is conceded to be the most able ministry gathered since the days of Gambetta.

It has been said in fun of the French president that he is one who eats luncheons and signs reprieves. But, in all seriousness, if another cabinet crisis is precipitated, the new premier's position will be an equally nominal one where foreign affairs are concerned if M. Delcasse wins his way to the Quai d'Orsay. The ex-schoolmaster-journalist will only go there provided he has his own way.

When he first accepted office in 1898 his country was without a friend in Europe, Russia excepted. In 1906, at his dismissal, the entente cordiale had come into being, and the most cordial relations existed with Spain, Italy and the United States. Meanwhile, too, France's superb Mediterranean colonies were generated into life entirely by his brilliant brains. As a diplomat, Delcasse is of proved value. It was he who negotiated between Spain and the United States; he again who smoothed the ruffled surface of affairs when the Russian Admiral Rojdestvensky, fired into a fleet of Hull fishing smacks, and he who settled the delicate Fashoda crisis. Is that not enough for one politician? Delcasse has done more. It was he who rendered possible the greatest force in the world to-day—the entente cordiale. King Edward and Lord Lansdowne held out the olive branch. Delcasse accepted it. Delcasse worked alone, and, as we shall see, it was because he worked alone that he fell. Yet there are those who scout the wisdom of placing French diplomacy in the hands of a man whose presence in a former cabinet very nearly provoked a war.

Delcasse to the Fore.

Six years ago this statesman was hounded from the Quai d'Orsay by the force of threats from across the Rhine. the kaiser, overjoyed at another triumph of the mailed fist, created his chancellor a prince. Delcasse had fallen over Morocco. Frenchmen were no less annoyed at his exit than they were with the statesman himself. They were exasperated that a minister should have so placed himself as to have to bow to the kaiser's wrath. How are the mighty fallen. Memories are all that remain to-day of Von Buelow in his Roman villa; Delcasse is again being mentioned for a cabinet portfolio, and should another cabinet be necessary and M. Delcasse reappointed, he will still persist in his policy of secrecy. Delcasse is as uncommunicative as Sir Edward Grey. Throuout his memorable tenure of office he remained unapproachable, inscrutable, mute. Can this be why a dozen of the most influential journals are ever ready, even to-day, to paint him in the blackest colors, to sneer at him, to discredit him?

Naval Affairs.

In March last the ex-foreign minister was nominated minister of marine, and at once set about putting his house in order, his work culminating in the great review at Toulon in September. Thru cheering stations the presidential train had made its way southwards from Paris. The cheers for Delcasse were louder than those for Fallieres. France was thrilled by a speech on the glories of their new navy made by its new chief. Delcasse said it was the proudest day of his life. Hardly had his words died away when the Liberte disaster appalled Europe. And the judgment of Paris was—"Eh bien, I prefer our fleet as it was before—without our wonderful Delcasse." But the "wonderful" Delcasse has outlived the Liberte disaster, and stands out to-day the one man France needs yet fears. And Germany fears him, too, for there is no gainsaying the fact that his return to power would mean more grey hairs for the powers-that-be of the Wilhelmstrasse.

But the present cabinet is conceded to be the strongest since the days of Gambetta. And, who is its head:

A short, compact figure, an oval face with high, intellectual forehead; a strong, closely-trimmed dark beard shot with grey; steady, contemplative eyes—such is the outward semblance of K. Raymond Poincare, politician, philosopher and litterateur, to whom, in his fifty-second year France has confided the conduct of her government. In some respects he is like M. Delcasse, in others widely different. To sum up the new premier in a word, perhaps the American phrase "a hard-headed lawyer" would be most apt, but it would have to be qualified to make it apply to France, where successful men of business seek leisure in letters and art. For, in addition to being probably the ablest and certainly one of the most prosperous figures at the French bar, M. Poincare is a writer of elegance and distinction, and his books are the reflection of the catholicity of his tastes.

Political Talent.

The head of the remarkable galaxy of political talent that makes the new French ministry the most formidable array of individual strength seen in France since the days of Gambetta has wooed fame successfully in many walks of life during the half century which has elapsed since he first saw the light on August 20, 1860, at Bar-le-Duc (Meuse). His father was an inspector of the bridges and roads department of the public service, but it is the present generation that has brought the Poincare family to fame.

As a young deputy of twenty-six M. Raymond Poincare immediately made his mark by his parliamentary work. "Thoroness" has always been his motto, and it stamped all the indefatigable labors of his early years. At an age when most Frenchmen are sowing their wild oats, the young deputy for the Meuse was earning golden opinions in parliament by the masterly reports he presented on the different budgets. He had the thirst for knowledge. "Understanding everything," one of his critics has said of him, "he studied everything to make it the better understood."

