

*Gets Material
from
Everywhere in Canada*

CANADIAN COURIER

*Goes to
Canadians
all over Canada*

Vol. XXI.

May 26th, 1917

No. 26

GREAT MEN IN CANADA

MOST great men have visited Canada as a curiosity shop or as part of an Imperial globe-trotting campaign. The triumvirate, Joffre, Balfour, Viviani, have visited us because we needed them—and they needed us. It is a great joy to know three big men who have no handles to their names. Mr. Balfour, introduced to some of our Canadian titleholders, might, of course, concede that overseas titles are a good thing to keep the British home fires burning in the Dominions. He is himself a nephew of the late Lord Salisbury, British Premier, and the man who, with more than common wisdom on foreign affairs, gave Heligoland to Germany in exchange for a protectorate over Zanzibar.

Canada has no man of the Balfour stamp. Sir Beerbohm Tree, writing in the New York Times, called him

"The most un-American thing in America. Cosmopolitan in intellect, he is the embodiment of the old-fashioned English gentleman. Having turned his back on fame, he seems almost irked by her pursuit. A natural aristocrat of mind and heart, he is a socialist in courtesy. He has remained plain Mr. Balfour and is so much the stronger with all sections of society. It is a great thing to be able to afford not to be a Duke. If as a politician he has a fault, it is probably that he is too much of a philosopher to take seriously the game which the pushful worldling plays with a deadly earnest."

Canada will be as much a curiosity to Mr. Balfour as he to Canada. In Ottawa he will not encounter his like. It takes historic background and a large element of leisure to produce men of his stamp. There is a certain native indolence about so keen an intellect that is near to genius; a quality which Lord Bryce and Lord Morley do not possess, and it is peculiarly charming. Mr. Balfour is a good deal of a dilettante. Literature, art, music, history, philosophy, politics, foreign affairs—all pass through this man's mind and leave it still the essential Balfour. He is not a natural diplomat, more than he was an effective First Lord of the Admiralty; not a shrewd politician, but a wise political thinker; not an eminent flag-waver, but a great patriot; not a musician or an art connoisseur, but a fastidious dabbler in music and pictures—unlike the average English public man who knows little of music and nothing at all about pictures. Neither is Mr. Balfour a philosopher or a religionist, though he wrote *The Foundations of Belief*. He is not an orator, though he speaks amazingly well because his style is so simple, his grasp of the subject so vigorous and his method of delivery so lucid. Democratic he may be, but he is not a Socialist. He is perhaps as much bewildered by the present world chaos as any man; but if he lives long enough no man will make a better intellectual use of the new world that comes out of the war.

The nearest approximation to Mr. Balfour that we have in Canada is a personality compounded of two such men as Sir Wilfrid Laurier and Sir Edmund Walker. Intellectual ease and a certain agreeable indolence make the Laurier resemblance; as a diligent dilettante Mr. Balfour resembles Sir Edmund, who has nothing of his Balfour philosophic insight.

On the practical action side this tall, lean ascetic

Interesting Impressions of Mr. Balfour, M. Viviani and Gen. Joffre, Regarding their Visit to this Country



with the sadly humorous face has seen considerable service, not the least of which was his Chief Secretaryship first of Scotland, afterwards of Ireland, concerning which the New York Sun says:

News of the appointment convulsed the country. The rebellious Irish were expected to "play the cat and banjo" with the mild, the frail, the easily exhausted Balfour. All England looked forward to a Roman holiday with Balfour as the Christian martyr. The rebels in Erin began to bedevil the Government, they indulged in a series of riots. The Chief Secretary was appealed to.

"Shoot if necessary," he telegraphed to the captain sent to put down the disorder.

Thereby he came into the title of Bloody Balfour—this man, who belonged to "The Souls," a society of esthetes, who had written "A Defence of Philosophic Doubt," who seemed to gain his only enjoyment out of a round of golf. Bloody Balfour he remained for his five years' incumbency of the office.

