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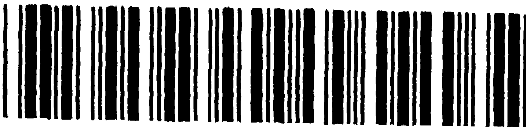
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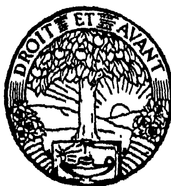
Woodrow Wilson

THE FIFTEENTH POINT

By David Loth



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FOREWORD

THE assertion that all international tragedies from the French invasion of the Ruhr to the rise of the Nazis and the present war stem straight from the Versailles Treaty has been so widely repeated that it is in danger of becoming history by default. A document that could draw Hitler's hysterical screams of rage might be commended on that basis alone, but of course that is no sounder an argument than Hitler's own. It is important to go back to the facts, and examine once again just how the Versailles settlement came about and what it was.

This book is an attempt to present the case through the medium of the treaty's chief architect. Before it was drafted, Woodrow Wilson expressed the world's hopes for it. While it was being framed, he was the principal negotiator. After it was signed, he was the center of the first great storm it raised. Even after he died he remained its symbol.

Since then much new light has been thrown on the forces whose interplay defeated the hopes of 1918's war weary generation. Since then, too, we have seen the nations plod blindly back to 1914, placing the United States in the predicament of 1917.

Wilson, whom the men of those days relied upon to obtain a lasting peace, left in his own papers an unusually complete record that enables us to study every step in the development of his program. The pages that follow have been written in the belief that a true understanding of that development and program is essential if this time the world is to break out of the fatal circle of war once and for all.

WOODROW WILSON

I

Call to Arms

"NEUTRALITY IS NO LONGER FEASIBLE OR DESIRABLE where the peace of the world is involved and the freedom of its peoples."

The words, spoken in the mellow, cultivated voice of the President of the United States, a voice the country had come to know well during recent years of struggle for social and economic reforms, carried easily through the densely packed House of Representatives. Outside a soft spring mist pressed close about the Capitol. Inside the lights blazed down upon a breathlessly silent crowd of Senators, Representatives, diplomats, jurists, Cabinet members and lucky holders of visitors' tickets. They had listened, tingling, to a stern indictment of the German Government for high crimes against civilization. Tensely conscious of the historic significance of the moment, they heard the clear tenor:

"The menace to that peace and freedom lies in the existence of autocratic governments backed by organized force which is controlled wholly by their will, not by the will of their people. We have seen the last of neutrality in such circumstances."

The President, acclaimed even by his enemies as a master of persuasive eloquence, was using the most effective of oratorical forms—unadorned simple sincerity. He was almost as motionless as his audience. Only his lips

moved steadily, firmly, and now and again his eyes shifted from the sheets of paper in his hands to where, just below him, the venerable Chief Justice, white-bearded, wise, intent, sat in his place with gaze fixed upon the speaker.

Woodrow Wilson, who for thirty-two months had striven for peace, to whom the nation looked as a guide in the mazes of a world torn by war and revolution, was seeing all his efforts end in this—a call to descend into the maelstrom and seek in blood and tears a new order of justice for mankind. Was it possible to find salvation in hell? A few months ago, even a few hours ago, he had not thought so. But he saw no alternative save to attempt the impossible. So he had come before the Congress on this night of April 2, 1917—and before the bar of public opinion and history, too, as he well understood—to ask his people to do what none had ever done before, to fight like devils and win like angels.

The cause, he told them with profound conviction, was just. The provocation, announced first so spectators might more easily forget its inflammatory appeal, was one that in the past had been regarded as ample excuse for war. "Little groups of ambitious men who were accustomed to use their fellow men as pawns and tools" had defied accepted rules of international conduct to trample on the rights of American citizens. German submarines, in defiance of law and solemn promises, were sinking American ships without warning.

"I am not now thinking of the loss of property involved, immense and serious though that is," he explained, "but only of the wanton and wholesale destruction of the lives of noncombatants, men, women and children, engaged in pursuits which have always, even in the darkest periods of modern history, been deemed innocent and legitimate."

But Germany, he went on, had gone further. Spies had been set to work within the country to spread disloyalty among citizens who might be supposed to cherish affection for the Fatherland. Accredited representatives of the German Government had directed sabotage of American industry. German propaganda had attempted to undermine national unity in the face of danger. Actually, too, there had been efforts to arouse Latin America against "the Colossus of the North" to further German leaders' ambitions for world domination.

"The challenge," he declared, "is to all mankind. Each nation must decide for itself how it will meet it. . . . There is one choice we cannot make, we are incapable of making; we will not choose the path of submission—"

He got no further. That ex-Confederate, Chief Justice White, dropped his hat, raised his hands above his head and banged them together vigorously. A roar went up behind him, died down and then rose, louder and shriller than ever, as the strong voice, unmoved by the clamor, continued soberly:

"I advise that the Congress declare the recent course of the Imperial German Government to be in fact nothing less than war against the Government and people of the United States; that it formally accept the status of belligerent which has thus been thrust upon it; and that it take immediate steps not only to put the country in a more thorough state of defense but also to exert all its power and employ all its resources to bring the Government of the German Empire to terms and end the war."

The din was deafening now, led by a very unjudicial old man who had seen one war and clapped and wept for joy that it had been vouchsafed him to see another. Tom Heflin of Alabama sprang to his feet first of all, then the

gigantic Ollie James of Kentucky, owner of the loudest bellow in Congress, then the whole Democratic side of the House, shouting and stamping. But two men were almost ostentatiously solemn. The President himself, grave and unsmiling on the rostrum, was as far from sharing the exultation as Senator Robert M. La Follette of Wisconsin, quietly registering disapproval with arms folded high upon his chest so all might see where he kept his hands.

The hardy little fighter for progressive principles, his pompadour bristling above his scornful face, stared hard at Wilson, who had shared those principles. He saw a figure of only medium height, but giving an impression of many more inches in its gaunt ungainliness. He saw a clean-shaven ascetic face, but without the saintly glow that sometimes illumines such asceticism. He saw good but not distinguished features, so that if it had not been for an uncommon length of jaw, the cartoonists would have had to fall back on the shabby device of exaggerating his glasses. There was no eccentricity of dress, gesture or haircut. While La Follette stared, unwinking, the hubbub subsided and the speaker was able to get to what he himself regarded as the meat of the argument.

"The wrongs against which we now array ourselves are no common wrongs; they cut to the very roots of human life."

He was not seeking to lead any crusade of hatred. He nourished a vision of mankind standing on the threshold of an age when nations would be made to observe the standards of conduct exacted from individuals. He disclaimed all enmity against the German people, and looked forward to a peace based upon a "partnership of democratic nations."

"The world," he said, "must be made safe for democracy."

The phrase was saved for posterity by a deaf man. Senator John Sharp Williams of Mississippi, who had been leaning forward, hand cupped to ear, knew a good slogan when one penetrated the barrier of his deafness. All alone he began to clap, keeping it up until others joined in and the reporters had a chance to underscore the remark. Again the speaker waited patiently, and then read steadily on to the final paragraph, in which he had condensed all that he believed men ought to fight for:

"But the right is more precious than peace, and we shall fight for the things which we have always carried nearest our hearts—for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own Governments, for the rights and liberties of small nations, for a universal dominion of right by such a concert of free peoples as shall bring peace and safety to all nations and make the world itself at last all free. To such a task we can dedicate our lives and our fortunes, everything that we are and everything that we have, with the pride of those who know that the day has come when America is privileged to spend her blood and her might for the principles that gave her birth and happiness and the peace which she has treasured. God helping her, she can do no other."

It had taken him thirty-two minutes by Colonel House's watch to end the efforts of thirty-two months, and they were still cheering when he turned away. He smiled to some of those who pressed about him, nodded, spoke a banal word of greeting as he moved along. But he was near tears, too, for he had no illusions about the horrors into which he was leading a nation. More than half a

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II

A Reconstruction Child

THOMAS WOODROW WILSON'S ANCESTRY WAS MIXED Scottish and Irish, a coincidence that was responsible for much entertaining but unprofitable speculation on the influence that conflicting racial strains, mingled in one small boy, came to have upon the fate of the world. Discussion might be more valuable if only we knew just what racial characteristics are. There have been many Irishmen far more austere than Wilson, many Scotsmen far less canny.

At any rate, for what it is worth, his forebears were more Scottish than Irish, and what of Ireland there was in him came by way of Scots who had settled in Londonderry, a circumstance that won him no favor from the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick or the Clan na Gael. Wherever they had come from, they were a tough, stubborn, healthy lot. Between them the Woodrows and the Wilsons succeeded in endowing their descendant with an unusually powerful brain but rather less than the family quota of physical stamina.

Aside from this all-important heritage, the traditions of Presbyterian intellectuals, a singularly harmonious family and the pervading, ugly aftermath of the Civil War had a great deal more to do with the development of Woodrow Wilson's mind and character than improbable racial traits attributed in spite or affection to two varied

peoples. For Woodrow Wilson, above all else, was a product of the study and of Reconstruction.

His Wilson grandparents, coming from Ireland in their youth, reared a family of ten in Ohio, where James Wilson was a hard-fighting newspaper proprietor, a man of substance, force and influence. The youngest of his seven sons, Joseph Ruggles Wilson, like the others, learned his father's craft but was destined for scholarship. That, in the 1840's, led straight to the ministry. After extensive preparation at the present Washington and Jefferson, the Western Theological Seminary and Princeton, the seventh son was licensed to preach and fell in love with Jessie Woodrow, events so nearly synchronous as to merit inclusion in the same sentence.

The Woodrows were by long odds more distinguished than the Wilsons. Jessie's father, the Reverend Thomas Woodrow, a famous Presbyterian divine, came from a long line of lawyers, teachers and ministers. He had immigrated to Ohio from Carlisle, where Jessie had been born. He brought his children up in the old Scots dominie tradition to love learning and ignore (not despise) riches.

Dr. Joseph Wilson and his bride saw a good deal of the country as he moved from one post to another. They had been married seven years, had two daughters, Marion and Anne, and had been for eighteen months in the lovely Virginia town of Staunton when their son was born on Dec. 28, 1856. There survive the usual parental rhapsodies, but of the future President's career as a resident of Virginia there is little to say. He had the doubtful political advantage of having been born in a State that has given more than her share of great men to the Presidency, but he left in a year.

Augusta, Georgia, to which Dr. Wilson was called, pro-

vided the background for Tommy's earliest memories. They were the standard childhood recollections of the place and time—baseball in green fields, interminable games of soldier and Indian in the woods, gatherings in the barn for reading, debate or just idle dreams, so that around the most tedious arguments of the future there seemed to hang something of the fragrance of high-piled hay and the sharper aroma of horses. Later there was school, the usual simple education offered by an impoverished Southern gentleman, in whose eyes the minister's son did not particularly shine. There were visits to plantations and boyish excursions to river and slave villages.

So far Tommy Wilson's life was indistinguishable from that of thousands of his kind before and since. But two things served to lift his early training to a different plane. First, was the scholarly-religious tradition of his clan; second, the unique happiness of the Wilson family life against a background of war, defeat, bitterness, poverty and futility.

The central fact in the boy's life from his very earliest recollections was the church. Dr. Wilson, like the family into which he had married, was a strict Presbyterian but no fundamentalist. He and his fellows believed in God and their own salvation with a firm, strong, calm conviction that shared none of the doubts and narrow introspection that made so many of their nominal co-religionists unlovely at best and dangerous at worst.

The liberalism of the Wilson and Woodrow creed opened other pages than the Bible and John Knox's sermons. Dr. James Woodrow, Jessie's brother, fought one of the great church battles of that period on behalf of the heretical doctrines of Darwin. To the religious philos-

ophy of this breed of Presbyterian, no honest inquiry was suspect.

In this environment, study was as natural as eating. It need not be—in Tommy's case it was not—the formal routine of the classroom, but rather the perpetual reading of whatever came to hand and discussions of what one read. Dr. Wilson had an affection for the English language. It was his patient insistence on lucid expression that started his son on the road to becoming a precise as well as a gifted user of words. For Dr. Wilson demanded that his children say what they meant.

More than most fathers, the Doctor molded his son's life. It was not a conscious process for the most part; it was rather the inevitable effect of a better than average mind at work through the medium of a boundless devotion inspired by a lovable personality. The reverend gentleman, besides being a scholar, was full of kindness, patience and sympathy. He was also a prodigious smoker, tireless in unraveling youthful mysteries, a vigorous, happy, generous man abounding in good spirits and good health. The effect upon an impressionable boy was that at the peak of his fame, and against all reason, Woodrow Wilson never really believed he was quite the man his father had been.

Jessie Wilson was the perfect complement to such a husband. Quite able to hold her own in learned discussions, she devoted herself to her family's physical and spiritual welfare with an enthusiasm that was at the time supposed to be the universal attribute of woman, but which was actually as rare as it was unappreciated.

The world outside was an absurdly inadequate setting for this island of contentment. The war itself was bad enough with its steadily mounting list of Southern dis-

asters. But the Wilsons were spared the worst of it. The Doctor was by now a good Southerner. He served in the Confederate Army as a chaplain and was a leader in setting up the Southern Presbyterian Church after the schism of 1861 led religion to follow the flag. But there was no fanatical hatred of Yankees at the manse. Two of the Doctor's brothers were Union generals, but even without that family tie there could have been little bitterness in any group dominated by the friendly spirit of Dr. Wilson.

The hardships of war, despite an anxiety about the head of the house when he was away, were trifling so far as the Wilsons were concerned. There was a shortage of many things but no actual hunger. Although at the last the tide of battle rolled perilously close, Augusta was spared a visit from General Sherman. The town had nothing worse than second-hand accounts of atrocities and famine and devastation, but it saw plenty of wounded and shared with the rest of the South the alternating currents of triumph, determination and despair.

The era of shoddy tragedy that followed was a more searing experience. A boy could live through the Civil War in Augusta and emerge at eight years old with nothing but glorious memories. The vicarious suffering was refined by the valor of ten thousand heroes. But Reconstruction was another story, and for Tommy Wilson more vivid. He was just acquiring an awareness of the outside world at a time when that world became for every Southern white child a thing of cheap but very real horror. Later generations might see the touch of comedy in the excesses of carpetbag governments and newly freed Negroes. To the men who lived through it, the universal corruption was an unrelieved stench.

Tommy Wilson, who could not but hear the views of honest men on these subjects and see the immediate effects of a misrule equaled only in the most backward of Latin American banana republics, came in time to believe that it was a blessing for the South that she lost the war. That heresy merely strengthened regret that both North and South had lost the peace. He shared with all boys of his race, time and class the memory of those years when both victor and vanquished hated more fiercely than they had as belligerents.

In the Wilsons, this revulsion never ran to the extreme of the Ku Klux Klan or even to the general contempt for all Yankees—after all, there were those two Union general uncles and a whole tribe of northern connections on both sides of the family. The lesson sank deeper than that, for in the minister's household it could not be taken for granted that all their country's woes stemmed from some unique scoundrelism in the makeup of Northerners. The mad orgies of Negroes and carpetbaggers, never so mad as in the field of government, were explicable only as the aftermath of and reaction from a long and bloody war that had dulled intellect and sensibility. There, for the time being, Tommy Wilson had to leave it.

At the height of the travesty on freedom and democracy, and at an age when he was better able to understand its folly and bestiality, the boy was permitted to glimpse the evils of Reconstruction in more finished form than was possible in Augusta. Dr. Wilson accepted a professorship at the Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Columbia, S. C., and when Tommy was fourteen, the family —there was another son ten years Tommy's junior and named for his father—moved to a State capital. Here the radical Republican interpretation of the rights of man

and justice to the vanquished ran uncontrolled. Columbia, furthermore, had not enjoyed Augusta's war immunity. General Sherman had passed that way, and his men had done one of their more efficient wrecking jobs. Even toward the end of 1870 the city presented the appearance of a looted town, half of it rebuilt, the other half overgrown piles of debris or blackened scars of burned homes.

To a thoughtful boy this sight could not but be a source of questioning on the essential righteousness of war and conquest. It shaped his mind, but it did not embitter him, for it was still rather remote from personal experience, though pressing closer upon it. He could contemplate worldly ills from the safe shelter of that still wonderfully happy home that Dr. Wilson had contrived for his family in the midst of misery. With two salaries—the Doctor was called to a pulpit as well as the classroom—and a legacy from one of the Northern Woodrows, the Wilsons were spared the cruel strain of poverty that crushed so many Southern families into impotence and despair. In freedom from economic worries, the cultural and intellectual virtues could flower without hindrance.

Aside from the religious atmosphere of a group drawing its principal sustenance, material and spiritual, from church and seminary, the discussions to which the adolescent Tommy listened were largely political. The leading white men of Columbia regarded their problems as almost entirely governmental. Reconstruction, the sorry reality as well as the much debated ideal, was to them primarily a matter of constitutional interpretation and administration. Economic and social factors, they thought, would take care of themselves once the political scene had been purged, reformed and set upon the straight and narrow path of white supremacy.