Thus the young member of parliament became a young minister, receiving the portfolio of public instruction, a weighty post in those days of Clerical strife, when only thirty-three. Here he made his mark, just as a year later, on being called to the head of the ministry of finance, he proceeded to handle the great budgetary problems of France with a command betokening long and careful study. As his knowledge of politics was much in demand, and his opinion, dictated by a singularly independent mind, it was sought after and valued. There is no doubt that long before now, when his feeling of patriotism has impelled him to assume a burden which ambition never led him to seek, Raymond Poincare might have been premier, but his aspirations did not lie in the parliamentary field. Politics tempted him, the man of indefatigable mental activity, for the hard work they promised, for the bait they offered to his desire for knowledge. The laurels he coveted, however, did not lie at the marble tribune of the chamber.

Lawyer-Politician.

In the decade elapsing between the portfolios he held (resigning the ministry of public instruction, his second term in that office, in 1895, he did not act as minister again until 1906) he conquered for himself a leading position at the French bar. Yet even the exhilarating atmospheres of politics and the bar did not suffice for this man of many parts. His limpid mind, reinforced by his great erudition, sought recreation in letters. He wrote little but well. His works are finely phrased, and the critics speak of their "harmonious sonority."

He has a penchant for generalizing, and this disposition finds expression in the titles of his books: "Idees Contemporaines," "Etudes et Figures Politiques," "Causes Litteraires et Artistiques."

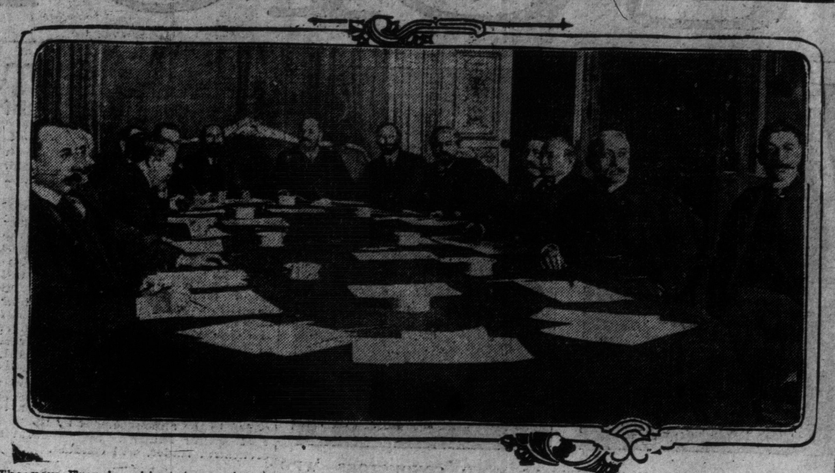
Not as a distinguished politician, not as a brilliant lawyer, nor as an elegant writer, but as all three, as one of the leading brains of France, Raymond Poincare was admitted to take his place among the forty immortals of the Academie Francaise.

Home Lover.

In a neat little hotel on the confines of the Bois M. Raymond Poincare has lived a retired existence with his wife, surrounded by his books and his bibelots, till his recent nomination to be reporter of the senate committee on the Franco-German accord launched him forth again into political strife. The new premier loves his fireside. Despite his name and his relations, which would open any doors to him, he is not a society man. Released from his chambers or the law courts he hurries home and spends the evening with his books and his two devoted companions, Gri-gri and Scott. Gri-gri is a magnificent Siamese cat; Scott a thorobred collie.

M. Poincare is a notable conversationalist. They say of him that in ten minutes he can dispose of any question and any person. He is not a great talker, however. His manner is reserved. His phrases fall slowly from his lips, and one feels that each one has been duly pondered over and shaped before being given forth. His appearance is a little shaggy. He looks more like a scientist, with his high forehead and slightly untidy dress, than the brilliant lawyer, politician, and writer that he is. He gives the impression of solidity, of depth.

If the reports are to be believed, however, the present strong cabinet has been assembled only as an emergency. Many of its members prefer other lines of business life, and have come to their country's aid by accepting portfolios to tide over the dark hours. So soon as the clouds have passed, they wish to retire to their own special lines, and, politics, and it is then that M. Delcasse may be called to form a cabinet. Stranger things have happened and in France cabinets, you know, are not long lived.