It was half a decade that brought him into constant battle in Ireland, where he opposed the Home-Rulers, and in Parliament, where he had to contend with the Irish Nationalists. Gladstone early in his career had adopted him as a sort of protege, but Balfour felt it essential to his duty to riddle his theories of Irish government. He did much that was constructive in Ireland, much that has lasted through all the pressure exerted since in behalf of the Emerald Isle.

When he dropped his duties in this important field he became First Lord of the Treasury. He took up for his uncle the work of the Foreign Office and he held the leadership of the House. When his uncle resigned as Premier, in 1902, Balfour succeeded him. He came into power about the time King Edward was crowned and when the loose ends of the concluded South African War had to be caught up.

For three years he held the Premiership. In his term he brought Russia and Japan into alliance with England after they had ended the war. He concluded the agreement with France in 1904. He saved his country from warfare, too, when the Russian squadron fired on the British fleet off the Dogger Bank.

RENE VIVIANI is a very different sort of man from Mr. Balfour. He is a great Socialist, a tremendous orator and a man of fire. His brief visit to our Parliament in Ottawa gave him a very small opportunity to demonstrate these charac-

teristics. He made a speech in French and it had about it some of the electric quality of the storm that made it impossible to get a clear photograph of the man while in Ottawa.

This man's intellectual fire is equalled by his patriotic inspiration. Both spring from the same root. A man of the people, a Socialist, an orator, he is a great Frenchman worthy to rank with them that will save France to the world. He was made Premier at the outbreak of war. When it seemed better to have M. Briand in the Premiership, without the least hostility or rancor, M. Viviani retired, like Mr. Asquith, to serve his country, but in a very difficult role, that of Minister of Justice. Under Clemenceau he had been Minister of Labour. He is by profession a lawyer, was born in Algeria, made his home in Paris, and was elected to the Chamber of Deputies.

It was during the early days of Briand's Premiership that Mr. N. W. Rowell, accompanied by Main Johnson, his private secretary, visited France and heard M. Viviani speak in the French Senate. A vivid impression of that

scene has been given to the Canadian Courier by Main Johnson, who says:

It was in the Senate that we listened to him. The French Upper Chamber, since 1879, has been housed in the "Palais du Luxembourg," built by Marie de Medicis, in the early part of the 17th century. While we were waiting in the sumptuous library before going into the "Salle des Seances" we could feel the atmosphere of the romantic history of the palace. Before the Revolution it was the residence of princes and princesses. From 1789 to 1795 it was used as one of the many political prisons in which were confined such men as Hebert, David and Danton. Napoleon himself afterwards lived there for a few years until he moved to the Tuilleries in 1800.

From the windows of the library we were overlooking the Jardin du Luxembourg—one of the glorious gardens of the world and the only remaining Renaissance garden in Paris. Ontario legislators look out upon Queen's Park, which needs no apology, but they are also confronted with some rather mundane and prosaic examples of sculpture. The gardens of the Luxembourg are not only enchanting with their delicacy of flowers and trees and fountains, but, scattered about, nestling under groves and peering half-hidden from unexpected spots, are some of the most delightful and charming statues in Europe. And they are not confined to figures of public men; Viviani and the senators of France look out upon Bacchantes, upon shepherds and fauns, goat herds and mowers, wrestlers and Venuses, hunters and river gods.

When we went into the Senate Chamber, Viviani was standing in front by the tribune addressing his colleagues, who were seated in the semi-circular amphitheatre characteristic of European assemblies. The President of the Senate, corresponding roughly to the Speaker of our Houses, sits not on the Floor, as with us, but dominates the hall from a lofty station at about the same height as the press gallery at Ottawa and Toronto. A number of secretaries are grouped around the circular platform behind the President. Viviani was standing immediately below and in front. Members do not debate from their seats, as they do under the British plan, but, like the Americans, speak from an isolated rostrum. The press men sit on both sides of the orator on the same level with him.

If we had expected to find the alleged excitability of the Gallic temperament illustrated in Viviani and to see an orator wildly gesticulating as Frenchmen have been represented on the American dramatic and musical comedy stage, we would have been surprised. Viviani spoke with complete restraint in a comparatively low