Tommy Wilson was too well brought up to inject his own precocious conversation into a discussion being carried on by his elders. But he was very much his father's son when it came to talking. His schoolfellows remembered him accurately as a mediocre student and ball player but as a prodigious reader and debater. He was always eager to analyze a character in a novel, a principle of conduct, a phase of politics. His Latin and Greek were no more than adequate, but his outside reading already was beginning to store his mind with a great deal of miscellaneous information and ideas which later years would have to reduce to order and method.

For three years during the South's nightmare and the West's lusty, ill-controlled expansion, Tommy Wilson lived a life of such placid content that ever afterward when he spoke of boyhood's happiness it was of Columbia that he was thinking. Then in the autumn of 1873, not quite seventeen years old, he was deemed fit for higher education and set off for a rigidly Presbyterian institution, Davidson College in North Carolina. In a severely healthy setting that matched the simple curriculum of Latin, Greek, mathematics, English, logic, composition and declamation, the gangling youth continued the studies and habits of home. He was relegated to the outfield on the baseball team, but stepped into a commanding position in the debating society.

He achieved a respectable but not distinguished standing scholastically and socially, but by the end of the school year his never very robust frame had succumbed to what some of his biographers liked to think was an overly intense application to study, but was more probably inability to resist the rigors of the Spartan regime at David-

son where every boy was his own hewer of wood and drawer of water.

Without offering to the medical knowledge of the day any recognizable symptoms, he was not sufficiently strong to return for his second year of college. He spent it in delightful idleness at home, which moved that year to Wilmington, N. C., where Dr. Wilson had a new pastorate. It was a year of great reading, of long talks with an adored father, of even longer talks with a few other young men of intellectual aspirations, of discovering the attraction of sea and ships, for Wilmington was a fairly active port in those days. The time passed quickly and in September, 1875, his health restored, he enrolled at one of his father's alma maters, Princeton.

It was above all other Northern universities the place for a Southerner. Everyone knew it had been Madison's college, and before the war boys from the cotton states had flocked there. It was becoming popular with them again, and they clung together clannishly. Wilson's first eating club was composed of youths from the unregenerate Confederacy, but although he was sufficiently sectional in upbringing that he here heard "The Star-Spangled Banner" for the first time, he was of so inquiring a turn of mind that he was soon on terms of intimacy with Yankees.

His four years at Princeton as a student were like no others he was ever to know. Here he slipped easily into many and warm friendships, achieving a leadership of the mind at the same time that he inspired an affection of the heart. The rather sensitive reserve that was brought out in him by the unpleasant experiences of bitter strife over principles in later life was scarcely in evidence at Princeton.

The Hayes-Tilden campaign of his sophomore year broke in upon his growing interest in the philosophy of government with a blast of harsh reality. But a Southerner hardened by carpetbag rule could not really despair because of one more stolen election. The Hayes succession in the line of "bullet-headed generals" who were the war's contribution to the White House only plunged young Wilson deeper into study of the how and why of such things, and of what the ideal practice should be. He pored over Burke, Bagehot, Bright and Macaulay, pondered the wisdom of "The Federalist," worried over Kant and Aristotle. He read current periodicals, too, deriving from the contemporary struggles between Disraeli and Gladstone contempt for the "foxy" tactics of the one and admiration for the noble sincerity of the other. So great was his esteem for the Gladstonian career that he developed a belief in oratory as the hope of modern politics. He practiced public speaking assiduously and seemed to pin his faith in the regeneration of mankind upon the hypnotic power of words.

But while his feelings thus carried him away, his brain remained active in the background. Almost unconsciously he was storing up facts and principles more solid than the froth of declamation. He was to learn that active forces, not merely lack of beautiful language, had brought a country once governed by the succession of Washington, Adams and Jefferson to the sorry level of Grant and Hayes. He delved into constitutional practice as well as constitutional theory. He reached the conclusion that the remedying of evils, the restoration and improvement of the older, more efficient system were worthy ambitions. His first conclusion was that this could be brought about by adopting the British principle of Cabinet responsibility

with the chief of state defending and saving his government by eloquence before the people's elected representatives. Meanwhile in his dreams he pictured himself as "Thomas Woodrow Wilson, Senator from Virginia," but never as President. Senators have unlimited time for debate, Presidents almost none.

More reasonable was his thesis that the disappearance of great men from high political place was due to the enormous power gradually concentrated in Congressional committees. The real moving springs of legislation were hidden from casual view—and Presidential interference—in little rooms to which the sonorous thunder of debate never penetrated. Wilson's views on the impotence of the Chief Executive were to change; his opinion of Congressional committees was only deepened and strengthened by experience.

Meanwhile he reduced his beliefs to reasonable magazine length, and in his senior year sent them to one of the most learned journals in the country, *The International Review*. This periodical's pretensions were as lofty as its title. Its standards had recently been elevated by the acquisition of an associate editor, Henry Cabot Lodge of the Massachusetts Cabots and Lodges, young but choosy and with a budding literary reputation of his own. Thanks to his good sense and good taste, the Princeton student's essay, "Cabinet Government in the United States," appeared with all the pomp of typography in a journal to which the country's leading scholars were glad to contribute.

The new Bachelor of Arts did not enjoy his elation very long. This was partly due to temperamental inability to keep his eyes on the sunny side of the street. But also there was no blinking the circumstance that, as he re-

turned to the parental home in June, 1879, only one road, and that a detour, seemed open to him in the general direction of statesmanship. This was apprenticeship at the bar. He reconciled himself to it, but he admitted:

"Since leaving Princeton, I have not been in the brightest of moods."

He had reason for his depression, once the glamor of successful scholastic and literary effort had faded a little. In the first place, he was dealing his first blow (and his last) at beloved parents. They had taken it for granted that he would embrace his father's career, but they were too kindly and too sensible to repine when it became apparent that he had no "call." Chief source of the young man's glumness was his distaste for his chosen profession. He wrote to a friend, without much conviction, of trying "to keep ourselves fresh from the prejudices and free from the foolish inaccuracies of those with whom we will constantly be thrown by the necessities of our law practice." But in 1879 there seemed to be no place in politics for anyone save lawyers and Civil War veterans.

Resignedly he enrolled in the University of Virginia at Charlottesville, where seventy-nine students were being prepared for the law by two professors. The faculty was of unusual quality, for from this one class alone sprang several exceptionally distinguished lights of the bar. They included John Bassett Moore, a judge of the World Court; two excellent teachers of legal principles and a couple of United States Senators. But Wilson, in the classroom, gave little promise of future eminence. On closer acquaintance he could compare the subject only with hash, an article of diet of which he was not fond.

"I . . . am swallowing the vast mass of its technicalities with as good a grace and as straight a face as an of-

fended palate will allow," he wrote. "I wish now to record the confession that I am most terribly bored by the noble study of Law, sometimes."

No place in America was then so imbued with the personal tradition of Thomas Jefferson as the University of Virginia; so it would be pleasant to record the influence that such a tradition had upon a man learning Jeffersonian principles to be applied to another age. But Thomas Wilson in his early twenties was a Hamiltonian. The character of the sage of Monticello interested him so little that he never during his college years bothered to make the brief pilgrimage to that very odd and wonderful house whence had flowed so much of the wisdom that enlightened the leaders of a young republic.

If Wilson did not shine in his studies or in appreciation of Jeffersonian philosophy, he acquired a fame that was then more highly respected. Virginia gave her plaudits to the orator even more lustily than had Princeton. Wilson took his place at once in the front rank with only the future Senator William Cabell Bruce of Maryland to dispute top honors. Here Wilson began to concern himself with the thought behind the formal phrasing, and he had the courage of his convictions. It is tribute to his fortitude as well as to his persuasive powers that in one address before a tightly packed audience of thoroughly unreconstructed Southerners he could proclaim his satisfaction with the Confederacy's defeat. The South never could have become a great independent nation, he asserted, and there is no record of even attempted violence upon his person. Nor was this a mere flight of youthful oratory. Wilson had been continuing his reading in history and political philosophy. Although it led him to the conclusion that the Republican party "is doomed to speedy

death," it had widened his views far beyond the narrow sectionalism that was still the rule in both North and South.

Collegiate triumphs were abruptly interrupted in the month of his twenty-fourth birthday by another protracted siege of ill health, one that kept him at home for eighteen months but did permit him to go on with his law and other studies. He felt himself sufficiently grounded in legal knowledge to pursue the distasteful subject alone. He was not, furthermore, too ill for political reading or to acquire his first pedagogical experience in teaching his fourteen-year-old brother, Joseph, or to rejoice in the death of Disraeli or even to fall in love. This last was a typically Southern romance, the object of his lighthearted affection being a good-looking cousin, Harriet Woodrow. There were picnics and drives and gifts of flowers and volumes of poetry, all ending with a formal proposal and a prompt rejection. The young man's life was not blighted; rather he seemed so strengthened by love that soon after his twenty-fifth birthday he felt fit to think about venturing forth into the world on his own. He also reached a final conclusion about his name. Through the years he had been experimenting variously with Thomas, Thos. W., T.W., plain T. and of late T. Woodrow. Now, whether for euphony or because he thought thirteen letters lucky or in tribute to the fair Harriet, it became forever Woodrow Wilson. Memory of the more common appellation survived only in letters at rare intervals from elderly relatives for whom the great man remained to the end "Dear Tommy."

III

Fugitive from the Law

With the aid of his father—infallible guide in scholarly, domestic or spiritual matters, but hardly qualified to deal with the cold professional aspects of a career—Wilson selected Atlanta as a likely place in which to combine law and politics. The city was then the most bustling spot in the South, young before the war and now brand new after its material recovery from Sherman's visitation. But like most Southern towns, it was heavily oversupplied with legal talent.

It contained, however, another young University of Virginia lawyer, Edward Renick, who had been graduated at the close of Wilson's first year. Renick was as innocent of a practice as his friend and as dependent upon a minister father. They had other things in common—political opinions, literary tastes, lofty ideals, a view of their profession as a stepping stone to higher spheres—so they thought they would make an excellent partnership. With some enthusiasm they rented a shabby little room on Marietta Street, wrote home for bits of furniture to fill it and settled back to wait for clients. Wilson waited, too, for the October term of court, when he might be admitted to the bar, and that was the pleasantest part of his legal career. He and Renick lived at the same boarding house on Peachtree Street and could talk the whole lovely summer of 1882 away without being bothered by the mundane affairs of clients.

The chief incident of Wilson's life in Atlanta occurred during this interval. One day in late September there stepped into the office of Renick & Wilson a friend of the senior partner, Walter Hines Page, a North Carolinian of twenty-seven who had ventured up among the Yankees and was achieving some reputation as a newspaper writer. Page was on an assignment to travel about the country with a Tariff Commission, then taking what it called evidence upon which Congress might base legislation. Wilson and Page hit it off so well that the writer insisted his new friend tell the commissioners a few home truths about their subject. The almost-lawyer was not afraid, and under the aegis of a sardonic journalist, Woodrow Wilson made his political debut.

It was what his enemies were to consider later a typically Wilsonian appearance. He knew a great deal more about the question than his audience—no great claim to expertness. But because he had acquired his knowledge from books and history while they were picking theirs up in the back rooms of saloons and legislative committee chambers, they sneered at him as impractical and said complacently that they were the fellows who knew the real facts of life. On this particular occasion, with much more of a ministerial air than his father, he bombarded six hard-bitten politicians with the economist's theory of customs duties, complete with quotations from Mill and Gladstone and Spencer and Bright. To men who were concerned with the tariff only as it affected votes and the profits of local industry, all this was highly irrelevant. Wilson inspired no tariff reform. But the meeting with Page led to a lasting friendship; Southerners of the old Calhoun school applauded his principles; he was free to

go before his examiners to win a highly useless certificate to practice law if he could find any to practice.

Renick & Wilson was entrusted with a certain amount of family business—the junior partner became his mother's man of affairs. The firm reaped a doubtful harvest of such cases as fall to most young, comparatively friendless attorneys, the collection of claims already dismissed as hopeless by more experienced practitioners. Of opportunity to exercise eloquence and learning in the cause of justice there was none. Nor was there much chance to hear others doing it. Atlanta courts seemed unduly concerned with thefts of chickens, bodily injuries inflicted in drunken brawls, the dull, interminable quibbling over boundaries. Wilson made little effort to compete for such plums of jurisprudence. He discovered that in general the mornings were ample for what he described to a Princeton classmate as "the dreadful drudgery which attends the initiation into our profession."

"I keep myself in good humor," he added, "by indulging in my favorite recreation, composition. I allow myself my afternoons for writing—and for reading on my old and loved topics, history and political science."

The writing was not particularly successful. Through the same Princeton classmate he placed an article on convict labor, but longer efforts on fundamental problems of government were rejected. The failure unreasonably intensified Wilson's fear that for him the law was no avenue to political preferment. By spring he was thoroughly dissatisfied with his mode of life. At twenty-seven it did not seem too late to remedy a youthful error, and he debated the wisdom of following the example of his favorite political philosopher, of whom in a heartfelt essay he later wrote:

"His university career over, Bagehot did what so many thousands of young graduates before him had done,—he studied for the bar; and then, having prepared himself to practice law, followed another large body of young men in deciding to abandon it."

Just before his determination to interpret this autobiographically, Wilson had an adventure that in a more mercenary man might have resulted in intense application to professional progress at whatever cost to the future. He fell in love again. The scene was the pleasant little village of Rome, Georgia, the time April, the occasion some of the hated law business for that bulwark of his practice, his mother. He was staying with her brother-in-law and sister, Mr. and Mrs. James Bones, and as a matter of course went with them to hear the local Presbyterian minister, Dr. Axson. The visitor from Atlanta was more interested in the features behind a heavy crepe veil. It was heavy, but not so heavy as to conceal blonde ringlets, brown eyes that were by no means as serious, the onlooker thought, as the subject of the sermon should have made them, and a marvelously fair complexion. After the service this glorious creature greeted Mrs. Bones and passed on, giving her admirer an opportunity to inquire who she was. On learning that she was the daughter of the preacher, called with the soft informality of the South "Miss Ellie Lou," Wilson remembered that he too was a minister's child. It would be seemly to pay his respects to the cloth.

He promptly called at the manse, and was engaged in deep conversation by the pleased pastor. The visitor broke in to inquire, "rather pointedly," he recalled, "after his daughter's health." The Doctor was surprised but politely summoned the girl. That was a start, somewhat handi-

capped by Dr. Axson's insistence upon pursuing at length the absorbing question of why attendance at night church services had grown so slim.

The lawyer was not dismayed. He grappled manfully with the problem, and earned the reward of bravery. He was permitted thereafter to call every afternoon. There were even more delightful meetings when he was privileged to take Miss Axson boating or driving or walking, when they formed part of a merry crowd at picnics or church suppers. He learned that Ellen (not for him the simpering "Ellie Lou") was just twenty-three, that the crepe veil was the symbol of mourning for a mother recently dead, that she took seriously her responsibilities as eldest in a family of two much younger brothers and a baby sister, that she had hopes of a career as a painter, that she adored Browning and Sterne and Sidney Lanier, that she was as good as she was beautiful and as sympathetic as she was intelligent. The lover's estimate was more than commonly accurate. Ellen Louise Axson was very like a feminine edition of Dr. Wilson—charming and kind and supremely understanding, well read but no bluestocking, able to think but not sicklied o'er with the pale cast of it, gay and tender and above all companionable. Wilson was not alone in considering her a paragon among women.

His prompt enslavement was plain good sense, and perhaps it is no more surprising that his feelings were reciprocated. Ellen Axson had been brought up in a home very like Wilson's and could appreciate his obvious qualities of mind. But he could cut a more dashing figure of romance than that. His gangling frame had attained more graceful proportions; his looks were adequate, embellished at this time by a fine, fairish mustache and short sideburns. His calculated humor was a little ponderous

but lightened on occasion into a genuinely infectious frivolity that was funny without being witty, as when he mimicked some dignified person with exaggerated solemnity. His moodiness was not immediately apparent. However, it is not necessary to rationalize the process by which two people fall in love. Wilson and Ellen Axson were never so foolish as to attempt it, but he found that his mother's affairs required frequent trips to Rome that summer.

It was the last of his law business. He had decided to cast his profession from him and go back to school. He gave up the idea of active public life for himself and settled on the next best thing—writing that would influence men who did appear upon the political stage. While that could be a fascinating career, it was not a living. Only a college professorship seemed to offer at once a salary, opportunity for research and leisure to write. Academic qualifications were essential, however, and that meant a two-year delay, but Dr. Wilson was glad to subsidize a scholar.

In 1883 there was just one institution to which a man of Wilson's aspirations could turn for post-graduate work. Johns Hopkins was only seven years old, but it had a faculty imbued with a progressive spirit of education beyond anything else in the country. In May they refused Wilson a fellowship; in July he informed them that he was coming up for the next year anyway "for the purpose of pursuing special studies in history and political science."