The new French cabinet in session. Premier M. Raymond Poincare is at the far end of the table, the one with the beard. At his right hand, in order, are: M. Steeg, minister of the interior; M. Guisthau, minister of education, and M. Berard. At his left hand, in order, are M. Klotz, minister of finance; M. Dupuy, minister of public works; M. LeBrun, minister for the colonies; M. Chaumet; M. Bourgeois, vice-president of the cabinet and minister of justice; M. Millerand, minister for war; M. Delcasse, minister of marine; M. Pams, minister of agriculture, and M. Besnard.

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$3.12 (WORTH $15).—Gent's Heavy 18 ct. Gold-cased Keyless Lever Hunter Watch, improved action (John Forrest, London), 10 years' warranty; absolutely perfect timekeeper; also double Curb Albert, same quality, with Grecian's head seal attached; all quite indistinguishable from new; complete, $3.12

$3.12 (WORTH $15).—Lady's handsome 18 ct. Gold-cased Keyless Watch, improved action (Allen & Co., London), exact timekeeper, 10 years' warranty; also long Watch Guard, same quality; guaranteed 15 years' wear; together, sacrifice, $3.12.

$9.63—MAGNIFICENT $65 Double Breech Loader Gun, 12 bore, top lever, proof tested barrels, left choke, rebounding locks, central fire, perfect condition; $9.63.

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$5.—REAL Furs, $30 Set black, silver tipped pointed fox-colour Princess stole, heads and tails; latest Parisian style; large muff with heads and tails hanging; $5.

$5.88—REAL Russian Furs (worth $40). Rich, dark sable brown extra long Princess stole, trimmed with heads and tails at back and on shoulders; also large animal muff, with heads and tails hanging; in perfectly new condition; sacrifice, $5.88.

$3.12 (WORTH $15.).—Gent's Fashionable Double Albert, 18-ct. gold (stamped) filled, curb pattern, heavy, solid links, superior quality; sacrifice, $3.12.

$2.63 (WORTH $15). HANDSOME long Neck Chain, 18 ct. gold (stamped) filled, in velvet case, solid links, elegant design; another heavier, extra long, $2.63

$2.63 (WORTH $15.) FASHIONABLE Curb Chain Padlock Bracelet, with safety chain, solid links, 18-ct. gold (stamped) filled, in velvet case; great bargain; sacrifice $2.63; another, heavier; sacrifice, $3.13.

$3.63—LADY'S 18k 18-ct. Gold Government hall-marked, Greatorex half-loop real Diamond Ring; perfectly matched stones, extremely fine quality, sacrifice, $3.63.

$4.33—LADY'S $25 18 ct. Solid Gold hall marked Diamond and Sapphire 5 cubist Half-hoop Ring, claw setting, large, lustrous, finest quality stones; sacrifice, $4.33.

$7.50—MAGNIFICENT $40 Set of Valuable Sheffield Table Cutlery, by Joseph Rodgers; 12 table, 12 dessert knives, carver, fork and steel; finest quality throughtang Crayford ivory handles; $7.50.

$39.—VERY fine quality $175 English-made Gun (by Freis, Williams, Gunsmith, London and Birmingham), Double-barrel Hammerless, Anson and Deeley pattern, fine English steel barrels, left barrel full choke right cylinder bore, nitro proved, tested and stamped, fitted with Greener treble cross-bolt action, automatic safety bolt, very highly finished and engraved, a first-class weapon by one of the best makers; sacrifice, $39, in practically new condition.

$3.20—EIGHT LADIES' Superfine Quality Chemises, Knickers, and Petticoats, magnificent $10 parcel, sacrifice, $3.20.

$6.45—GENT'S $20 dark green Tweed Jacket Suit, by Longford, high-class tailor; latest West-end cut and finish, never worn; breast 39 in., waist 36 in., length 32½ in.; sacrifice, $6.45.

$5.63—LADY'S $35 Solid Gold English hall-marked Keyless Watch, highly finished Jewelled movement, exact timekeeper, richly engraved, 12 years' warranty; sacrifice, $5.63; also Ladies' handsome solid Gold long Watch Guard, worth $35; sacrifice, $5.63.

$13.75—GENT'S Magnificent $60 Solid Gold English hall-marked Keyless Lever Centre seconds Chronograph Stop Watch, ex. by celebrated watchmaker (W. Russell, London); jewelled movement, compensated balance; perfect reliability in any climate in the world; timed to a minute a month; 20 years' warranty; 6 months' trial; sacrifice, $14.75.

