

to induce Hindenburg to stand for the presidency in the contest which must take place soon, as Ebert is only a provisional president.

As a further symptom of centralizing tendencies, it may be noted that, although the constitution of the empire says nothing on the subject, the German 'lands,' or states, have not set up

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presidents of their own. No one has taken the place of their deposed sovereigns. Prussia set the example in this regard, and the Prussian Ministry is selected by the president of the Prussian Chamber acting in agreement with the leaders of those political parties which combine to form the parliamentary majority.

JOSEPH CAILLAUX: A CHARACTER SKETCH

BY LOUIS LATZARUS

HAD M. Caillaux, during his too famous voyage to Italy, visited Herculaneum, he might have seen a fine mosaic picturing a veiled goddess holding a sheathed sword. It was held by the ancients that Nemesis, daughter of Night and sole mistress of Destiny, hid her face from mortals till the hour when her sword struck down into their hearts. The man who is soon to appear before the high court may profit from a contemplation of this allegory. In the hour in which his fevered dream promised him absolute power, in the moment when oblivion seemed about to overwhelm faults, scandals, and crimes, the goddess swept aside her veil and looked him in the face.

If he reads these lines, he will laugh. No man on earth has ever been more certain that mortals bend destiny to their will, and that nothing counts in human life except force, audacity, and an obstinate will. Hear him as he addresses his electors at Mamers just after the assassination of Calmette. 'Defeated,' he cries, 'my adversaries

have proclaimed that I was done for, defeated. Defeated? Come on! To-morrow, even as to-day, I shall be standing in the breach.' And hearken to the words of the same nature which he used to the senators charged with his trial. 'My political adversaries may be triumphing to-day, but I am holding my own and shall continue to do so; the accused of to-day is the accuser of to-morrow. I shall be at the breach—I shall hold my own, . . .' These words of combat express his conception of life. He is not of those who sleepily await the caprices of fortune. He will take her by storm; he will put her in chains. If he falls it is but for a moment. He will be on his feet again and ready for the fray. At least, so he thinks. Let us, then, look at him as he lies in the abyss into which he has fallen, not with pity, for this he neither merits nor asks, but without prejudice or passion.

They say of him: 'He is a bourgeois. He is a renegade bourgeois ruined by an unbridled ambition.' The man

himself was wont to speak with complaisance of his origins. He did not require much urging to proclaim himself of gentle birth. Did he not avow that one of his ancestors followed William the Conqueror to England? In one of his recently published letters did he not refer to the marriages of his kinsfolk with the nobility? A smile may be pardoned. In his collateral genealogy, a Bouvet de Bronville and a Fournier des Ormes, son of a printer, may be found. *Voilà tout*. Yes, let us smile at these comic pretenses. Nothing whatsoever can be found concerning the famous ancestor who accompanied the conqueror. The first known Caillaux was, in the eighteenth century, a humble village carpenter whose Christian name was Lubin. He had several sons, one of whom was called Joseph. This first Joseph Caillaux founded the fortunes of the family. Let us pause at this precious grandfather.

In November, 1792, he did not possess eighteen hundred *livres*, but seven years later one finds him the sixth richest citizen of Chartres. In the year VII he actually spent six hundred and forty-nine thousand francs in a single day. The citizens of Chartres murmured against a fortune so rapidly acquired. But he held his own as did his grandson. He posted proclamations on the wall in which he boldly stated, 'I engaged only in speculations that were honest and legal. Success crowned my efforts; this success stirred envious tongues. The evil minded declare that my fortune was dishonestly gathered. Into what a pit of error have these infamous calumniators fallen!'