The only deterrent might have been Ellen Axson, but she believed he ought to follow the course that would satisfy his intellectual needs. He discussed such problems with her at length, and as she was a sensible girl it could not have surprised her greatly that in September, while

he was on his way to Baltimore for the opening of the college term, he seized the opportunity of a chance meeting to propose. She was not even dismayed that for the occasion he quoted Bagehot (who thought a bachelor was an amateur of life) rather than something more appropriate from Browning or Shelley. She accepted him, and he went on to Johns Hopkins in the peculiarly exalted frame of mind of a young man much and successfully in love.

He was equally lucky in his work, for nothing quite so well suited his temperament and tastes as the pursuit of learning. But the formal, conventional side of the business was not to his liking. In less than a month he rebelled against routine lectures and research while, he explained, he was yearning for "grand excursions among imperial policies." Johns Hopkins was elastic enough to conform its requirements to his. The head of his department, Dr. Herbert B. Adams, who was to live in the educational world as one of the great university teachers of the age, readily granted the new student permission to devote himself to the "grand excursions."

After that the day was hardly long enough for all Wilson had to do. There were of course the lectures and seminars where discussion ranged widely. There was an enormous amount of reading in economics, history, politics, even law. But Wilson could not be satisfied with the current academic view that learning is enough in itself. A man who wishes to influence others, he knew, must be able to express his thoughts as ably as he thinks them. So, while oratory ceased to hold highest rank in his list of desirable accomplishments, it was still high, and literary style even higher. In the midst of deep, fascinating studies he schooled himself in speaking and practiced

writing to such purpose that several of his articles on government were accepted at last. Readers who praised the manner of these pieces won greater gratitude than those who merely complimented the matter.

The task of fitting himself for a professorship did not completely fill Wilson's time. He read other things besides history and politics—Wordsworth and Matthew Arnold and Scott. He attended theaters, was fascinated by Irving and Ellen Terry, was merry with the new team of Gilbert and Sullivan. He was even known to express delight over such dramatic hits as "Baby Bootle." He watched Baltimore's great baseball team, but his own exercise was walking. He joined the glee club and warbled without distinction but with a great deal of pleasure at rehearsal and public performance. He attended decorous but lively collegiate parties with candy pulls and much business of trapping young Mr. Wilson in the pantry.

When Ellen Axson went to New York to study painting, he took to visiting galleries and exhibitions, read about pictures and displayed an intelligent interest in the works of popular artists. He became passionate in his defense of Uncle James Woodrow, then in process of being ousted from his seminary post by fundamentalist prejudice. But the nephew continued to go to church despite some rather harsh things said in the heat of battle. He had found one where, he explained to Miss Axson, there was "attractive orthodoxy in the pulpit and beauty in the pews."

"See the advantage of a strict training in doctrine!" he added. "No amount of beauty in the damsels of an Episcopalian or Methodist or Baptist church could have led me off; but beauty in one's own church may be admired weekly with a conscience void of offense. By-the-way my

orthodoxy has stood still another test. I was invited a short time ago to join the finest choir in town; but it was a Methodist choir, and I declined. True, I did not care to join *any* choir; but of course the controlling motive in this case was connected with the question of doctrine. Should I be asked to sing in a Presbyterian choir, I could easily find some other, equally creditable reason for saying 'nay,' for Presbyterian choirs should be of the best."

Besides writing long letters, he found time for the inevitable debating society and the amazingly stimulating lectures of James Bryce, a shining example of success in the career he himself intended to follow. The Englishman was gathering material for "The American Commonwealth," and some of it was supplied by his student at Johns Hopkins. But Bryce gave a great deal more than he took. It was partly under the influence of his teaching—but more because his father and Ellen advised against it—that Wilson conquered the temptation to accept a teaching post at the end of his first year of graduate work. Dr. Wilson was happy to complete financing the education begun so long ago in Augusta. Miss Axson preferred to think they were doing the right thing by his future.

Wilson agreed and plunged into the task of collecting some of his articles which, with additions, might make a book. He hammered away at it all through the summer vacation on his own primitive writing machine, and in the fall the finished product was sent forth with a prayer to the distinguished Boston publishing firm of Houghton, Mifflin & Co. Some weeks of anxious waiting followed, ending with the exultant cry to Ellen Axson:

"They have actually offered me as good terms as if I were already a well-known writer! The success is of such

proportions as almost to take my breath away—it has distanced my biggest hopes."

"Congressional Government," dedicated on the fly-leaf to Dr. Wilson and in the author's heart to Ellen Axson—"In sending you my first book, darling, I renew the gift of myself"—was published early in 1885 and promptly praised by men most competent to judge as being on a par with the great work of Bagehot from which in part it derived. Coming before the public at a time when the divisions and scandals in the Republican party were making a sorry mess of the last months of Arthur's administration, though hopes for the future under President-elect Cleveland were bright, "Congressional Government" struck a new note in the field of political literature.

Wilson had produced so searching an analysis of the American system in operation that thirty years later the first Democratic administration after Cleveland's could be understood in the light of its head's first book. He attacked the problem at its root, for the most glaring fault in the national machinery was a lack of any responsible leadership. Real power was hidden from sight in the hands of men the public hardly knew. Wilson grasped the point that corruption, grab and the evils attendant upon expansion stemmed from this. They might persist without it, of course, but certainly could not be ended until wielders of authority were dragged into the open. The young author had not found it necessary to study Congress in its native habitat, and he would be criticized for that. But there was nothing to learn from the empty debates, senseless roll calls and monotonous reading for the record, which was all that could be observed from the public galleries. This was not the government of the United States, and Wilson knew it without bothering to be bored by it.

The leadership principle in time was appropriated as the window dressing for an international racket, but in 1885 leadership was a word that could be used by decent people without apology. Wilson argued for an executive strong enough to lead Congress, an executive who took power away from obscure men in dark corners and lifted it up into the light where all could see how it worked. Government by caucus and committee had proved such a sorry failure that the whole generation who experienced it would have to die before anyone could get real support for it again. The recognition of its failure was due in considerable measure to books such as Wilson's.

The mere fact of publication, combined with the highly laudatory reception, sent the author spinning to the crest of the wave, but he was plunged into the trough within a month. It was not in his nature to sustain the happy mood, and the contrast between the acclaim for his analysis of what was wrong in government and his hopeless prospects of ever being in a position to do anything about it was extremely discouraging to a student whose growing acquaintance with political problems only whetted his appetite for a political career, "a *statesman's* career," as he put it.

"My disappointment is in the fact that there is no room for such a career in this country for *anybody*, rather than in the fact that there is no chance for *me*," he wrote to Ellen Axson, but of personal disappointment there was enough.

Meanwhile the approach of the time when at long last he would begin to earn a living, and for two, was engrossing his thoughts. He had said he would "put myself up to the highest bidder," and soon the bids began coming in, but it could not be said that any were high. There

were suggestions of openings at several colleges, and one day in November, 1884, he was summoned to Dr. Adams's office. There he was introduced to a Dr. James E. Rhoads, an old gentleman distinguished by a flaring collar, exuberant sidewhiskers and a quiet Quaker manner, who was accompanied by a masterful-looking young woman, Miss M. Carey Thomas. They were President and Dean of Bryn Mawr College, drawing so largely on Johns Hopkins for their faculty that their institution was long known familiarly as "Jane Hopkins."

"You never heard of Bryn Mawr college?" Wilson asked in a letter to Miss Axson. "Well, neither did I until a very few weeks ago. The fact is that Bryn Mawr college has not been started yet."

That was one of the advantages. The professors would have a chance to organize departments according to their own ideas. In Wilson's case he would be the whole department, that of history. The disadvantage was that Bryn Mawr was to be a college for females and have as its active head a female. Wilson's views on women in the higher learning were mixed. He admitted, at least to Ellen Axson, that women were people and had minds. But he was Southerner and nineteenth century enough to harbor doubts. The prospect of working as a subordinate to Miss Thomas —he could not bring himself even to write of her as "Dean" without the quotation marks—was markedly distasteful to his chivalry. But there was a salary, and marriage would be possible when he had a salary. After some negotiations, for Wilson asked $2,000 whereas Bryn Mawr hoped to get a history department for $1,200, he could announce proudly that he had been elected associate professor at $1,500.

The appointment coincided with publication of "Con-

gressional Government," and as Wilson wrote of it triumphantly to the girl art student in New York the future looked bright. He even had hopes as he observed the promising beginnings of Cleveland's administration that the impact of the bulky New Yorker's rigid integrity upon the encrusted abuses of a generation might shatter Democratic ranks and produce from the fragments "a new party to which one could belong with self-respect and enthusiasm." At this time Wilson was convinced that little of value could be done within the framework of existing political machines.

Even political interests faded with the spring. The end of his student life preceded only by days the end of his bachelorhood, and at the last moment he thought it no more than fair that the young woman should try to understand before it was too late that she was tying herself to a "sensitive, restless, overwrought disposition," a man who had perhaps unrealizable ambitions, talked too much and would be poor. Doubtless he knew her well enough to know she would not be dismayed. Assured of that, he became worldly and protecting in outlining ways and means of living on $1,500 a year.

As a matter of fact he knew less about it than she. At twenty-eight, he never had been under the painful necessity of making a living. All his life such economic aloofness was to handicap him in understanding his fellows more than any supposedly cloistered attitude of mind. The only worrying he ever did about money was in these weeks while he wondered how wives managed on $1,500 a year, actually very easy in 1885.

No such anxieties marred the happiness of the wedding, celebrated on June 25 in the Presbyterian manse at Savannah—the bride's father had died a year before and she

had gone to make her home with her grandfather, the Rev. I. S. K. Axson, a popular Georgia minister. The comfortable living room was filled with the warmth of family affection as Dr. Axson and Dr. Wilson performed the marriage service. There were happy tears, manly emotion and quite a lively scrap between a small Axson brother and a Wilson nephew. Then the young Professor and his wife were off for four months in the North Carolina hills before facing the world and women students and a woman dean together.

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IV

The Happy Years

INDEPENDENCE AND MARRIAGE THOROUGHLY SUITED WILSON. Dissatisfaction with the lot of poor men of nice tastes who could not get into active politics fell from him. From the moment he had a home, although at first it might be no more than a room in a not too comfortable boarding house, his moods of profound discouragement were less frequent and less intense.

The actual teaching was only partly to his taste. Among the forty-two students of Bryn Mawr's first year he found no brain that seemed to have ability to assimilate all he was ready to pour into it. He was inclined to blame this on the fact that he had women to deal with, a fallacy he discovered when he came to teach men. His classes were small; to his embarrassment they sometimes consisted of only one girl, but he had to map the courses as carefully as for an army. He learned a great deal more than his students, for with a grand impartiality he ranged over almost all recorded history. He had to expound many subjects that had been strange to him until he began to prepare his lectures.

The girlishness of girls did not disturb him too greatly. He was popular enough with them but inspired no passion, even in the most romantically minded. He did sacrifice his mustache for them—so he said—and reported their approval of his improved appearance. He also went to the trouble to acquire what he considered a more in-

consequential ornament, this one at the urging of Miss Thomas. Although a woman and younger by five days than himself, she had a hard, keen intelligence he could not but respect. She put it to him that it was a flaw in the college dignity that the head of a department was only "Mr." He yielded with good grace, especially since Ellen agreed with the Dean. In May he traveled to Baltimore for a fairly exhausting examination and a few days later, Johns Hopkins having agreed to accept "Congressional Government" as a doctoral thesis, he could announce that he had won "that petty title."

One of the reasons he took the trouble was that a month before he had achieved a far from petty title, that of father. If "Dr." Wilson could command a better price in the educational mart, Mr. Wilson owed that much to his daughter, born at the home of her mother's aunt in Georgia and christened Margaret. The proud parent had relieved some very anxious weeks by making his first visit to Congress in action—and his last for twenty-seven years. He also seized the opportunity to visit his publishers in Boston, and at the modest cost of $40 met not only the Messrs. Houghton and Mifflin but the great Gamaliel Bradford (an enthusiastic reviewer of "Congressional Government") and a young lawyer of Wilson's own age, A. Lawrence Lowell, who had been a far less enthusiastic critic of an article in *The Atlantic Monthly*. Despite Lowell's unfortunate opinions in this matter, the visitor found him "really delightful" and the two future college presidents burbled happily for an hour, "quite like two boys."

Such meetings encouraged the young Professor in his writing, but he had no success with fiction, which he soon abandoned. He was asked to do a textbook on the State,

and plunged into it with an enthusiasm few textbooks inspire. For the results of his teaching, reading, writing and his talks in Boston mingled and sorted themselves in his brain as a truly grandiose conception, the outline of a life work that would be a permanent monument to the author and a valuable contribution to his civilization. "The State" could be a beginning. The idea was nothing less than the production of a many-volumed "Philosophy of Politics." In the leisure of the summer vacation with his wife and baby at hand, giving him the absurd feeling of achievement common to new fathers, he turned the project over and over in his mind and then wrote to Horace Scudder of Houghton, Mifflin:

"I want to come at the true conception of the nature of the modern democratic state by way of an accurate exposition of the history of democratic development. . . . I would read the heart of political practice, letting political theory wait on that practice and carry weight only in proportion to its nearness to what has been actually accomplished. I would trace the genesis and development of modern democratic institutions—which, so far, seem to me expressions of the adult age of the State, the organic people come to its self-possessed majority and no longer in need of the guardianship of king or aristocracy or priesthood."

It did not occur to him then or later that there could come a time during which, over an important part of the supposedly civilized world, democratic institutions would be reviled as not adult but senile. In 1886 men did not talk such folly, and no doubts marred Wilson's vision of a rarely significant contribution to human thought. He believed he would be ready to begin writing it in about fifteen years, and for the rest of his life the alluring dream

floated on ahead of him, a solace in moments of depression, a challenge when he felt fit to tackle it. It impelled him to acquire a reading knowledge of German so he could consult the recondite but dull masters who analyzed theories of government in what passed for a liberal monarchy, still presided over by old Kaiser Wilhelm. He also brushed up on French, and his little library grew until the Wilsons had to move from lodgings to a cottage of their own, as much to get room for books and work as because in August, 1887, another daughter, Jessie Woodrow, was born.

Here, in what was to be his last year at Bryn Mawr, he filled cards and notebooks with his neat, precise hand, pecked away on his typewriter at "The State," made shorthand memoranda for lectures he had been invited to deliver at Johns Hopkins (twenty at $25 apiece) and read aloud to an admiring audience of one. That audience was soon increased, for the Wilsons wanted to do their bit for the education of the South. There lived with them that year Mrs. Wilson's brother, Edward, then eleven, and her cousin, a girl of an age to attend Bryn Mawr. News of his mother's death in the spring of 1888 intruded upon this domestic felicity as a heavy blow, and for his father, thus bereft of home life after so many happy years, the son felt a truly anguished sympathy.

Wilson's work at Bryn Mawr, both the writing he loved and the teaching he endured, was so well done that word of his ability spread. He was still the entire faculty of history, and after three years he felt he had done his duty by the higher education of women. When an offer came of the chair of history at Wesleyan University in Connecticut, he accepted eagerly. Not only was the salary sub-

stantially larger, but he would be among men again and the student body exceeded 200.

Teaching men did not prove the intellectual treat he had imagined, but there was more satisfaction in hammering historical background into the heads of young fellows who might some day be in a position to use it than in educating women, since it never occurred to him they might have a part in public affairs some day. He found, too, a larger, broader faculty society as well as a surprising warmth of welcome. Wilson had shared the general Southern opinion of chilly Yankee manners. If he thought about it at all, he assumed that his Northern friends at Princeton had been exceptions or merely young. At Middletown he discovered there was such a thing as Northern hospitality. It was a lesson in tolerance that finally converted Woodrow Wilson from a Virginian into an American.

It also fitted him for his most important literary effort to date. "The State" and his third daughter, Eleanor Randolph, both saw the light in 1889, and that same year one of the country's leading historians, Professor Albert Bushnell Hart, proposed that Wilson cover the period since 1829 in a series Hart was editing. Touched and encouraged that a Northerner should turn to a Southerner for this delicate period, he embarked with enthusiasm upon what was to be the first decently impartial account produced by anyone of his generation. After all, he still considered himself a Federalist, but more than this or the fact that his parents were not born Southerners, both of which he stressed to Hart, it was his clear judgment and rational perspective, which he did not brag about, that enabled him to suppose "that a detachment of my affec-

tionate, reminiscent sympathies from my historical judgments is not beyond hoping for."

Others than Hart were accustoming themselves to the idea that the Wesleyan Professor was something extraordinary in the academic world. Princeton, the place above all others that Wilson wanted to impress, took note. Influential alumni of his own class, particularly Robert Bridges, were eager to have him on the faculty to impart some of the new ideas in education to that still essentially conservative institution. The new President, the Rev. Dr. Francis Patton, was not unwilling to meet the sponsors of the modern schooling—about halfway, he thought, would be a good place. After an interview with Wilson he reached the conclusion that here was a progressive but safe sort of halfway fellow, a notion for which the younger man's classical precision of language was more to blame than any views he expressed. The offer of a professorship of public law followed, and in September, 1890, the gangling freshman of fifteen years before returned to the campus with a shy wife, good-looking enough to be approved by the student body, and with three small daughters.

