

MAINLY PERSONAL

The Good Ghost Lavergne

ARMAND LAVERGNE, the trumpet medium of the young Nationalists, has appeared at a seance in which the voice from Lavergne says that he will not volunteer to be a commander of a battalion which he might be allowed to recruit at Montmagny. The voice from the spirit world says that Mr. Lavergne—who in peace times was a soldier—does not believe in volunteering to recruit battalions to help Canada in this war; that the only time to go to war is when you are attacked by somebody else; and that if Canada were attacked by whomsoever he would favour conscription for purposes of defence; nevertheless, if the Minister of Militia or the King or Lord Kitchener see fit to command his services, he is at their service.

This was a most inspiring message from the spirit world in which Mr. Armand Lavergne lives and moves and has his Nationalist being. That is the way the disembodied spirit feels about the war which is being carried on by his materialistic brethren—a number of them being his own French-Canadian compatriots. It is a great comfort to know that the spirit of Armand still keeps in touch with the French nation fighting for its national existence, with the British Empire in the crisis of the Empire's life, with Canada as an integral part of the Empire sending troops to Europe to help defend that Empire. It is all the more comforting because in his ordinary life upon this earth Armand Lavergne was a soldier.

But he went into the other plane, the idealistic, idyllic part of the universe known as any part of Quebec that indulges the Nationalist dream of independence. From that exalted nebulous sphere the calm spirit of Armand Lavergne looks down upon the tumult of men at war and encourages them with abstract doctrines. He sees very clearly that it is not for us to defend England; it is for England to defend us. That is something which our carnal minds never would have thought out. It comes with beautiful clearness from Armand Lavergne, like the voice of an untroubled angel bidding us all take heart and be at peace no matter with what millions of tons of murder the enemy may be rampaging over Europe and as far as possible over the rest of mankind. Still it is nice to know that the Nationalist lieutenant of Mr. Bourassa is willing to come down from that exalted spirit Utopia in which he leads a detached, dispassionate existence and go to war if he is so commanded. With the spirit of Armand Lavergne at the head of our Nationalist troops even the angels at Mons might be considered very ordinary apparitions by comparison.

Mayor Martin, Compatriot

MAYOR MEDERIC MARTIN, of Montreal, sends his respects to Mr. Stephenson Blake, of Toronto, and says it is not true that French-Canadians are so lukewarm over the war as Mr. Blake supposes. The reason for the letter was that

Mr. Blake sent a \$1,000 check to Mayor Martin to be used in aid of the British Red Cross in Montreal; but when he heard rumours that Quebec priests discourage French-Canadians from enlisting, that French-Canadians desert in large numbers, that one regiment, the 49th, was made up of a lot of foreigners, and that another regiment, the 41st, recruited a year ago, has not yet got up to 800 men—and so forth—he gave orders to cancel the check.

To these allegations Mayor Martin replies; for him with very temperate language. The theatrical Mayor very soberly assures Mr. Blake that the allegations are much exaggerated. He admits that he does not know the exact proportions of French-Canadians who are at the front or on the way there. For his information, be it said, that the Montreal Daily Mail gives the percentage as .61, the lowest in Canada. He says that Sir Sam Hughes, not long ago, expressed his satisfaction at the part taken by French-Canadians in the war. But Sir Sam has since invited Armand Lavergne to raise a regiment. He alleges that the 41st was long ago up to full strength and will soon be on the firing line. As to the

mixed 49th, he says it is not the lack of French-Canadians, but the need of certain other men for this, that or the other. He pertinently inquires what about the 57th, now about ready to depart; about the French-Canadians who enlisted in English-speaking regiments—does Mr. Blake know their number? No, neither does Mayor Martin. More pertinently still, he asks if Mr. Blake has never heard of the gallant 22nd, a French-Canadian regiment somewhere in France or Belgium in the thick of the fight.



HON. ARTHUR MEIGHEN, P.C.,
Solicitor-General, who denies the rumour that he intends to enlist. He is more necessary at Ottawa.

ing under Col Gaudet. He mentions several French-Canadians who have served gallantly in the trenches; the hospitals equipped by French-Canadians; the large amounts raised by Quebec municipalities for the war; the first recruiting speech delivered in Canada—by Sir Wilfrid Laurier; and the numerous recruiting rallies held in French-Canadian centres.

A most amiable reply and very much to the point.