A hundred and twenty years ago, the language of the first Joseph Caillaux foreshadowed the rhetoric of the second. Let us see, however, of just what nature were these 'honest and

legal speculations' and 'efforts.' They consisted in buying the assets of the seminary and the convent of the Jacobins, and in re-selling them and buying other assets. In short, the efforts spoken of concerned speculation in national property. Moreover, at the same time that the good man was making a figure as a worthy *sans culotte*, he politely doffed his red cap when he encountered a cidevant noble. In the rear of his shop in the *Rue Poelc-Percée*, he furtively welcomed and accepted commissions. This revolutionary Janus became wealthy at the double game. When he died in 1820, however, he complained of not being rich enough. Above all, he complained of the ingratitude of the nobles, for he had received no recognition from the government of the Restoration. He had even seen his son refused the post of *Procureur de Roi* at Chartres because of his father's revolutionary past. Thus, when his children gathered round his bed, he tossed at them this last bit of advice: 'Never do a service for the nobility. They know not gratitude.'

Who can say that this ancestral phrase, passed on by family tradition, has not had some influence on our M. Joseph Caillaux? The first steps of his political career concern his contest with a nobleman, the Duke de la Rochefoucauld. He allows him to believe that he will not stand as a candidate against him. The Duke, reassured, leaves for his estates in Sicily. Nevertheless, M. Joseph Caillaux has himself elected to the Chamber, in spite of the opposition of his family, and in spite of the fact that his brother, indignant at the lie, writes a public letter to the press disavowing him. The grandfather in his tomb, however, must have been satisfied and turned his head to hear the last faint echoes of the Carmagnole.

Let us beware, however, of trying to explain M. Caillaux by the variable laws of heredity. Let us follow the more permissible course of pointing out some piquant resemblances between the two Joseph Caillauxs. The first, in the same hour that he sustains the revolutionary, Pétion, hides a marquis in his cellar. The second, outwardly ranked with the socialists, prepares a dictator's *coup d'état*. The first joins with the people in decrying abuses, and secretly dreams of building his aristocracy of fortune, the second crushes the income tax while speciously appearing to defend it. Both possess the same double nature; both conceal under the same Jacobin bonnet an ambition exclusively personal. Behold two plutocratic demagogues with a hundred and twenty years between them. And remember that the ancestor defamed his critics and that the descendant urged a law against the press.

No one knows, however, whether the *sans culotte* possessed the characteristic which marks his grandson — pride, the prodigious pride which unseats the mind. Perhaps this pride is the personal possession of the present M. Joseph Caillaux, and has its source, as M. Daudet has subtly said, less in the *self* than in the *myself*. Even as a child, he waited for his father at the door of the senate chamber, asked about the high placed personages, and was proud to recognize a Caillaux among them. 'I, too, shall be a minister.' Such was his childhood exclamation. The people who gathered together to see the vain little boy in his wagon were but machines which could be made to work by shrieking out 'Democracy!' In the depth of his heart, M. Caillaux despises democracy. 'I am an aristocrat,' he murmurs to himself, poor man, who does not know that aristocracy is founded neither on

worldly goods nor intelligence, but on sacrifice. This scorn of others leads him to think himself of a superior race. I heard him once reëcho the famous apostrophe of Mirabeau, and compare himself to the last of the Gracchi. 'In all countries and in all times the nobility has implacably trailed down the friends of the people, and if such a friend rose in their own ranks, it was he above all whom they sought to strike down, that the choice of the victim might inspire terror.' And read these phrases from the preface to his recent book — 'I write these lines in the prison of La Santé in which I have been detained for sixteen months. I think of Lally-Tollendall and Duplex.' And he adds, 'My country! My country! must you always punish thus those who have best loved you and served you, men to whom you later erect statues?'

Everything that concerns him takes on an air of grandeur in his eyes. At the trial of his wife, he sums up his life in these terms. 'A millionaire from my cradle, son of a Cabinet Minister, a brilliant student, inspector of finances at twenty-five, life opens before me. At thirty-five I defeat the Duke de la Rochefoucauld, I enter the Chamber (*sic*) almost triumphantly.' And there are other phrases here and there: 'A man,' he is speaking of himself, 'whose vigor, authority, and power of will no one can deny.' 'My conscience, I may say, is of a delicacy refined to the last word in scrupulousness (?).' Such is his advantageous style. He does not for an instant feel that it is the style of a parvenu.