Joy in a new adventure was strong upon him. No more routine courses in phases of history that bored him as much as his students; no more classes of two or half a dozen youngsters. The chair of public law confined itself to just those constitutional and administrative principles in which Wilson wished to specialize. He lectured to more than one hundred young men from the very start, and as the years passed the capacity of his hall, which seated four hundred, was taxed. The growing popularity of his courses was accompanied and caused by his own intellectual growth. Every year his mastery of his subject increased,

and with it the gift for stimulating student interest. He had achieved one of his ambitions; he was helping to shape the development of young men who would have a chance to be the leaders of the nation.

Distinguished professors surrounded him—"Jack" Hibben, the logician, and Henry B. Fine, the mathematician; Andrew F. West, a forceful Latinist, and Henry Osborn, who was to make the American Museum of Natural History a factor in education. Some of them, particularly Fine and Hibben, became extremely close friends. In the pleasant way of college professors, they sometimes plotted among themselves against the more hidebound principles of the good Dr. Patton, achieving such modest reforms as the introduction of the honor system, a device for relieving teachers of the duties of policemen.

Home life was, if anything, more felicitous. His wife remained perfect, his children as close to perfection as was reasonable to expect, and there were always a couple of young relations from the South living in the big, comfortable house on Library Place. Old Dr. Wilson, a frequent visitor, grew tired of going away at intervals and moved in for good. A professor's salary did not quite meet all this, but fortunately Wilson's pen as well as tongue was in demand. He augmented his income nicely with outside lectures, books and magazine articles, working with such smooth efficiency, even in the year he achieved extra earnings of $4,000, that only Mrs. Wilson seemed to know he was overexerting himself.

His powers of concentration were the admiration and envy of his friends. They had to stop and light a pipe in moments when thought refused to flow, or they got up to pace the floor or fidgeted or drummed on books or drew aimless diagrams. Wilson could sit quite still and

literally force the reluctant mind to function. This gift made his shorter pieces remarkable for an easy, clear quality that marks the true essayist, and the magazines published them gladly even when he turned from political or historical subjects to more exclusively literary efforts. Two volumes of these trifles were published in the intervals of weighty historical writing that resulted in "Division and Reunion," "George Washington," "A History of the American People."

In these the thoroughly realistic approach at which he aimed was more nearly achieved as his intellectual horizon widened. He saw a great deal more of the country and became aware of some problems that hitherto had not intruded themselves upon his consciousness. He reached the conclusion that the woes of mankind were not susceptible of solution by mere oratory and personal leadership, however high-minded. The economic disorganization of the '70s had made little impression upon him, for Southerners then regarded poverty as their own particular burden imposed by defeat and Reconstruction. They were hardly aware that the North too had some bad years. But in the '90s the evils of a flagrant laissez-faire system in the hands of men who recognized no responsibility and very little legality were combining with over-hasty expansion westward to prepare a panic to greet the honest but unimaginative Cleveland's second term. A great many thoughtful men, including Wilson, learned from it the harsh facts of economics.

The Princeton Professor, in demand for lectures all the way to Chicago and Colorado, learned not only the overpowering influence of the West in the development of the American way of life but also how to reappraise the reforms that once had seemed all in all to him. As an

historian he recognized the fatuity of the still popular "New England" school, which interpreted all American expansion in terms of Puritan culture. He could see that the country owed something, too, to the Middle Colonies and even the South. As a student of politics, he discovered that economic and social reforms must accompany if not precede constitutional changes.

No scholar was likely to be attracted by the Western and Southern program that was a reaction against the rule of robber barons and plundering politicians. The Populist philosophy, grounded in a commendable spirit of revolt, offered panaceas that seemed worse than the disease they were meant to cure. But the flaming indignation, which was to terrify respectable folk in '96, was instructive to a man who "would read the heart of political practice, letting political theory wait on that practice."

In the security and comfort of his Princeton life, Wilson learned that insecurity and misery, emphasized by terrible strikes which brought minor civil war to industrial satrapies, were as much a governmental problem as Cabinet representation in Congress, and that both were parts of a greater whole. Writing and lecturing and studying, he watched the country whirl into the great free silver campaign, and he was profoundly disturbed to find that the choice lay between "the boy orator of the Platte" and an amiable figurehead who was a living symbol of leaderless government. The power and danger of oratory as exemplified in the young Bryan of the golden tongue and Samsonesque head provided a striking illustration of the way a pet theory might go astray. More than ever Wilson was convinced that his youthful belief in sheer eloquence had been misplaced.

"We might have had Mr. Bryan for President because

of the impression which he made upon an excited assembly by a good voice and a few ringing sentences flung forth just after a cold man who gave unpalatable counsel had sat down," he complained. "The country knew absolutely nothing about Mr. Bryan before his nomination and would not have known anything about him afterward had he not chosen to make speeches."

But Bryan did so choose, and the country learned so much about him that Mrs. Henry Cabot Lodge, as sincere an opponent as Wilson and much closer to the inner political scene, but more appreciative of a brilliant dramatic performance, wrote:

"The great fight is won and a fight conducted by trained and experienced and organized forces, with both hands full of money, with the full power of the press—and of prestige—on one side: on the other a disorganized mob at first, out of which burst into sight, hearing and force—one man, but such a man! Alone, penniless, without backing, without money, with scarce a paper, without speakers, that man fought such a fight that even those in the East can call him a Crusader, an inspired fanatic—a prophet! It has been marvelous. Hampered by such a following, such a platform—and even the men whose names were our greatest weapon against him deserted him and left him to fight alone—he almost won. We acknowledge to 7 millions campaign fund against his 300,000. We had during the last week of the campaign 18,000 speakers on the stump. He alone spoke for his party, but speeches which spoke to the intelligence and hearts of the people, and with a capital P. It is over now, but the vote is 7 millions to 6 millions and a half."

It was very exciting, and the Lodges were a good deal happier about the election of William McKinley than

were the Wilsons. As the new administration went spinning on its gay, careless way to war and imperialism, a tariff for "the boys" and some noble words for the people, Lodge, "the scholar in politics," was in his element. He was in the Senate, that is to say, declaiming weighty words, helping to reach grave decisions, laying down the law with pontifical confidence, and no more than his infant son understanding whither all this was sweeping him and his country and the decorous, cultivated, rather prissy society of which he was a shining ornament. Wilson remained severely aloof, nourishing his dreams for the future on good solid study of the past while he let the politically unpalatable present rush by. His health, too, was bad, his right arm so crippled by neuritis that he taught himself to write with his left hand. Two summers found him in England to recuperate, and he studied English universities more closely than English politics. He came back for more writing and more lectures outside the college, one of which so pleased a product of the new imperialism, lifted by the glamor of a mismanaged war to the Governorship of New York, that we find Theodore Roosevelt writing to Woodrow Wilson:

"Just a line to say how delighted I was with your address last night! It was admirable in every way."

We rub our eyes and look again. Yes, that is the Rough Rider to the Professor, the "militarist" to the "pacifist." But then they were both historians in 1899, chroniclers of history, not yet its makers.

The days without history were happier. Ill health, occasional twinges of ambition, some impatience with the rigidity of college authorities were inoffensive flies in the ointment of Wilson's felicity. There was his home, established now in a house he had built next door to the

rented place. There was his heady popularity with the student body, which made him the highest paid man of the faculty plus an extra endowment from a group of alumni to keep him from accepting offers from other colleges. There were his very real friends among his colleagues and old classmates. There was the innocent thrill of being paid $12,000 by *Harper's Magazine* for the serial rights to "A History of the American People" after he thought he had sold them for $2,000. There was the esteem of his professional peers. There were quiet evenings overflowing with contentment, the simple joys of reading aloud, making plans, telling stories.

And then all of a sudden there was the intimation that Dr. Patton had had enough of the presidency. It was inevitable that Wilson should be considered; it was not inevitable that he should be the only one, but so it happened. Trustees who admired him—three were of the class of '79—backed by a few important alumni who wanted to see their alma mater in the front rank of American universities, campaigned for him quietly but effectively. So effectively that when, on June 9, 1902, Patton announced his resignation and suggested Wilson, the historian was elected unanimously without any other name being brought forward. It was the first time, one trustee remembered, that they ever had agreed about anything under the sun, a pleasant experience that must have given Grover Cleveland, then attending his first board meeting, an erroneous idea of harmony.

They broke the news to the man of their choice at his home at once, and as soon as he could get away he ran into the middle of a Commencement reception at Jack Hibben's house to tell his friends all about it. They were all excited, none so much as the principal, of course, for

it was plain that Princeton was going to get something besides its first lay president. Breaking that succession of twelve Presbyterian ministers, the trustees had launched their university upon a course that might terrify them later on, but would fill them with pride, too. Nor did their achievement end there. In giving Princeton a president, they had done the same service for their country.

V

A Political Education

STATESMEN WHO LATER UNDERTOOK TO DEAL WITH WILSON on the assumption that a college president is concerned solely with beautiful thoughts and the higher life labored under a woeful ignorance of universities in general and the Princeton of the early 1900s in particular. Wilson went for his inspiration to the fighting divines who had headed the college in the eighteenth century—the first Aaron Burr, Jonathan Edwards, John Witherspoon. He took Princeton by the back of the neck and shook it into life and progress. He animated not only the faculty but even what he liked to call "that arch conservative the undergraduate himself." He came perilously near to fulfillment of the program he outlined his first year:

"I am not going to propose that we compel the undergraduate to work all the time, but I am going to propose that we make the undergraduate want to work all the time."

He originated no revolutionary theories of education or teaching machine for pouring knowledge into youthful heads. He simply took generally approved, long overdue reforms and pushed them to fruition in the face of sloth and the immemorial academic tradition: "Let well enough alone." Other colleges caught the infection and preparatory schools were forced to raise their standards or find their pupils humiliatingly rejected by the suddenly

strict institution in New Jersey, bent on becoming a seminary from which really educated Americans might go forth to lead their people.

His inaugural was worthy of Wilson's ambitions. October 25, 1902, was a gorgeous, crisp autumn Saturday, ideal football weather, and a crowd as big as a football crowd came to see a far less exciting spectacle but one that thrilled some in the audience as much as a touchdown run. Among them were men who had made a good deal of the color of that peaceful world soon to be swept away. Mark Twain was there and William Dean Howells and a host of writers only less famous. Finance came rumbling down from New York in a special train, and as J. Pierpont Morgan stepped to the platform men wondered whether this presaged endowment. Grover Cleveland took a prominent part, watched by his political antithesis, "Czar" Reed, Speaker of the House, an example of what Wilson most distrusted in Congressional government. There were two friends of younger days, Page who had urged a fledgling Atlanta lawyer to argue the tariff, and Lowell, resplendent in academic robes and the Harvard presidency. There were swarms of other educators—Nicholas Murray Butler of Columbia, Arthur Twining Hadley of Yale, Ira Remsen of Johns Hopkins and, to the horror of unreconstructed relations of the man of the hour, Booker T. Washington of Tuskegee. Robert Lincoln came, trailing memories of his immortal father, and George Harvey was there with prophetic mutterings. Most important of all was one old Presbyterian minister filled with pride in a son elevated to an honor no Woodrow, let alone a Wilson, had reached before. And in the background were cousins and aunts and the "gang" from the class of '79 who had once known Tommy.

It was a great day and not the less notable for the new president's speeches. He plainly enough foretold the changes he meant to bring about, and it was not his fault if some of his listeners supposed it mere rhetoric. He had already presented his first report to the trustees, warning that his program for Princeton was going to cost $12,000,000 (the total endowment collected through a century and a half then stood at $4,000,000). When he repeated some of this, modestly asking only for half to start, at an alumni dinner six weeks later, he heard the breath escaping from his auditors and retorted:

"I hope you will get your whistling over, because you will have to get used to this."

Without money to support teachers, build new halls, equip laboratories and libraries there could be no such education as Wilson proposed. He put it so clearly in speeches and meticulously phrased begging letters that men of wealth responded at once. That winter, as he sat singing hymns to his dying father in the rambling presidential mansion, Wilson was almost consoled for his loss by the happiness the kindest of parents took in the fact that his son's goal was almost close enough to touch.

Everything turned out just right those first years, including introduction of a preceptorial system, the most revolutionary step ever taken by an American university. This was designed to carry out Wilson's ideal of transforming Princeton "from a place where there are youngsters doing tasks to a place where there are men doing thinking." But first he must revise the entire curriculum, and that meant waking up the faculty. In two years Princeton achieved a modern course of study. In another the preceptorial system went into effect. It was an instant success, largely because Wilson's tremendous prestige as

educator and innovator attracted forty-seven of the fifty young tutors he wanted, enthusiasts for the scheme by which each worked with a group of undergraduates in a more intimate, inspiring fashion than the cold formality of the classroom permitted.

The president of a university has other duties than mere organization of teaching. He must see that his business runs smoothly as a business. He must bear a responsible share in new building, and Wilson could take credit for some of Princeton's high architectural rank. He must lecture to keep his name and that of the college before the public. He must entertain distinguished visitors, particularly those with endowment possibilities. He must control faculty debates and push his policies through the critical gantlet of professors and trustees. He must soothe parents and visit the high wrath of his displeasure upon erring students.

If his name was Woodrow Wilson he also had to take an interest in public affairs. It was a disapproving interest. The contest between Roosevelt and Alton B. Parker in 1904 had even less to recommend it than the '96 campaign. The Democracy, hugging its defeats to its bosom, was not attractive when trying to look more conservative than Mark Hanna. On the other hand, the picturesque Rough Rider talked a lot and fiercely, but what did he do? The reformers who had hailed him with rapture were rapidly cooling off. Wilson, who had never numbered himself among the reformers, had no cooling off to do. Already he was cold as ice to intemperate language about trusts when the only apparent result was that the trusts grew stronger and contributed heavily to their traducer's election funds.

There were others of like mind, and Wilson's writings

and speeches had led at least one Southern paper to speak of him as the best Southern presidential prospect. Southern comments were not taken very seriously, but on February 3, 1906, Wilson saw his hat kicked into the ring by Colonel George Harvey, the ambitious, intriguing editor of *Harper's Weekly,* who enlivened a Lotos Club dinner with the statement:

"As one of a considerable number of Democrats who have become tired of voting Republican tickets, it is with a sense almost of rapture that I contemplate even the remotest possibility of casting a ballot for the president of Princeton University to become the President of the United States."

"He didn't seem to be joking," the startled candidate told Mrs. Wilson next morning.

The chief outside comment was one of surprise that Americans should consider for high political office a man who actually had devoted a lifetime to the study of its problems, duties and opportunities. Of course it was a mild boom, only enough to stir a bit of talk and set Princeton seniors to singing:

> Here's to Wilson, King Divine,
> Who rules this place along with Fine.
> We hear he's soon to leave this town
> To take on Teddy Roosevelt's crown.

But there would be a few preliminary fights, and the first one was for health. Every summer he sought it in the long vacations—in 1903 he made his first trip to the continent of Europe. Neuritis was a frequent and usually disregarded visitor, for if he couldn't hold the pen in his right hand, he used his left or tapped out letters and reports on his typewriter. And then on a May morning in

1906 he woke up to find he couldn't see out of his left eye or use his right hand. They rushed him to specialists and the immediate verdict was crushing. "Hardening of the arteries . . . a dying by inches—and incurable," wrote Mrs. Wilson while the physicians shook their heads and murmured phrases about complete retirement, complete inactivity. It was some weeks before they reached the conclusion that a long rest followed by a strict regime would restore his sight, his hand, his usefulness.

Another trip to England did just that, and while he rested he thought. The thought translated itself into words that finally boiled down to this:

"My own ideals for the University are those of genuine democracy and serious scholarship. The two, indeed, seem to me to go together. Any organization which introduces elements of social exclusiveness constitutes the worst possible soil for serious intellectual endeavor."

He had struck a mighty blow for scholarship; now he would see what might be done for democracy. Whether the enthusiasm of working out an idea made him well or whether the extra effort further weakened him was something the medical gentlemen never quite decided. At any rate, their patient was able to do several times the work of a normal man, but he never thoroughly recovered, his vision, for example, being permanently impaired so that he wore glasses for the rest of his life.

He felt strong enough to attempt to revolutionize the social habits of "that arch conservative the undergraduate," and incidentally the outlook of an equally difficult group, the alumni with money. All universities have suffered from the unfortunate tendency of mankind to organize into little groups, each insisting on its own superiority. At Princeton, as elsewhere, this tendency had

become more pronounced after the turn of the century. It manifested itself in the upper class eating clubs, founded originally by bands of congenial youths but now beautifully housed and heavily endowed by sentimental or snobbish alumni. For a long time it had been a source of sorrow to Wilson, who had belonged to a club in the old, simple days, that even quite bright youngsters were more concerned about admission to the sacred portals of Tiger Inn or Ivy than about fitting themselves for service to the community. Furthermore, a goodly part of each college year was taken up with the complicated politics of the club system. When the struggle was over and the heart burning and triumph duly apportioned, a few lads always slunk away from college altogether because they had not been invited to join an eating club. Even in 1906 the problem was familiar to all educators, and there were worse places than Princeton, as Wilson recognized when, making notes for a speech on the subject, he jotted down the line:

"Danger that we will develop *socially* as Harvard did and as Yale is tending to do."