Gallieni, the Veteran

GEN. GALLIENI succeeds M. Millerand as French Minister of War. Here is a fine veteran in the right place. Gallieni is one of the marked men of this war. His career as military governor of Paris, which he has been since the war began, is enough to give him a big place in the counsels of the nation. The defence of Paris was at one time a very precarious matter. With Gallieni in charge of the city, no Parisian got hysteria. Close as it was to the lines of battle with great armies wedging down upon the Capital and Zeppelins near by, Gen. Gallieni has managed to keep Paris life in Paris as normal as living in London or Berlin. He is a veteran who has studied war by experience. He is one of the score of generals who know as much about war as Joffre, even if most of them lack Joffre's powerful personality in the practice of war.

Sir Max Aitken—C.O.?

SIR MAX AITKEN has perhaps got weary of being merely chief eye-witness with the Canadian troops at the front. In this field of writing he has done some good work. He now wishes to do something a little nearer the front without the shadow of the censor always over him. He has offered to raise a battalion in his native province, New Brunswick, or if not permitted to do that, to serve as an officer in a New Brunswick regiment at the front. There is no doubt that either offer—probably the latter—will be accepted. Sir Sam Hughes is not passing over with scant courtesy millionaires who are able to raise battalions. Besides, New Brunswick is a fine field for recruiting. No other province has shown a better spirit in the war, in all the numerous activities that require men, money and materials. Sir Max himself is the right sort of stuff.

He is a man of action. He has always been swift to do what came into his head. A few years ago he was dazzling the financiers of this country by his rapid climb from down-at-the-heels to the financial apex of Montreal. He had the golden touch, the wizard's wand, then. Since he has gone to England as an M.P., Sir Max has not been idle. He has become a very prominent figure in the public life of the Old Country. His opinions about Imperial politics were always welcome to the political leaders. By all means, let us see Sir Max at the head of a New Brunswick battalion.

More Useful at Home

WITH somewhat of a sigh of relief we learn that there is no truth in the rumour that Mr. Arthur Meighen intends to enlist. The Solicitor-General, now P. C. and a member of the Canadian Cabinet, would no doubt make a fine soldier. He has succeeded so well in Parliament that we should expect him to make his mark in the army. A few years ago there was no man in Parliament more diffident and somewhat awkward in debate than Meighen. But he began to study the art of debate. He studied the leaders in debate. He saw what made Laurier and Foster such able debaters. And he was not satisfied until he had himself become what he now is, one of the best fighters in the House.

Meighen did not get to be a parliamentary fighter by studying merely the art of rhetoric. He learned more by fighting. Certain members opposite used to take great joy out of bull-baiting Meighen, the member for Portage. For all these, including Mr. Carvell, from New Brunswick, Meighen had a nice long Eskimo dog-whip coiled up under his desk. When he rose and cracked that whip across the floor he snicked the ear of a member here and there and then sat down. He is always ready. In the House he is one of the strong men needed now and then by the Premier in debate. In the Cabinet he will not be less useful with his clear-headed ability.

Ready, Aye Ready

"READY, Aye Ready" might almost be written of the 73rd Highlanders, of Montreal. The new overseas battalion—allied with the great Black Watch and wearing its uniform—is rapidly nearing its full strength. Over one thousand men, gathered from all over Quebec, are enlisted now, and Col. Peers Davidson, who has had the recruiting field almost all to himself for the last month, is giving way to General Meighen, who is to raise and equip the Grenadier Guards.

Col. Peers Davidson is a soldier and the son of a soldier. His father is Sir Charles Davidson, Fenian raid veteran, formerly commander of the 3rd Victoria Rifles, of Montreal, and a jurist of wide repute. Col. Davidson is soldier and lawyer, too. He is a King's Counsel in professional life, and when the war broke out he was a major in the Fifth Royal Highlanders. He had joined that regiment eight years before; he worked so enthusiastically that his company won the most efficient company prize. When the outbreak of hostilities came and the 13th Battalion was being formed, he was unable to leave the city. He wanted to go with the 42nd Battalion, but he was held back until the 73rd was raised. That battalion will be in barracks in Montreal all winter, but with the 13th and the 42nd it will give a fine account of itself when it reaches the battle zone.

Col. Davidson was born in Montreal in 1870 and is the eldest son of Sir Charles Davidson. He was educated at the Montreal High School and at McGill University, from which he holds the degree of B.A., M.A. and B.C.L. He was appointed a King's Counsellor in 1906; he is a director of the Crown Trust Company, and a lecturer on law frequently. He is a yachtsman, too, and was commodore of the Royal St. Lawrence Yacht Club in 1907. He is a very prominent club man, although he is one of the busiest men in Montreal. This week he brought his Highlanders home to Montreal from Valcartier, where they had been in camp for a month.



COL. PEERS DAVIDSON,
Commanding Officer of the
73rd Highlanders in Mont-
real.



GENERAL GALLIENI,
The Minister of War in the
new French Cabinet.