$63.75—GENT'S $200 Solid 18 ct. Gold English hall-marked Keyless Lever Watch, open face, sunk seconds, fully jewelled in 17 holes, with high-class Kew certificates; highest grade movement; would make handsome presentation Watch. In perfectly new condition, by Graham & Co., London. This Watch was awarded the Government Kew certificate, with high marks for superior accuracy, after a period of 45 days' continuous test in every possible position and temperature, from freezing in a refrigerator to oven heating, thus ensuring absolutely perfect reliability in any climate in the world; patent screw regulator, highly polished pallets in massive solid 18-ct. Gold dump and dust proof cases; 6 months' free trial; sacrifice, $63.75.

$15.—MAGNIFICENT $35 Diamond and Sapphire Cluster Ring; 18 ct. Gold, hall-marked; suit either lady or gentleman; there are 10 pure white absolutely faultless diamonds of quality and water rarely equalled, surrounding a superb sapphire of richest quality; to appreciate the full beauty of this ring it must be seen; bargain, $15.

$4.20—MASSIVE $20 Solid Gold Curb Chain Padlock Bracelet, with safety chain; sacrifice, $4.20.

$3.38 (WORTH $20) EXPANDING Watch Bracelet, Hanhenie-Keyless Watch in centre, perfect timekeeper; 18 ct. gold cased; 6 months' free trial; sacrifice, $3.38.

$6.—GENT'S $25 solid silver Real English hall marked Lever Watch, exactly by the celebrated watchmaker (W. Russell, London); high-grade movement, highly tempered unbreakable mainspring; timed to a few seconds a month; 10 years' written warranty. Also Gent's Solid Silver English Hall-marked massive curb Albert, with Silver Compass attached; three together, sacrifice, $6.

$24.38 (WORTH $125.). Hammerless Breechloader, Anson & Deeley pattern; double barrelled, interchangeable 12-bore quadruple cross-bolt action; automatic safety bolt; steel barrels, left choke. This gun is a really first-class weapon. Sacrifice, $24.38.

$7.50—BABY'S Long Clothes, superfine quality, magnificent $15 parcel, 82 articles. Everything required beautiful home-made garments, the production of mother's personal work; never worn; great sacrifice, $7.50

$18.75 FINEST quality Hammerless Gun, by renowned maker; well worth $60; double barrel, 12 bore, Government proof tested barrels, very highly finished and engraved; in perfect condition, 6 months' trial; sacrifice, $18.75.

$4.13—SHEFFIELD Cutlery.—$20 Service.—12 large, 12 small, knives, carvers and steel, massive Crayford ivory handles; sacrifice, $4.13.

$5.—VERY Valuable Violin, perfect condition, labelled Stradivarius Antonius, 1721; rich, mellow tone, with Double model Bow and black ebonized Case, suit professional or soloist; sacrifice, $5; worth $50.

$1.45—HANDSOME $5 Brooch, two hearts entwined with ivy-leaf centre; 18-ct. gold (stamped) filled, in velvet case; $1.45.

$1.45—PRETTY NECKLET, with Heart Pendant attached, set Orient Pearls and Turquoises; 18-ct. gold (stamped) filled; in velvet case; worth $5; sacrifice, $1.45.

$9.88 SPOONS and Forks, A1 quality, silver-plated on nickel silver, stamped maker's initials, Queen Anne pattern; 12 table, 12 dessert, 12 teaspoons, 12 table, 12 dessert forks; service 5 doz.; list price, $32.50; sacrifice, $9.88; half set, $5.

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An Englishman's Impressions of Canadian Cities

Being the letters of Captain D. J. Stenton to His Friend R. H. Franklin, London, E. C.

Montreal, Jan. 7, 1912.

My Dear Franklin: No doubt you are wondering why I do not answer your very welcome letter of Dec. 15, but when I tell you that I read said letter for the first time this morning, you will perhaps pardon my seeming lack of courtesy. The fact is, old man, I have been indulging in some of the winter pleasures of this big metropolis, or rather have attempted to indulge in one particular pleasure of this big, unfeeling city and as a result my mind has, for the past two weeks, been more or less a blank.

When the bald-headed clerk of my hotel and his friend, the mineral-water agent, asked me how I would like to try ski-ing down the virgin snow of the world-noted Mount Royal, I, at first, firmly refused. I argued that a mere alien such as myself had no right to take liberties with anything so sacred as that hump-backed idol of a worshipping populace. I expressed myself as willing to do anything in reason, such as walk a tight-rope across the rapids, sass a street-car conductor or wear my Freemason's badge to a French picnic, but I firmly refused to strap a pair of turned-up cedar fence-rails to my feet and do the shoot-the-shoots act down a beautiful mountain that had never done me any harm, to speak of. It mattered naught to me if others ski-doodled down her face, bridging its wrinkles and leaping from mole to freckle. To some men nothing was sacred. For my part I believed in letting sleeping dogs and mountains lie.