He did not propose to see his plans wrecked by the snobbery of students. But before he could attend to rooting it out, there was a vast amount of routine work waiting for him, including the task of persuading Dean West of the Graduate College, to whom the presidency of Massachusetts Institute of Technology had been offered, to remain. This was easy, for West, a man of tremendous physique with the head of a bulldog and the aesthetic tastes of a Renaissance poet, had set his heart on making the Graduate College a place of beauty and beautiful living. His ideas had been brought nearer fulfillment by a

bequest of $250,000 from Mrs. Josephine Thomson Swann for a building.

Just at this time, too, there was an odd reaction to Wilson's speeches on public affairs. The Democratic bosses of New Jersey, fine examples of the Dick Croker school, had lost the legislature. Always willing to parade in a mantle of respectability when it cost them nothing, they hit on the idea of giving their purely complimentary vote for the United States Senatorship, then to be filled by joint ballot of the two Houses, to the president of Princeton. That gentleman was spared the empty honor and the identification with corrupt politics by warnings from old friends and a certain sure instinct that told him one did not play marbles with professionals of the political ring unless the game was for keeps.

It was not until December that Wilson was able to lay before the trustees his plan for giving Princeton back to democracy. He outlined the evils that had grown up around the innocent custom of eating in groups. Then he proposed a remedy, not the mere abolition of the clubs but their elevation to a new level. He wanted to convert them into colleges within the university, and the whole university divided into these colleges. All the members of each college would live together, eat in hall together with a master and a couple of preceptors and have almost the entire government of their college in their own hands.

While the student body debated the plan's merits, a trustee committee drew up a recommendation "that the President of the University be authorized to take such steps as may seem wisest" to carry it out. This was adopted unanimously, was published and immediately became the object of an academic storm that no revolutionary change in curriculum could arouse. All through the summer the

alumni gave their rage free rein. A good many of them—wealthy, successful, generous men for the most part—sincerely believed that membership in a good club was more beneficial than any familiarity with history, mathematics or the classics. They could prove it by their own careers, and they thought themselves quite democratic enough. They made a sentimental appeal to tradition and good fellowship, and advanced the hard argument of property rights, for the clubs represented a tidy investment. Almost no one—Professor Paul van Dyke was a notable exception—offered any objection to Wilson's "quad" plan on educational grounds, but when the faculty met in September a strong opposition had been formed. Led by van Dyke and Dean West, and joined by Jack Hibben, the opposition to Wilson's program was beaten by 80 to 23, and the warm, close friendship of the Wilsons and Hibbens was broken forever in the heat of battle.

The real fight was with the trustees. Their unanimous vote of June had been made before the alumni were heard from, and before the panic of 1907 gave men of business the jitters about anything that remotely resembled added expense or a threat to property. The board assembled again in October as the market was hitting bottom. With only one dissenting voice they threw the "quad" plan overboard. They almost threw their president with it, for Wilson thought of resigning, but he found that in the absence of British parliamentary institutions, British parliamentary practice is impractical. The existence of the official leader of His Majesty's Opposition makes possible the smooth transfer of power. At Princeton there was no such functionary.

So Wilson stayed on and set out to convert his trustees, alumni and students. By January, 1908, he had worked

himself into another breakdown without making an appreciable impression. The final breach with the Hibbens was apparent in the usually sweet-tempered Mrs. Wilson's expressed opinion that the defection of the once-beloved Jack caused her Woodrow's collapse.

He partly recovered in Bermuda, and was able to finish out the college year, reaching, by a curious contradiction in the undergraduate mind, the peak of his popularity with the student body because he was fighting hard to deprive it of a cherished right. That fight, the center of the Princeton universe, attracted a good deal of attention outside, thanks to the happy paucity of more serious troubles in the country at large. Harvey's remarks at the Lotos Club seemed slightly less fantastic now that the president of Princeton had become a champion of democracy battling vested interests in a manner worthy of the magnificent Teddy himself. There was talk of a nomination for Vice-President on a Bryan ticket, which, when Wilson sailed for England in the summer, he authorized his brother-in-law, Stockton Axson, now on the Princeton faculty, to decline for him. He had made the tender of such a nomination impossible by allowing himself to be quoted as saying that the head of the party was "the most charming and lovable of men personally, but foolish and dangerous in his theoretical beliefs." More private, but not private enough as it turned out, was a letter to Adrian H. Joline, New York lawyer and Princeton trustee.

"Would that we could do something at once dignified and effective to knock Mr. Bryan, once for all, into a cocked hat," Wilson wrote, combining indiscretion with haste.

Refreshed by a summer's rest, the letter writer returned to the fight for democracy. But suddenly the struggle for

the undergraduate's soul was submerged in an even bitterer contest for the graduate's body. Dean West, maturing his plans for the noblest graduate college ever seen, had worked out a program for a little domain of his own. Under the existing arrangement, he was an autonomous power in the university. He wanted a place apart, and materially a very splendid place of oak, stone, tapestry and stained glass. Wilson, too, had high ideals for the Graduate College—he allotted one quarter of his original $12,000,000 scheme to it—but he wanted it an integral part of the university so that its older men would exercise a healthily intellectual influence upon the rest of the student body. He also wished to subject West to the supreme authority of the president and faculty.

As the controversy developed with reverberations that made the quarrel over the clubs sound like a gentle whisper, the educational issue faded into the background. On that point Wilson and West were both right and both wrong. The enormous growth of the university and the speed of modern transportation, foreseen by neither, rendered their arguments futile. On the issue of West's authority to run his college independently of the president, Hibben was to win what Wilson contended for. To Princeton itself, this was of first importance. To the country, the significant phase turned on money and the power thereof.

The point on which battle was joined concerned merely the location of the Graduate College. West wanted it remote from the rest of the campus; Wilson insisted it be not only close but in the very heart of the completed group of buildings he envisaged. The Dean didn't have a chance until an alumnus who admired the magnificence of his aesthetic views came to his rescue with a letter that

shook Princeton to its foundations and made Woodrow Wilson a national figure.

William Cooper Procter, Princeton '83 and Procter & Gamble soap, offered to give his alma mater the staggering sum of $500,000 in a lump. But he was, perhaps by business habit, the sort of financier who achieves unshakable control with a minority interest. By the terms of his letter, his half million was to give him the right to dispose of three quarters of a million of other gifts, Mrs. Swann's bequest and contributions from outside equal to his own.

"You can't fight a million dollars," men said.

Procter explained that he did not approve of the college site selected by the Princeton authorities on the campus. His half million, the half million to match it and Mrs. Swann's legacy must be put into a school on a location approved by a soap magnate regardless of what educators might say. It was a nice simple issue, the sort of thing anyone can understand in half a minute. But it was not the sort of thing academies of higher learning fight about. Few human institutions are so dependent upon propitiating the wealthy as our non-State-supported universities with inadequate endowments.

The fact that a college president was willing to refuse a million dollars rather than compromise a principle was big news, and Americans who cared no more about a graduate school than about life on Mars were eager to read and hear what Wilson had to say. They heard at last that in December, 1909, he had informed the trustees that their eagerness to accept Procter's gift left him no course save resignation. Consternation at the next board meeting was great. Wilson really had meant what he said, and Procter, seeing that his offer was about to be rejected,

withdrew it. Wilson had beaten a million dollars, and as the chorus of praise rolled across the country men wondered what kind of a statesman this college president would make, while Harvey informed the readers of *Harper's Weekly:*

"We now expect to see Woodrow Wilson elected Governor of the State of New Jersey in 1910 and nominated for President in 1912 upon a platform demanding tariff revision downward."

That hardly appeased the alumni, particularly the good club men of the East who took the most active interest in the university. Perhaps their rage inspired an old man in Salem, Mass., who had taken no part in the controversy but was to end it by the simple act of dying. Isaac Wyman, class of '48, left his estate to the Princeton Graduate School with West as trustee. His wealth was considerably exaggerated, and on May 22, 1910, Mrs. Wilson was startled by loud laughter from her husband's study. She ran in, and he showed her a telegram from West telling the news and estimating Princeton's gain at $2,000,000 or more.

"We have beaten the living, but we cannot fight the dead," Wilson remarked. "The game is up."

And of course it was. Wilson was worth a million to Princeton, but hardly two or more—maybe ten millions, some optimists said. (Actually the net was even less than West's figure.) But the winners knew they had not convinced the loser, and the struggle went on through commencement while seniors paraded and danced and sang:

> Here's to Andy eight million West,
> Sixty-three inches around the vest.

Wilson was determined to resign as soon as he could do so without letting his backers down. The fight itself

gave him the opportunity. New Jersey bosses congratulated themselves that they knew a good thing when they saw one, and the astute rulers of Newark and Jersey City had no doubts they could control an impractical dreamer, a theorist, a college professor. They nominated Woodrow Wilson for Governor in September and elected him in November while the Republicans were being torn apart by the growing animosity between those one-time friends, Taft and Roosevelt. The sharp politicians even let their unusual candidate into office without a string tied to him, without a promise made, without an incriminating word on paper.

VI

The Machine's Candidate

For twenty-five years Woodrow Wilson's views on government had been expressed at great length in clear, forceful words, written and spoken. They were constructive, sound, progressive. His administrative career at Princeton had revealed his ability to fight for reforms and go on fighting regardless of odds. He had the sort of record that ought to make a man sought after by his party, but he got his nominiation in spite of it, not because of it.

"How the hell do I know whether he'll make a good governor?" snapped Little Bob Davis, the rough, tough, thoroughly "practical" boss of Jersey City, who ran as corrupt a machine as that municipal stronghold of corruption ever saw. "He'll make a good candidate, and that's the only thing that interests me."

Fortunately for Wilson it was the only thing that interested the other overgrown ward heelers who thought they owned the New Jersey Democracy. King pin of the lot was Jim Smith, a large, pink, handsome, dressy exhoodlum who had once ordered a lickspittle legislature to send him to the United States Senate. He had the usual political boss's relationship with seekers after franchises and other business favors. He had worked with Colonel Harvey, whose title was a New Jersey honor, to the satisfaction of both.

Harvey convinced the Big Fellow that Wilson was his candidate. Harvey interested Thomas Fortune Ryan, traction magnate, whose relations with Croker and Murphy in the politics of New York were not unknown to Smith. Harvey, riding the obsession of being a President-maker, brought Wilson and Smith together. But the experienced boss, whose stock in trade was judgment of men, made a fatal underestimate of the Professor's character and ability. The Big Fellow was fascinated by the other's eloquence, but he believed that powers of speech precluded powers of mind. Such had been his experience, and he reasoned that no orator could have much sense or much backbone. On his recommendation, Wilson was accepted by the lesser ward heelers, whose graft was even less objectionable in his eyes than the irresponsible nature of their leadership.

To Wilson, to Harvey, to Marse Henry Watterson, brought on from Louisville by the Colonel to be converted to the Princetonian's availability, the Governorship was of chief interest as a stepping stone to the Presidency. The country as a whole followed the campaign from the same point of view. Because of Ryan, Harvey and some of the wealthier Princeton alumni, the Hearst papers were making a good deal out of an allegation that Wilson was Wall Street's man. J. P. Morgan must have grinned wryly, for it was only a few months since the financier had presided over a bankers' dinner and heard this presumptuous professor call the whole lot of them "too narrow-minded." Morgan had taken as a personal insult the further indictment:

"You bankers sitting in this provincial community of New York see nothing beyond your own interests and are content to sit at the receipt of customs and take tolls of all passersby."

As for the Princeton alumni in the upper income brackets, they had been busy defeating the most cherished aims of a president who told them to their faces that they "sided with dollars rather than ideas."

So, as the State Convention got under way in the Trenton Opera House, it appeared that everything the machine's new man had said in a quarter of a century had gone unheeded by the politicians. Nor had the idealists been better listeners. To a man, New Jersey's Democratic reformers came down to Trenton breathing fire against that tool of the corrupt bosses, Woodrow Wilson. There was a young Irish lawyer, Joe Tumulty of Jersey City, who had just seen his convention seat taken away by the familiar steam roller tactics. There was Judge John W. Westcott, who had a seat and was using the word "immorality" freely in commenting on Wilson's candidacy. There was Judge John Crandall, objecting so violently to the Princetonian that he broke a cane over a fellow delegate's head. This reform element did a lot of talking and made a noise like a majority. But the Big Fellow's well drilled cohorts did the voting. On the first ballot Wilson had 749½ votes out of 1,408 whereupon, with customary harmony, the nomination was made unanimous and they sent over to Princeton to tell their man he was in.

Wilson had been playing golf, and arrived in Trenton for his acceptance speech wearing a knitted jacket under his coat. It was a pleasantly informal touch when they had been expecting an overdose of stilted conventionality. The speech was even better, a plain statement of his belief in honest, decent, democratic government so explicit that the ward heelers were sure he couldn't mean it, but so sincere that it won Joe Tumulty and old Judge Crandall on the spot. The young Irishman flung himself into the campaign

with such fervor and sense that he won his recent enemy's confidence and became his private secretary. Wilson's old faith in oratory seemed to have proved itself. The connoisseur Smith was so charmed that he shed tears—easy, sentimental tears that had nothing to do with the man's hard-headed, hard-fisted methods of running the party.

It was a glorious campaign, an exultant onward sweep in a Democratic year that ended in November with Wilson receiving the greatest plurality ever recorded for a Governor of New Jersey. He carried a Democratic legislature with him, and as Princeton students wound in a jubilant, yelling procession under his window, the victor proceeded to elaborate the program that would prove to the unheeding that he had meant what he had been saying for years and that one American commonwealth had acquired a leader.

The machine's candidate had a four-point "must" legislative schedule that the machine itself regarded as fatal. Direct primaries, a corrupt practices act, some gentle regulation of public utilities and an employers' liability act comprised an extremely advanced program in 1910. It represented a considerable proportion of the reforms with which the ardent spirits who gloried in the name of muckraker were scaring good people as good people had not been scared since the young Bryan set the West ablaze in '96. For that was the era when Lincoln Steffens and Ida Tarbell and Ray Stannard Baker were dangerous radicals, and mere mention of the gentle Debs sent cold chills down the spines of a class which, after the shocks of a revolutionary generation, were not that badly frightened by Trotzky or Stalin.

Of course the machine quickly learned how to control primaries and evade the corrupt practices act, while the

larger utilities found that they were virtually immune to mere State regulation. But the notion that a "Wall Street man," a nominee of Big Jim Smith, could advocate seriously such radical doctrines was unsettling. The new Governor's first task was to convince the machine that its leaders would have been wise to have studied the published works of Woodrow Wilson.

He began before his inauguration. One of his stipulations in accepting Smith's support was that the Big Fellow renounce Senatorial ambitions. Smith cheerfully agreed since he did not believe the Democrats could capture the legislature even if they elected a Governor. But when the unexpected happened, the Boss saw no reason why a mere promise not even published to the world should keep him out of America's most exclusive club. Nor did he see why Wilson should interfere. The selection of a United States Senator was the legislature's task. Furthermore, if Wilson wanted a Presidential nomination, he would need his own State's delegation in the national convention, and that was supposed to live in Smith's pocket. To his surprise, the impractical professor not only issued a strong statement against him but as soon as inauguration was over on January 17, 1911—a dreadful, solemn affair of bands and speeches and a tiresome reception—got to work on the legislature. There were enough new men and enough old ones fearful of a governor's power over patronage to defeat Smith, a blow that lost him the party leadership as well as the Senatorial toga, for if a boss can't get a job for himself how can he get jobs for other people?

The Big Fellow was through, but Wilson was by no means finished with the machine. Smith had a nephew, James R. Nugent, an educated fellow who was at once the boss of Newark and chairman of the State Committee. He

had long been his uncle's legislative expert and his knack of handling the Trenton solons was much admired. But Wilson went into the Democratic caucus—in itself a minor revolution in a State where legislative and executive held severely aloof in public—and Nugent's once obedient servants recognized a new master. Wilson spoke strictly on the point at issue, his election bill, but he gave the impression of being willing to use all the power vested in his office, and he carried the meeting by three to one.

A few days later came his final break with the machine. Calling at the Governor's office for a last conference by which Wilson hoped to win the boss's co-operation, Nugent lost his temper. He was being asked, as he saw it, to commit political suicide to make a reputation for a fuzzy idealist. He flatly accused Wilson of using the patronage club. Nugent had been doing that for years, but the Governor was insulted. With slightly old-fashioned histrionics he pointed to the door and a highly epigrammatic version of the brief parting exchange ran through the lobbies of Trenton out into the world to be greeted with appreciative chuckles.

"You're no gentleman!" Nugent exclaimed bitterly.

"You're no judge!" Wilson retorted.