I see him now, walking with his jerky step, biting his lips, digging his nails into his palms, tapping with his foot, and brusquely shaking his head. I see him as the judge asks him a question. A tide of blood flows over his neck and head, and the temporal

artery swells to a thick coil. It is his physiological mark, this flushing of the features. Perhaps a neurosis hid in the cradle of the millionaire child.

The clerks in the department used to call him 'the fire alarm,' because of the prolonged shrieks he sometimes utters behind his official desk. Utterly incapable as he is of self-control, always talking to himself when he reads the newspaper in his bedroom in the morning, and giving vent to fierce diatribes which nobody can hear, and which he emphasizes by kicking the furniture about — does he not display a dangerous lack of equilibrium?

And note another indication — the cynicism with which he lies. To the Senatorial Commission, in 1911, he pledges his honor that there have been no secret negotiations. Being soon confronted with proofs, he is not at all embarrassed. At his wife's trial, he declares that the green documents are forgeries, whereas, he has just stated the contrary. When he gives his

explanation about Bolo's letters, he makes false statements which the very documents themselves contradict.

This is no statesman. He has neither the cool logic nor the profound reflection of one. He is a politician, distinguished from other politicians only by his monstrous lust of power. And all tools are good in his eyes. Suppose you reproach him with his connection with Almereyda, Bolo, and so many others of his gang? He despises them as he despises all men. 'To think that one must consort with such fellows!' he said one day — not on leaving Bolo's house, but on coming from a reception given by the President of the Chamber. He was there, and 'those fellows,' too; that is to say, everybody. He will love them if they serve him faithfully. If not, he will try to crush them. From the pedestal of vanity on which he has taken his stand, he sees at his feet only a confused mob, in which there is nothing to differentiate one man from another — not even honor.

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ANTI-BRITISH FEELING IN AMERICA

Most Englishmen would say that they deserved and had earned the good opinion of the United States. The conviction that it is necessary for the future peace of the world that the two great nations with Anglo-Saxon ideals should work side by side, if not universal in Great Britain, has vastly spread. That conviction is now one of the cardinal points of our statesmanship. Yet just at the moment when Englishmen not only admit the necessity of such coöperation, but fancy that events have made it easy, we are faced by the paradoxical fact — for fact we take it to be — that there is a fresh tide of anti-British feeling in the United States. Let us say at once that we do not believe for a moment that this tide will engulf our fondest hopes. It will pass away, and the British Empire and the United States will understand each other all the better in the end. The best minds in both countries are working for that result. But nothing would be more foolish than to mistake the reality of these successive tides of anti-British feeling. If they are ignored they may effect the destruction which they will be powerless to effect if we understand their force and treat them with the necessary seriousness.

There was one tide of anti-British feeling, and a very grave one it was, early in the war, just when the British people hoped that their motives in rushing to the rescue of Belgium, and interposing themselves between Belgium and France on the one side and the hatred of Germany on the other, would be understood and appreciated in America. At that time a number of Americans, instead of saying a word of

encouragement to European civilization fighting for its life — as it had not fought for it since Napoleonic days — preferred to stick pins into Great Britain as an unscrupulous interferer with neutral trade. As we said at the time, the American point of view was at least intelligible. The United States, as the greatest of neutrals, has always stood out as the champion of neutral rights. It seemed to President Wilson and to his great following of Americans that the British blockade of Germany was doing an injustice to all neutrals, and the President allowed his feelings on this subject for the time being to push into the background all the detestation and scorn which he, of course, harbored in his own mind against the conduct of Germany. But think how it struck Englishmen. They did not ask that America should come into the war, but they did expect that America would utter some official word of understanding and encouragement to those who were thus early trying 'to make the world safe for democracy.' They would have been satisfied, or at least somewhat appeased, in those days if Mr. Wilson had denounced Germany for tearing up treaties and disregarding all the humane rules and customs of war. But no such word came. The strained relations between America and ourselves might have turned — for things were drifting that way — into a disastrous severance or a still more disastrous conflict if Germany had not fortunately played her hand so badly that she soon made it plain to all Americans that they must stand positively on our side.

When the danger passed it passed completely, and it is disappointing