But that goggle-eyed clerk and the pug-nosed drummer were not to be thus easily turned from their heinous purpose. They agreed that my sentiments were a credit to me and a compliment to the city and hers, but they failed to see how a little trip on fence-rails down her glassy sides would materially molest the slumbers of the beautiful mountain, or in any way mutilate her features.

Seated here, propped up by pillows in my little white cot, with a kind and attentive nurse, (it seems the woman nurse first assigned me was not strong enough for the job), taking my dictation and occasionally dropping a tear of sympathy as I narrate my woes, seated here, I say, and calmly reviewing my wonderful loop-the-loop dash from the now to the everlasting, that awful dip down a tree-studded mountain that started on skis and came to a sudden ending in the skies. I wonder why the clerk and the drummer got me to do it. I find myself straining my brain to find a motif for their murderous plotting against me. But I can find none. I am convinced there was none and that their unquestionable knowledge of skis and ski-ing, their wonderful know-it-allness was as natural to them as fleas are to a dog, both of these gentlemen being, as I have since ascertained, Americans. I now attribute their cock-sureness more to their bringing-up than to their dwarfed criminal intellects. In the United States I understand lack of knowledge of anything, big or little, animate or inanimate, is not considered much of a defect in any person, unless that person is foolish enough to confess it. Then it becomes the greatest, the rarest, crime of the country and the career of the confessor is doomed from that hour.

I must own, however, that my undopers possessed great powers of persuasion. They had mastered the art to a sublime degree, particularly had the bow-legged drummer, who was in the habit of placing his customers under a hypnotic spell and making them double their orders.

In half an hour, aided by a bottle of mineral water from the drummer's sample case, they had persuaded me that it was every loyal Englishman's duty to slide down Mount Royal on skis.

What was the mother country to know of the fairest of her colonies, if an officer in her army refused to set an example to his countrymen? What was that country to know of Canada's chief city and its wonderful mountain if I refused to taste of the thrilling exhilarations said mountain afforded? Would an English officer who had braved the siege of Ladysmith and filled his boots with perspiration in building trenches on the hot African sands turn his face from the call of duty? No, they thought not. They were sure he would not.

We will now, my dear Franklin, shift the scene to the field, or rather the mountain of action. Behold your poor friend balancing himself on the top of an icy hill. I have been duly decorated with the red and blue regalia of the Ski-ing Order and resemble the first mate on a pea-soup slooper, bound for the Arctic Circle. A little body of grave-faced men stand just behind me. Among them are a priest, a coroner, a doctor and an undertaker. I am impressed that the latter gentleman is the only cheerful one in the party, unless it be myself.

All the forebodings which had troubled me earlier in the day have been dispelled by the same voices of my seducers. I smile as they strap the Georgia pine scantlings to my feet and listen to their parting directions. I am advised to keep my head, to lean backward, to crouch, stand erect, side-step, two-step and several other things of minor importance.

At last I stand ready for the sacrifice and as I look down that mountain-side which resembles the slate-roof of a church after a sleet-storm, the little group of mourners at my back come forward and shake my hand. If their action prompts misgiving in me, I have no time to back out, for, with a playful little gesture, the hotel clerk shoves the mountain under me and the next second I have given a Chikopee war-whoop and am beating its echo out of range down the side of the hill.

I have a faint recollection of thinking it great sport as I made the first hundred yards in three seconds less than record time. I had no time to fall and now think that my elevation must have kept me up. Then I saw a twenty-foot scrub oak drifting up to meet met and I playfully leaped it and alighted, bunched, according to directions and schedule, on its other side. I heard a cheer from above and my determination to make an achievement out of my descent, increased materially. My speed also increased. I was now painting a sort of red and blue rainbow down the curving mountain side and I realized that I was not retaining my compactness as I should; I was stringing myself out too much.

Next, I remember striking a bump, of drifting high in air, coiled up like a busted clock spring, of lighting with an awful thump and then oblivion.

All this, my dear Bob, happened some days ago. Since then I have had lots of time for reflection, but not sufficient strength to go down and murder the hotel clerk. He keeps sending me up all sorts of wines and things but he never comes to see me until I am asleep. My right arm is still too lame to do any writing so I have the good nurse help me out.

When next I write you, I will as you suggest, tell you about some of the splendid buildings and beauty spots of this city.

Until then, I remain,

D. J. Stenton.

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