Nugent retired, beaten as badly as Smith, and thanks to the prestige of these encounters plus some broad clowning at a Senatorial waffle and chicken supper, at which the Governor cakewalked with a dignified Republican Senator, Wilson had no more trouble that session. The old politicians and business interests that thought they were going to get hurt by regulation snarled at him as a dictator. The party hacks stirred restively as he appointed independents and even some few liberal Republicans to desirable jobs. But Wilson at bottom was a good party man. He knew he

could fight the bosses as such. After they had been defeated he could only work through the organization. He had studied political history to too good purpose to believe that in a two-party system substantial gains could be won by earnest fellows shadow boxing in a vacuum. His aim was to remodel his own party into a progressive force by a merger of Hamiltonian and Jeffersonian principles, retaining the best features of each. Wilson, the Southern Federalist, had discovered the value of Jeffersonian democracy. Like the sage of Monticello he became aware of something that Hamilton for all his genius never learned—that the people may be a "great beast" but that no progressive government can be based on anything else. The instinct of inarticulate masses is better than their collective intelligence; the people can be trusted—most of the time.

That was the lesson of the session of 1911, made further memorable by a meeting and a partial recantation. Among the Democrats attracted by Wilson's record was the Great Commoner. In his paper he had commended New Jersey's Governor with the exuberance he brought to everything that he noticed at all. Mrs. Wilson, hearing that Bryan was to give a March address in Princeton for the Theological Seminary, invited him to dinner. At the Governor's quarters in the Princeton Inn, used as a substitute for a home since his resignation from the university, Wilson discovered how right he had been in writing of his guest as "the most charming and lovable of men."

The Bryan who became a figure of fun for people who liked to think of themselves as sophisticated did not exist in 1911. For that matter, he never was quite as funny as his mockers, some of whom have lived to see derided Bryan policies adopted with almost universal applause. Today the ridicule is not for the man who refused to believe that im-

mediate ruin must follow any tampering with the gold standard or who held that private citizens have no right to involve their country in wars by deliberately traveling about in war zones demanding protection because they can wave a United States passport. And in 1911 the Bryan of prohibition and the Scopes trial was mercifully hidden from his admirers. Wilson, susceptible to the appeal of Bryan's vital personality, could appreciate now why the Commoner was so great a leader. He was no thinker; he did not need to think; he substituted an instinct for progressive principles. It was asking a little too much to demand that in addition he possess a mind capable of figuring out a practical program to effect his beliefs.

Between Wilson's triumph in the legislature and the benign accolade of the party's leader, so much progress was made that headquarters of a Presidential campaign were opened in New York in June. Harvey and a former Princeton student, William F. McCombs, and Page and a few others had already been at work promoting Wilson's candidacy. William Gibbs McAdoo, the energetic builder of the Hudson tunnel, joined the ranks in July, having been attracted to Wilson while his son was attending Princeton. With these men and others like them, the persistent hostility of the machine that had made Wilson Governor was an asset. Boss Nugent gave the movement a strong push forward that summer when at a dinner in a vacation resort he proposed a toast in which he invited his own guests and those at neighboring tables to join.

"I give you the Governor of the State of New Jersey," he cried, and glasses were raised as men smiled in appreciation of the sporting gesture. But glasses were lowered and smiles faded as the proposer added sharply, "a liar and an ingrate."

For a moment Nugent glared around him at the hostile faces.

"Well," he demanded curtly, "do I drink alone?"

He did, defiantly, and the story ran across the East, spreading the fame of a man who was being favorably judged because of the enemies he made.

New Jersey had not finished with the lessons it furnished for the political education of its Governor. But Wilson did not con thoroughly the one set him in the autumn of 1911, although it was simple. Perhaps too simple—merely that the people relax their enthusiasm as soon as a progressive leader stops fighting. A conservative may coast along on reputation; there is no rest for the liberal. Wilson's own instinct was to go forward and give New Jersey a new constitution, but he was diverted by the vast amount of speaking, writing and conferring that an active Presidential campaign entailed. The people grew as apathetic as he, and the independents stayed at home in November. The machine, which never stays at home on election day, carried the Assembly for the Republicans, and Boss Nugent was well on his way to reassert control over the Democrats. There would be no chance to repeat in 1912 the legislative triumphs of the year before.

But by then all eyes were turned to a wider stage, and Wilson was one of the principal actors. The curtain was going up on the quadrennial drama of a Presidential election, and this one was to be an old-fashioned thriller. The prima donna, Roosevelt, raved and ranted in the spotlight, a lovable character who could pull at men's heartstrings but, after the fashion of stage heroines, seemed woefully lacking in common sense although his principles were lofty. The "heavy," President William Howard Taft, pursued doggedly the unpopular path, and if his principles

too were lofty the fact was concealed from the public by the determined manner in which his former friend was linking him to the hated trusts and political dictatorship of the Speaker, Uncle Joe Cannon. For Wilson was reserved the role of the dashing gallant who will rush in when things are darkest to bring the curtain down on a happy ending of virtue triumphant and evil cast out into the wings.

The only trouble was that this play could have no final curtain. The actors had to go on after the melodrama finished, meeting a bewildering succession of new villains not included in the original script, ad libbing in unexpected situations, contriving their own exits and entrances, completely unaware of the tortuous twists the plot would take. At fifty-five, Wilson trod the boards of a national theater, an earnest ascetic player who would always have to be careful of his rather fragile health, but with the trouper's dogged creed: "The show must go on."

VII

The People's Choice

One of the charms of American politics is the contradictory talents and personalities that join without merging in each of the two great parties. Wilson's pre-convention organization was an admirable cross section of the Democracy. It gathered men and policies so oddly assorted that nothing but the candidate's own tenacious drive toward a fixed goal and excellent sense of direction kept him from falling into the predicament in which, according to a sympathetic biographer, another progressive found himself.

"Roosevelt," says Henry Pringle, "insecure and bothered by the conflicting forces which pulled him, was not wholly aware of what he was doing."

This was a frame of mind shared by some of Wilson's supporters but not by their leader. From their very diversity and occasional bewilderment he himself drew new strength, for their contradictions and confusion gave him confidence in his own judgment. Long after the miracle of a college professor President ceased to astound a country grown accustomed to even stranger things, the argument about who put him in the White House raged in the printed and spoken word. Occasionally someone would suggest that the people did it, and that their opinion of him had been formed largely by the man himself. But that view, however reasonable and even true, was not shared

by expert practitioners in the science of political intrigue. Some of them were just in time to get on the bandwagon, but others did help influence the Wilson boom.

First of all, in chronological order, was Harvey, a dry, experienced political journalist who gave Wilson shrewd support without understanding him. The editor's publishing house was a Morgan firm; his own relations with Wall Street were close and friendly, and he was largely credited with bringing into the Wilson camp, if only temporarily, the powerful Ryan, who, whether despite or because of his franchise activities, was a pillar of the party.

McCombs, titular manager of the campaign, was the sort of politician the professionals would have expected an inexperienced professor to select. A sensitive, erratic, irritable, suspicious and jealously devoted amateur, McCombs was a cripple whose fight against disability honored his courage but embittered his nature. He had taken every course Wilson taught at Princeton and absorbed without quite comprehending the theory that university men should be educated for service to the State. With sufficient means to free him from close application to a New York law practice, he had become fascinated by the political game as Charlie Murphy played it. He reduced Wilsonian political doctrine to a series of deals and intrigues. He virtually appointed himself to be his old professor's campaign manager, and Wilson was grateful for his loyalty although frequently doubtful of his methods.

McAdoo was more nearly the type the candidate would have chosen. Like Wilson, he was a product of the post-war South. A sinewy, hatchet-faced lawyer of forty-eight, he had for years been the organizing genius of the Hudson tunnels, dealing with problems of finance and construction rather than law. His views on the regulation of business

were advanced enough to be suspect in the skyscraper offices of Manhattan. He put money, time and ability at Wilson's disposal. Page, an editor of more literary stamp than Harvey, was a more effective propagandist. There was Cleve Dodge for financial support, friendly encouragement and sympathetic understanding; A. Mitchell Palmer, a Pennsylvania lawyer attracted by Wilson's popularity, and greater and lesser lights in a dozen states. Some of these were Texans and had spoken to their principal, one of the exotic flowers of Lone Star politics, Colonel Edward Mandell House.

One had only to look at House to realize that his title was as synthetic as Harvey's. He had played an important but not conspicuous part in the election of several Texas governors, and appointment to the staff of one of them was all the reward he would take. He was a little man who looked like a cross between a rabbit and a mouse, and the resemblance went deeper than appearance. He had an odd aversion to authority or responsibility or publicity. Yet his passion was politics and he had inherited a fortune large and safe enough to indulge his tastes. It was his delight to be the manipulator behind the scenes, to be known to insiders as a man of mysterious but real power, to advise but never to act. Cautious, discreet, well-informed, he inspired confidence and seldom returned the compliment. But then he was such a good listener, so interested in what others had to say, so intelligently acquiescent that he did not get much chance to talk. A wise, traveled, cultivated gentleman, he spent more time in New York than in Texas, but never lost his influence at home.

He had had a slight correspondence with Wilson, based on the impression New Jersey's Governor made upon Democrats in the West. The political world then was

dominated by the quest for a Democratic winner, as the pugilistic field was by the search for a White Hope. Both seemed remote. But Wilson devoted a great deal of 1911 to a swing around the country, speaking to a great many audiences all the way to California and winning the support of newspapers by the simple expedient of giving them a good deal of clear, readable prose to quote. He had been welcomed with especial warmth in the West, Bryan's country, and could now consider himself on terms of friendship with the Commoner.

House was stirred by what he heard of Wilson, as a fight promoter would have been by news of a big, strong kid who might develop the skill to flatten Jack Johnson. Late in November the Governor called at House's hotel by invitation, and an hour later they were fast friends. Wilson, who could be impulsive when all his guards were down, was disarmed at once by the Texan's amiable charm. He had the impression of being thoroughly understood and appreciated and at the same time liked for his human qualities—a feeling no one else but his wife inspired. Warmed by the little man's grace and his own abandonment of reserve, Wilson proved as charming as his host, who wrote next day:

"He is not the biggest man I have ever met, but he is one of the pleasantest and I would rather play with him than any prospective candidate I have seen."

Wilson had need of an experienced player, for two weeks after this meeting he was to lose the first and most "practical" of his supporters, the prophetic Harvey. Harvey's choice was not popular in the circles the editor adorned. He already had told House that "everybody south of Canal Street was in a frenzy against Governor Wilson." Harvey was known as a man who did not think much of

anything north of Canal. That he should stand out against a frenzy by a body of gentlemen south of the line was incredible to many who knew him and to more who knew only that there was a tie between *Harper's Weekly* and J. P. Morgan. Wilson himself said he was confident the bond did not undermine the editor's independence, but the country was not so charitable and early in December Harvey asked:

"Is there anything left of that cheap talk during the gubernatorial campaign about my advocating you on behalf of 'the interests'?"

Wilson, who all his life labored under the delusion that men ask questions because they want answers, replied candidly, "Yes."

"Then I will simply sing low," Harvey commented, and they left it at that.

Harvey's idea of singing low developed unexpected chords. Tumulty, who understsood the conceit and doubt that mingled in the editor's unattractive personality, was sure he was "deeply wounded." Wilson, however, waited two weeks to send a friendly little note, to which Harvey replied in kind, and the Governor was free to consider a more important indiscretion. This one was five years old, the letter to Joline expressing a wish to knock Bryan into a cocked hat. Joline kindly gave this letter to the New York *Sun,* which published it on January 6, 1912, just two days before Wilson was to speak at the Jackson Day dinner in Washington, along with Bryan and other Democratic hopes.

Joline, the *Sun* and the easily alarmed McCombs thought this was an end to any possible support for Wilson from the progressive wing of the party. Tumulty was disturbed. The candidate himself wrote an explanation and

then had the good sense not to issue it. But he refused to share the excitement of his entourage, although he heard with relief from Dudley Field Malone—"a young *fidus Achates* of mine"—that the person most concerned preserved complete calm. After all, Bryan was accustomed to reading harsher things about himself than Wilson would have thought fit to go through the mails, and he told Malone quite good humoredly:

"I believe that when Mr. Wilson wrote that letter to Joline, he believed it. It doesn't follow that he believes it now. If the big financial interests think that they are going to make a rift in the progressive ranks of the Democratic party by such tactics, they are mistaken."

At the Jackson Day dinner, Bryan greeted Wilson cordially, but then he greeted Speaker Champ Clark of Missouri, chief contender for the nomination, just as cordially. However, when the Governor turned to him in the course of his speech and proposed mutual apologies "that we ever suspected or antagonized one another," Bryan was somewhat swept away. Never bothering to question when he ever had suspected or antagonized Wilson, he declared the address ". . . the greatest . . . in American political history." While that may have been a kindly exaggeration, the aging boy orator was thoroughly appeased by Wilson's tribute to his principles. Both men believed the principles counted for more than methods.

A few days later Harvey's version of "sing low" appeared in *Harper's* as a notice to readers that said:

"The name of Woodrow Wilson as our candidate for President was taken down from the head of these columns in response to a statement made directly to us by Governor Wilson to the effect that our support was affecting his candidacy injuriously.

"The only course left open to us, in simple fairness to Mr. Wilson, no less than in consideration of our own self-respect, was to cease to advocate his nomination."

The Colonel switched to Clark and Marse Henry went with him while a great chorus of "ingrate" swept, echoing Boss Nugent, through the ranks of the organized Democracy. Once again Tumulty and McCombs worried, but actually Wilson gained new support in the only place it could do him any good, among the unorganized party members. These simple folk thought ingratitude to men like Nugent and Harvey was a very fine thing. They had had a good deal of experience in paying through the nose for the gratitude of office holders to political machines and the men of large property with whom the machines loved to do business.

The pressure of these voters' desires, although largely inarticulate, molded the decisions of local bosses. These men, starved of Federal jobs since Cleveland's day, wanted to win at any cost short of losing their power at home, and as the Republicans stumbled forward to disruption, Democrats all over the country perked up. Far less acute judges than local bosses could see that with Roosevelt splitting his party from top to bottom, the Democratic nomination was going to be equivalent to election unless they gave the rampant Teddy his chance by putting up a candidate even more conservative than Taft.

The boys in the back room, asked what they would have, chose Clark. He was known to them and trusted by them, yet he had a sufficiently progressive Congressional record to get by in a campaign. The only obstacles to his nomination were Wilson and Bryan, Wilson because he was making a vigorous campaign for delegates and showing wide popular support, Bryan because he had stampeded one

convention and might do it again. Wilson was stumping so vigorously in the early spring that his constituents had some cause for the complaint that they had elected a Governor not a Presidential candidate. Actually there was little he could do with a hostile legislature, and he drove forward to the larger goal.

At last, weary from his efforts, he retired to the comparative quiet of the Governor's cottage in Sea Girt, while 1,088 expectant, office-hungry Democrats, with the fine disregard of climate that is expected of national convention delegates, assembled in a Baltimore armory for the last stand of an old order in a world so happy that when Roosevelt shrilled his challenge, "We stand at Armageddon and battle for the Lord," he could be understood to refer to domestic politics.

The Democratic convention of 1912 was an extreme example of a curiously American phenomenon. The candidate in New Jersey, linked by private telephone to his Baltimore headquarters, was spared the sights and sounds and smells of the massive machinery by which a party grinds and creaks to its choice. He was spared, too, the endless renditions of the Missouri chant which Clark followers were rapidly making the theme song of the convention:

> I don't care if he is a houn'
> You gotta quit kickin' my dawg aroun'.

To that tune there was the customary Democratic tussle over a platform that few ever read again, the customary perfervid oratory in which candidates were placed in nomination, the customary scurrying around for delegates. From the outset the contest lay between Clark and Wilson with the others holding on in the hope that a deadlock would force selection of a compromise candidate. Judge

Westcott, who once had called a Princeton President the tool of the bosses, presented Wilson's name. When the first ballot was taken, Clark had 440½ votes, Wilson 324; 726 was necessary to nominate under the two-thirds rule.

As convention battles go it was a classic. Wilson had some highly capable strategists in Burleson of Texas, Palmer of Pennsylvania, Cotton Ed Smith of South Carolina, Alfalfa Bill Murray of Oklahoma. But the bulk of the experienced practitioners were working for Clark, while Bryan, the wiliest of them all, preserved a strict neutrality. Slowly through two days the votes of the leaders mounted as favorite sons dropped out, and on the tenth ballot late of a Thursday night Charlie Murphy made his bid to win Tammany credit for a nomination by delivering New York's ninety votes to the Speaker. He nearly started a landslide, for he put Clark in a majority and never yet had a candidate failed of two-thirds once the halfway mark was passed. But the Wilson forces hung on doggedly through the deluge although McCombs was plunged into such deep despair that on Saturday he called Wilson to suggest that their delegates be released. The candidate, thinking it was the end, turned to Mrs. Wilson, with whom he had discussed a trip to England in just such an eventuality, and said almost in relief:

"Now we can see Rydal again."

McAdoo, however, blocked McCombs's surrender and just in time, for that very day Bryan made his move. With the sense of perfect timing that, quite as much as his eloquence, stampeded the delegates of '96, the Commoner flung his personal following, his prestige and his moral fervor into the face of the Clark majority, already feeling itself swept forward on a tide of victory. Stilling the clamor briefly, Bryan announced that no candidate with the boss-

and finance-ruled Tammany delegation's votes should ever have his. He cast it for Wilson, and never wavered after that although the struggle went on ballot after ballot. Clark had reached his peak but he still blocked Wilson.

Meanwhile delegates were hearing from home. In a day that had not yet devised the stratagem of bulk telegrams signed with names drawn from the telephone book, this form of pressure was exceptionally persuasive. Wilson passed Clark on the thirtieth ballot, went into a majority on the forty-third and crashed through to the nomination on the forty-sixth.

"Well, dear, we won't go to Rydal after all," was the victor's first comment, while an exhausted convention hastened to nominate Governor Thomas Marshall of Indiana for the Vice Presidency.

The head of the ticket, reserved in the initial flush of triumph, had more to say in the weeks that followed. The campaign of 1912 was highly vocal, and Wilson contributed his share. The issues were familiar to the country—tariff reform, trusts, money, liquor, women's votes, immigration—and Taft was the only one who was very explicit about how he proposed to deal with them. Since his solution, maintenance of the status quo, was unpopular, the voters preferred to consider the generalizations with which Wilson and Roosevelt regaled them. But actually the fight was not over issues; it was for the progressive vote. Roosevelt confidently supposed he had a virtual monopoly on it—had he not even adopted the name for his new party?—and Wilson was well aware that the magnetic Teddy was his real opponent. But the Governor held the conservatives of his own party without trying, and hardly needed the full strength of the progressive Democrats. Probably he could have won with the kind of a campaign he wanted to

make, a few carefully prepared speeches and not much travel and no personal publicity. His advisers overruled him and he made the swing around the circuit, rivaling Roosevelt in the length and number of his speeches, winning plaudits with the slogan:

"There is no indispensable man."

It was almost his only hit at the third term. He preferred to stick to general principles and developed a knack for saying the same thing over and over again in new, or at least different ways. He was exhausted, bored and glad to get done with it by the time he was permitted to return to a little house in Princeton. The restful interlude was short. At 10 o'clock on the evening of November 5, he learned that he had been elected—a landslide in the electoral college, a minority of the popular vote. He had 435 of the 531 electors and 6,286,214 popular votes (fewer than Bryan had polled in any of his three tries) out of nearly 15,000,000. To convert that minority into a majority in the next four years would be the test of his leadership, of his theory of government, of his principles, and as the flood of congratulations, advice, solicitation and appeals broke over him on November 6, he cried out to McCombs:

"I must have time to think."

VIII

No Time to Think

1

WILSON STOOD UP UNDER THE BARRAGE FOR TEN DAYS before he fled. In that time he received thousands of letters and hundreds of visitors theoretically worth a President-elect's personal attention. The crusade for rebirth of responsible government was being swamped in a mad scramble for office. It would have been discouraging if it had not been expected. The professor of history long ago had made himself familiar with the complaint, reiterated by every President, that the burden of appointments and the greed of partisans were almost unbearable. The only change since Washington's day was a multiplication of places to be filled.

Prevision made reality no more palatable. And when Wilson could get away from job seekers, it was only to run into reporters. He liked to talk to newspaper men interested in political principles. But at mass interviews these were outnumbered by colleagues looking merely for a sensational phrase to twist out of its context for a headline or whose interest in public affairs was confined to inane questions about what he ate for breakfast, how well Mrs. Wilson could cook, whether his daughters were in love. Wilson happened to be one of those unfortunates who suffer real pain from such prying. He grew cold and awkward un-

der impertinent or stupid questioning, and his attitude was reflected in many of the stories written about him.

The newspaper boys at least did not ask for jobs. But even McCombs—one might say, especially McCombs—came down from New York with a Cabinet list in which he figured as Secretary of the Treasury, a post for which he was almost as unfit by training as by temperament. He had supreme confidence in the justice of "organization" claims, and looked upon himself as head of a new Democratic machine destined to do by clean methods what Tammany had done by any methods available.

"I recognize your right to name your private secretary and other members of your confidential staff," he said magnanimously.

He seemed quite surprised that his old professor in the science of government should have other views, and one more charge of "ingrate" was chalked up against Wilson. The President-elect got away to Bermuda for five weeks, but the problem was waiting for him on his return. Meanwhile the industrious House, become "Dear Friend" in letters from his chosen chief, was proving invaluable. He refused to consider a Cabinet position for himself, although offered his choice, but was tireless in weeding out and reporting on applicants. His correspondent knew almost none of the party leaders who would have claims to Cabinet rank, and he had none of the easygoing Marshall's philosophy:

"Indeed, this has been the law of my life: To give away gladly and joyfully to anybody who wanted it, anything I did not want myself."

Nor could he take the easier line of Andrew Jackson:

"If there be an office in the Republic that a Democrat cannot fill, let's abolish the office."

His own flippancy showed how far removed he was from such skillful politicians. House had spoken of Henry Morgenthau for Ambassador to Turkey.

"There ain't going to be no Turkey," Wilson replied, but he reckoned without his party's appetite.

There were plenty of Democrats for every office, but only four were slated for the Cabinet from the first. One was Bryan, not because he would sulk in his tent if passed over but because he had too many sulky friends. In the actual administration of a department, he might leave much to be desired, but his help in handling Congressmen would be ample compensation. There was no question about his claim to the Secretaryship of State, but Wilson toyed with the idea of sending him on a foreign mission until Bryan reacted violently from the merest hint.

McAdoo was a certainty in Wilson's mind, and obviously best suited for the Treasury. For head of the newly created Labor Department, he long ago had fixed on William B. Wilson, a Pennsylvania coal miner, loyal Democrat and powerful union leader. Josephus Daniels, a North Carolina editor of charm and more ability than he usually got credit for, had been an early Wilsonian. The Navy portfolio went to him, although Page, when it was suggested that he might not be Cabinet timber, cried:

"Timber! He isn't a splinter!"

For Attorney General, after wavering between Louis D. Brandeis, the Boston terror of bad corporations, and James C. McReynolds, fiery prosecutor of the Tobacco Trust, Wilson chose the trust buster, who in 1912 had a highly progressive reputation. House learned that he even was "considered radical in his views by a large part of the New York bar." Palmer refused the war portfolio

because he was a Quaker, whereupon, on Tumulty's suggestion that a New Jersey President ought to have a New Jersey man in the favored ten, Vice Chancellor Lindley M. Garrison, a fine lawyer only slightly known to Wilson, got the call at the last minute, to his own surprise.

The Interior Department, a storm center under the previous and succeeding administrations, went to Franklin K. Lane, chairman of the Interstate Commerce Commission, a Westerner who satisfied even Roosevelt and Gifford Pinchot, high priests of conservation. Wilson had wanted Newton D. Baker, Cleveland's young reform Mayor, who had attended his lectures at Johns Hopkins, but Baker felt himself bound to carry out the municipal program for which he had been elected. For Secretary of Agriculture, the Professor President went to one of his own kind, Chancellor David F. Houston of Washington University in St. Louis, an economist with a post-war Southern background as well as learning and wit.

There was one choice on strictly "practical" grounds, Albert Sidney Burleson for Postmaster General, traditional office for dispensing patronage. Burleson, a man of austere manner and dress, nicknamed "the Cardinal" and "Demosthenes" by Wilson, was popular in Congress, where he had served for eight years. He understood local needs, hopes and desires in the way of jobs, and he was recommended strongly by House and his own heroic efforts at Baltimore. The tenth post, Commerce, went to William C. Redfield, a free trade manufacturer with experience in the House of Representatives and the only thoroughly old-fashioned set of whiskers in the Cabinet.

Some newspapers and politicians objected that only Bryan and McAdoo had anything like national reputations. Houston noted when he saw them together for the

first time that they were a good looking but "not a particularly able group of men—Cabinets seldom are." But the general criticism was mild. There was a popular willingness to let the new administration see what it could do. A few disturbing rumors that men able to manipulate the financial markets were preparing a little panic just to teach the Democrats who was boss was met by Wilson's promise of "a gibbet as high as Haman" for anyone who tried it, a statement that profoundly shocked the sensibilities of Wall Street. A more agreeable welcome to office was extended by Taft, who out of a large good nature and a great relief that the country was delivered from Roosevelt, wrote his successor a friendly letter full of tips about how to get along and even save a little on the Presidential salary. It was the sort of thing he wished someone had told him before he came to the White House. The advice perhaps made Wilson feel a little better about the $5,000 he borrowed from the bank—his first debt—to get to Washington in proper style.

2

On March 4, 1913, an era began that bade fair to take its name from the title of the President's book of campaign speeches, "The New Freedom." It would have to be something new, for the old freedom of westward expansion had reached its physical limit. Men whose energies, nonconformist views or inability to make a living had driven them to the frontier now bucked the existing economic setup instead of fleeing from it. For these men, for steel workers who had a twelve-hour day, for farmers who had to sell in a glutted market and buy in a protected one, for all sorts of ordinary, bewildered people who were finding jobs scarce and opportunities for profit-

able little businesses dwindling, a new freedom was overdue.

The program by which Wilson proposed to give it to them was well fixed in his mind, matured over a lifetime of study. A special session of Congress, called for April 7, was to be presented with a schedule of progressive legislation that would make the New Nationalism of Roosevelt's turbulent administration seem positively static. Wilson envisaged an orderly drive for one reform after another, all energies of government being concentrated on each in turn—tariff reduction, income tax, a new currency and credit system, elimination of monopoly, emancipation of labor, solution of the farm problem. That was the way he liked to work; he used to say he had a single-track mind, and one of the improvements he hoped to introduce into the White House was an orderly, methodical routine.

Neither people nor events respected his desire for a chance to think. Hidden away among the stacks of the Princeton library, he found quiet in which to write his inaugural address. The contrast between that academic haven and the turmoil of Washington on March 4 was symbolic of the trials that were to come. He and Taft exchanged visits and there was a parade and a vast crowd gathered to see Wilson sworn in. Beside the retiring executive, a large, happy man delighted to be leaving the cares of office and cheered more lustily as a loser than ever he had been as a winner, Wilson appeared pale, solemn and frail, only 179 pounds next to Taft's enormous bulk. No one missed the contrast; no one missed the drama when an old Confederate soldier, Chief Justice White, administered the oath of office to the first Southerner elected President since Zachary Taylor. Then those

near enough to hear caught the words of one of the shortest inaugural addresses ever made, a simple statement of high purpose. Most of the crowd rejoiced in the brevity and deplored the omission of an inaugural ball, feelings shared by the President's daughters.

Wilson, physically a far cry from the "wise and prudent athletes" from among whom he had once advised the nation to seek its Presidents but heartier than he had been in years, began next day to learn that the White House is not a place in which to think. The smooth progress from one reform to another was an impossible dream. The deluge of demands for jobs which had seemed overpowering after election was a mere trickle compared to the flood after inauguration. Hardly anyone he met took as much interest in legislation as in appointments.

"Gentlemen," Wilson told his Cabinet at their first business session on March 6, "I shall have to give my attention to the graver problems of the nation, and I shall not have time to see the swarms of people who want office. I shall have to ask you to sift the applicants for me and make your recommendations."

That was pleasant hearing, but then he added:

"It makes no difference whether a man stood for me or not. All I want is a man who is fit for the place, a man who stands for clean government and progressive policies."

The practical politicians present, particularly Bryan and Burleson, knew that if he stuck to that line there would be mutiny on the ship of state. Burleson succeeded after a couple of meetings in convincing the President that he could not hope to divorce patronage from Congress and still get any constructive legislation. The appointment of the 56,000 postmasters, for example, was one of the chief preoccupations of Congressional talent. To ignore the

traditional and just claims of loyal Democrats was to invite four years of constant bickering from which the people would suffer, while it was unlikely that the quality of postmasters would improve merely by changing advisers. The solution of putting them all under civil service was yet to be a feasible victory over the older system.

Bryan was less tactful than Burleson. He informed the President and Cabinet that 6,000,000 citizens had voted for him three times. A surprising number of them wanted to serve the public in paying positions, and Bryan could not imagine a better qualification than those three votes. Furthermore, he was on terms of warm personal friendship with thousands of the 6,000,000. He even proposed to split up jobs among the faithful, appointing them in rotation for brief periods so that all might be accommodated. That was overruled, but House helped convince Wilson that moderation in fighting the patronage mill would pay. Anyway, the President soon found that consideration of appointments on their merits, except for a few key positions, was beyond one man's power.

3

The anxiety of deserving Democrats lest they be cheated of their deserts was not the only obstacle to concentration on constructive measures. The Taft administration had left, along with other unsolved problems, some foreign questions that took up as much time as a tariff bill. The Chinese Republic was in course of rising from a revolution, and tied to the question of recognition was a Six Power Loan on the usual terms for "backward" (i.e. weak) countries. California was sending the Japanese into hysterical storms of protest by forbidding the industrious little men from the flowery empire to own land.

Two weeks before the inauguration Mexicans had displayed their talent for embarrassing Yankee diplomacy and alarming foreign investors.

General Victoriano Huerta, having deposed the gentle Francisco Madero, celebrated Washington's birthday by having the imprisoned President murdered. Rebellion against the usurper followed promptly while foreign companies with millions at stake screamed for instant recognition and even help for the General who could put their millions in jeopardy. When Wilson came to the White House, the case for these men, put by Taft's Ambassador in Mexico, Henry Lane Wilson, was on file, an admirable exposition of what was known as "dollar diplomacy." The practitioners of this school never tried to make clear that anything but dollars was involved, and their moral attitude was admirably summed up by that paragon of Boston culture, Senator Lodge, who after Huerta's bloody coup expressed this neighborly wish for the Mexican people:

"I hope they have got a man of the Diaz type who will do sufficient throat-cutting to restore peace. That seems an unpleasant thing to say, but it is apparently impossible to maintain order or any approach to decent government in Mexico upon any other terms."

Lodge was supposed to be an expert on international affairs, being the ranking Republican on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Wilson made no such pretensions.

"It would be the irony of fate," he said before his inauguration, "if my administration had to deal chiefly with foreign affairs."

The great ironist had been busy even as he spoke. But Wilson, confronted with a perplexing problem on which he was not prepared, never hesitated. With that odd

twist of impulsiveness that surprised those who thought of him as an abstract reasoning machine, he reached a conclusion after six days' study and without benefit of much advice from the State Department experts. His opinion, based on a sound grasp of moral principle and a healthy reaction from Ambassador Wilson's dispatches, was not one of which the blood-thirsty Lodge could approve. The day after the Senator had penned his pious hope for the slitting of Mexican throats, the President handed out a press release of a policy for Latin American and even world relations which eventually must doom not only Huerta but a good many Yankee investments. Asserting that his country wanted nothing from her sister republics except friendship and confidence, he set forth the doctrine that the consent of the governed should be the basis for new governments. He intimated that recognition would be withheld from any regime founded upon "arbitrary or irregular force."

The definition fitted Huerta's government without a wrinkle, but the implications of the new policy were not so perfectly developed, even when Wilson outlined to Congress the further principle of "the self restraint of a really great nation which realizes its own strength and scorns to misuse it." The dollar diplomats saw the flaw, but it was not definable in terms of dollars, so they never made headway with their complaints. However, Wilson's doctrine predicated a public opinion vocal enough and strong enough to make the consent of the governed plain. His rule of recognition tended, too, to the perpetuation of some unsavory regimes merely because they existed, and it prevented any flexibility in foreign policy. As Wilson himself was to find, it worked admirably as between really free nations, but led to endless complications with the

dictators and revolutionists who thought democracy was a word to be confined to proclamations of a coup d'état. Nevertheless he preferred the complications to Lodge's simple cutthroat formula. So did the country. For all its faults, the Wilson program promised peace and cooperation rather than repression in the interest of investments or attempts to exercise imperial sway in the Western Hemisphere.

The single-track Wilson mind had no more opportunity to concentrate on a foreign than on a domestic issue. A week after he delivered his snap judgment on arbitrary force, he applied the same spirit to the Far East. In a press statement couched in plainer terms than most of his Cabinet liked—the final document was toned down a little—he announced that the Six Power Loan to China was proposed on such terms that it compromised the new republic's independence and might easily lead to forcible attempts at collection. He therefore condemned participation by United States bankers, and they withdrew from the consortium while liberals everywhere applauded. But since five powers remained to exploit the infant republic, and since Chinese democracy could hardly thrive on lofty American ideals alone, the net gain to peace and progress in the East was confined to hopes for the future.

One other foreign complication waiting on the White House doorstep when Wilson moved in would not yield to a statement of principle. This time the troublesome problem was constitutional, in which Wilson was thoroughly expert, but neither he nor anyone else has ever been able to solve it. The California law excluding Japanese from ownership of land was nothing in which the Federal Government could interfere officially, yet Japan was protesting in language that convinced timid citizens

that she would declare war and seize the Philippines, especially as the United States was in no condition for a first class naval fight. Some of the earliest Cabinet meetings and private talks concerned ways and means of persuading California to concede something to Japanese pride. California refused, but at least this question settled itself. Japan decided the insult was not worth a war.

4

The unexpected rush of foreign business was inextricably mixed with Wilson's preparations to meet his first Congress and the baffling problem of getting the nation's leaders to take a sufficient interest in the nation's business. To compensate for his comparative unfamiliarity with foreign affairs, he had promised himself the assistance of thinking men in the embassies abroad. He wanted Eliot of Harvard for London, Dean Fine of Princeton for Berlin and Henry van Dyke, also of Princeton, for The Hague. He reserved Paris for McCombs as the least of unavoidable evils, but after long vacillation the National Chairman decided the place unworthy of his services and talents. Eliot and Fine said they could not afford the offers made to them, and Richard Olney, an old man bearing heavily the dignity of having been Cleveland's Secretary of State, declined the London assignment. So Wilson came to Walter Page, who accepted with enthusiasm although he couldn't afford it either and was subsidized to the extent of $25,000 a year by Cleveland Dodge in the most tactful manner possible. Tammany got a morsel in the nomination of James W. Gerard for the German Embassy.

More enjoyable than making appointments and statements on foreign policy were preparations to carry out

the tariff reforms enunciated before a bored tariff commission by a young Atlanta attorney thirty years earlier. This was the work he had trained himself for, and with Oscar Underwood of Alabama, another tariff expert, he happily drafted the outline of the first comprehensive reduction since the Civil War. He even had visions of getting the tariff out of politics onto a merit basis.

Announcement of his purpose to explain this to Congress in person caused almost as much excitement as the tariff itself. No President had undertaken to face the legislative branch of the government since bitter John Adams had paid his farewell compliments to a hostile Congress on November 22, 1800. In most cases George Washington was a sufficient precedent, but the theory of communication by letter had been formulated by Jefferson, who had covered his real reason—that he was a miserable orator—with nonsense about aping monarchical customs. That a Democrat and a born Virginian should fly in the face of such a tradition was a blow to the conservative nature of Congress, and Wilson commented when it was over:

"Congress looked embarrassed. I did not feel so."

He did not keep them long. One of the secrets of his oratorical success was brevity. On this occasion he spoke for only ten minutes, explaining what the legislators had been summoned to do and thanking them for the courtesy of listening. There was a good deal of retrospective astonishment that Roosevelt had never devised this simple expedient for creating a stir, and Wilson remarked with a laugh:

"Yes, I think I put one over on Teddy."

He had other methods, too, of effecting his leadership principle. He took a more active part in the preparation

of bills than his predecessors and he relinquished more and more of the bother of appointments. He caught on quickly that a fight with Senator Simmons over a North Carolina postmaster might easily wreck the tariff, which would be in the Senator's hands in the upper house. He learned how fast the Southern Bourbons to whom seniority gave most of the important committee places could be driven. That he too was a Southerner helped. With a following not notable for constructive thinking or decisive political action, he pushed through a Congress somewhat startled by its own speed a program reminiscent of Hamilton's legislative accomplishments in Washington's first administration.

Just as the early development of the Federal Government was shaped by the brilliant Creole, the course that the United States was to follow in its suddenly acquired role of world power was largely determined by the practical aspects of the New Freedom as embodied in the concrete achievements of the Princeton professor. The Federal Reserve System, new labor and trust legislation, a rural credits program and a rudimentary budget machinery strengthened the country for the economic opportunity that it was so soon to find in the holocaust of war.

It is a truism that one generation's liberal slogan is the reactionary shibboleth of the next. The essential soundness of Wilson's domestic policy can be seen in the rapidity with which the measures regarded as revolutionary by the conservatives of 1914 came to be defended by equally conservative successors as bulwarks of the American way of life.

The victory that gave Wilson political and popular strength to carry forward so much of his plan was one that had the least effect of itself. This was tariff reduc-

tion, whose actual influence on the nation's economy was obscured by the accompanying dislocation of all trade in the war. But the prestige won by succeeding where Cleveland had failed swung support behind other Wilson measures. For even in a Democratic Congress committed by platform and campaign pledge, actual reform was not easy. Louisiana's Senators, for example, could by no means be brought to vote against high sugar duties. Each Congressman felt obliged to protect local interests as long as there was any protection available for anyone. The pressure upon every man among them had been one of the scandals of Washington ever since the days of Grant. In 1913, for the first and almost the last time, the tariff lobby was beaten to a standstill.

"There is every evidence that money without limit is being spent to sustain this lobby and to create an appearance of pressure of opinion antagonistic to some of the chief items of the tariff bill," Wilson declared in a public statement at the height of the battle. "It is of serious interest to the country that the people at large should have no lobby and be voiceless in these matters, while great bodies of astute men seek to create an artificial opinion and to overcome the interests of the public for their private profit."

The strong language, recalling some of the more robust Roosevelt hits, was more alarming to lobbyists than anything the Rough Rider had said because it was being noised about that Wilson really meant his words and knew enough to enforce them. Roosevelt always had been hampered and deceived through his confessed ignorance of economics. The blow at the tariff lobby was a highly publicized but not decisive factor in the victory.

"The crowd," said Secretary Houston, referring to the lobbyists, "scattered like rats."

That was picturesque but hardly accurate. Lobbyists do not flee before words. They were beaten by keeping the spotlight fixed on them and the men they sought to influence, while their defeat was turned to good effect in the other battles then raging.

Chief of these was over the Federal Reserve bill. For months before inauguration Representative Carter Glass, who was to be chairman of the Committee on Banking and Currency, had been conferring with Wilson and later with McAdoo on a plan to give the United States some semblance of a modern banking system. The Federal Reserve, regarded as more suitable than a central bank for a country of such size and diversity, was the result. It was not won without a tremendous struggle. Finance in general was horrified at the suggestion that banks would not control the new machinery, although they could not point to a single country of any commercial importance where banker control existed. Wilson with his gift for concise expression silenced them for a moment but could not convince them. A committee of eminent bankers came down to insist that they should appoint the members of the Federal Reserve Board because their banks would own the Federal Reserve System.

"The railroads are owned by the railroad companies, are they not?" the President asked. "Which of you gentlemen thinks the railroads should select the members of the Interstate Commerce Commission?"

There was no reply. Even those who secretly thought it would be a very fine thing if the railroads controlled the bodies set up to regulate them did not care to put that view into the record. But they resented the prospect

that the seat of government might actually be transferred to Washington. They were not at all agreed on what the Federal Reserve System would do to the country. They only knew they were losing power, but since that was not likely to alarm the country they conjured up a picture of disaster. They might have had more success if they could have agreed on the same picture.

James B. Forgan, eminent Chicago banker, announced that the inevitable result would be unparalleled deflation. Elihu Root predicted vast inflation. President Hadley of Yale thought Root was right and offered the extra warning that all our gold would flee to Europe. James J. Hill, the empire builder, pontifically pronounced the one damning word: "socialistic." Former Senator Nelson W. Aldrich, retired ruler of Senate reaction, elaborated that into "revolutionary, socialistic and unconstitutional." "Fiat money," cried Frank A. Vanderlip, president of the National City Bank of New York, referring to Federal Reserve notes. Charles G. Dawes, another Chicago banker then chiefly known to the public in connection with some shady practices of an unseated Senator, was quite sure the Federal Reserve would "cripple the present national banking system and pave the way for panic." Those anguished cries, echoing so oddly but familiarly down the years, sounded loud in Congress. It was not until two days before Christmas that Wilson could sign the bill, using four gold pens in the process.

5

Meanwhile the distractions of innumerable other issues crowded in upon the administration. The Mexican problem declined to yield to the justice of democratic principles. All through the summer and autumn the obstinate

Huerta refused to fall before the shadow of non-recognition and there was a steady clamor for the substance either of intervention or outright support for the wily Indian's promise of an order based on the Lodge prescription. In October Huerta had himself elected President in a badly staged farce, the humor of which was lost upon bewildered Mexicans who were being killed or starved or ruined as civil war spread across innocent villages and farms.

Similar problems, similarly insoluble by any formula Wilson could devise, were presenting themselves in the Caribbean. The Dominican Republic and Haiti by alternate disorders and periods of sullen quiet under United States arms proved again the irreconcilable contradiction in the theory that good government can be imposed by or rest securely upon military might. In each case Wilson found himself maneuvered into a position where his appeals were ignored and intervention was the last alternative to complete withdrawal, abandoning principle along with material and strategic interests. Nor was Nicaragua a prettier picture, for there Dictator Adolfo Diaz held precarious control by virtue of United States loans and United States power. With some distaste Wilson was obliged to adopt here too the "policy of watchful waiting" of which in his December message to Congress he somewhat prematurely bragged as a solution of the Mexican question. "Watchful waiting," he was sure, would eliminate Huerta.

In the baffling mazes of Latin American politics, United States Presidents usually find the test of their statesmanship. Wilson's foreign policy was being shaped by the obscure feuds and political immaturity of the banana republics. He found that good will in order to achieve suc-

cess must be reciprocated. He believed that such reciprocity was the sincere desire of all American peoples, but the more he dealt with the petty dictators the more he missed a forum from which the principles of co-operation could be proclaimed. He felt the need, too, of some central organization that could implement those principles. Torn between the cry of United States concession holders for order imposed by the marines and his own understanding that progress at the point of a bayonet is illusory at best, Wilson was in a mood to welcome any feasible scheme for an international tribunal that would settle disputes between nations on some other basis than naked force. Such an organization would let him get on with his work at home.

Europe, too, was a nagging interruption to the steady drive for domestic reforms. Great Britain was protesting the law that granted exemption from Panama Canal tolls to United States coastwise ships. There was a treaty guaranteeing equal treatment for all. Arbitration treaties with various European powers were expiring, too, and this problem was met by Bryan's chief contribution to foreign policy—a series of "cooling off" agreements by which the contracting parties bound themselves to wait a year before permitting any dispute to carry them into actual hostilities. It was quite generally believed that this really would be a deterrent if any nation committed the incredible folly of resorting to war.

As these and a myriad other questions spread and multiplied, Wilson's cry for a chance to think was forgotten in the need for a chance to rest. Thanks to rigid discipline and the devotion of his family and attendants, he succeeded in getting time for enough relaxation to keep his health; leisure for thought was out of the question. Golf,

visits to the theater, quiet family dinners, carefully calculated holidays were part of a severely strict regime which alone kept him physically up to the task of leadership he had set himself.

6

As he passed the first anniversary of his Presidency, he could congratulate himself, and was widely felicitated by others, upon having accomplished far more than any practical politicians had believed possible. But Wilson never had been inclined to look complacently upon past achievements. Rather it was his nature to push forward to new fights without giving friends or enemies a breathing space. He already had made clear his determination to press for effective anti-trust legislation, exemption of labor from the penalties of the Sherman Act, repeal of the Panama Canal tolls exemption. He did not pause to celebrate birthdays but opened his second year in office by appealing to Congress to withdraw that exemption in the interest of treaty obligations and as an aid to the administration in dealing with other countries.

"I do not know to this day what he meant by its being necessary to repeal the tolls discrimination in order to enable him to conduct the foreign relations of the country," wrote Lodge, who, although on Wilson's side in this matter, seems not to have understood that a reputation for breaking a pledged word is of little help in negotiations.

From success in this skirmish, Wilson turned to the trusts. As he worked out his program for ending monopoly, regulating some of the wilder stock market abuses and protecting labor, three major bills were developed. One created the Federal Trade Commission; the second

stipulated that unions could not be considered conspiracies in restraint of trade; the third, lost in the upheaval of war, would have given the Interstate Commerce Commission supervision over railroad securities offered to the public. At the same time, the trust buster McReynolds prepared to press some notable prosecutions under the Sherman Act, the most spectacular being the case against the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad with Thomas W. Gregory as prosecutor. The reaction, whether "psychological" as Wilson said or the result of ill-digested reforms as conservatives insisted, was a very definite business depression which the President believed to be in part manufactured for the occasion. But he found it easier to talk about gibbets than actually to get them set up. No speculators were hanged.

The coolness between the administration and business was not dissipated by the sudden chilling rattle of swords along the Mexican coast. On an April day in Tampico, a Mexican colonel arrested some sailors from a United States warship while they were loading supplies on shore. The men were released with an expression of regret a few hours later, but Admiral Henry T. Mayo undertook to commit his country to a high-handed policy. He demanded a formal apology, punishment of the offending colonel and a twenty-one gun salute to the American Flag, all within twenty-four hours. The arrogant tone was not calculated to make yielding more agreeable and the Mexicans refused.

Wilson, disgusted with Mayo's ultimatum, yet felt called upon to support this symbol of American dignity while an unlovely jingoistic fervor swept the country to the tune of vociferous expressions of contempt for Mexicans and rage that they dared insult their betters. Even

Bryan and Daniels, the unwarlike, even the Senate agreed that an apology must be wrung by force from "that scoundrel" Huerta. Everyone Wilson saw assured him that no open resistance could be expected if Vera Cruz were to be seized—that port was selected so the navy could confiscate a shipload of German munitions ordered by the stubborn Indian. Wilson gave the order and on April 21, pale and somewhat shaken, he read the result in a telegram from the consul in Vera Cruz:

"Notwithstanding firing from housetops we are masters of situation so far. . . . At this time reported four our men killed, twenty wounded."

Wilson recognized his deep responsibility for the loss of those lives and took it hard, but he did not change his course. While the nation assumed that war had begun, he insisted that he was fighting a Dictator, not a people, a point of view that was to become more notable in a larger quarrel. Even so the interventionists and jingoes must have forced him into something very like a campaign of conquest if Latin America had not saved him from the consequences of an Admiral's blunder and his own principles. Argentina, Brazil and Chile, the so-called A.B.C. powers, offered their mediation and Wilson jumped at the chance. It saved peace, although the flag never got that salute. It was, too, a reward for Wilsonian ideals since the A.B.C. offer would hardly have been made so quickly without his record of patience and his speeches of good will.

Throughout this crisis private sorrow weighed more heavily upon the man in the White House than did concern for the public. Mrs. Wilson, whose health had been worrying her family for a year, was now struggling to recover from a fall suffered in March. Although she was

able to attend the marriage of their youngest daughter, Nell, to the Secretary of the Treasury—a romance that roused almost as much interest as the landing at Vera Cruz—she weakened all through the early summer. By the time an Archduke was shot at Sarajevo on June 28, she was unable to leave her room. When the wily Huerta finally fled from Mexico in July for a triumphant vindication of "watchful waiting," his antagonist in Washington had no heart for rejoicing. Gray and weary, his careful regime of rest and exercise flung to the winds, Wilson was spending every minute he could spare in a sickroom. His own little world was whirling relentlessly down the road to tragedy with the greater world outside, and at the same reckless pace. All he could do was sit and suffer through the hot July days, a new horribly useless "watchful waiting" that could no more save private happiness than it could avert public disaster.

IX

"Incredible Catastrophe"

THE MOST INCREDIBLE FEATURE OF WHAT WILSON CALLED "this incredible catastrophe" of a European war was the almost universal confidence that it couldn't happen. European diplomacy was based on the theory that it was inevitable. European budgets included fantastically large sums for defense because it was inevitable. There had been repeated crises that frightened the world into believing the inevitable was at hand. But in July, 1914, all save a few croaking Jeremiahs had heard the cry of "wolf" too often. Armies and navies might be used for little wars, it was supposed, to "clean up" a small backwater of disorder or "develop" an uncivilized part of the globe. The notion that great powers would fight each other was held only by military experts, professional pessimists and gloomy radicals who maintained that the capitalist system was doomed to perish in a cataclysm of its own devising.

The only Jeremiahs with appreciable audiences were the military experts, and they were all discredited by the frequency with which a few of them had predicted war over a specific issue on a certain date. By 1914 their stories of commercial rivalries, the threat of an expanding industrial Germany to a prosperous British Empire, the uneasy balance of the status quo, French revenge, Russian ambitions, Austrian fears had an old-fashioned ring—as truth is likely to have. Surely, the world told itself, it was

too enlightened to go to war for such silly reasons. There had been a flurry over the assassination of Franz Ferdinand, but in a few days only the diplomats and chancelleries of Europe remained interested. The state of Ireland, where Ulstermen were arming and orating, attracted more attention in America than devious negotiations between and about Austria and Serbia. The statesmen were solemn from force of habit and waggled their heads gravely, but few seemed to realize that the moment for which alliances and armies and plans of campaign had been created was upon them.

Certainly it was not to be supposed that Wilson, absorbed in his domestic program except when foreign crises forced themselves upon his notice, would have any sharper insight than his own ambassadors. They, when they noticed the nervousness of foreign ministers at all, treated it with faintly contemptuous amusement. Furthermore the President received some remarkable letters that summer from House, reporting that the peace of the world was being put on a sounder basis than ever it had been before.

The Colonel was then in Europe on the first of those informal missions that were to give the conventional masters of the Continent a very odd impression of American democracy and to confirm isolationists in a belief that simple Americans were no match for the wily diplomats of an effete civilization. House had reached the summit of his ambitions at home. He was the power behind a Presidential chair, so far as there was any such power. He was the most trusted confidant of the chief executive. He could climb no higher in that peculiar little realm of irresponsible, mysterious influence in which he delighted to dwell. But a larger world beckoned, and hardly had he seen the administration settled than he yielded to the lure

of the international scene. Here his talents for negotiation and compromise were equal to those of the men he met, but the foreigners had the insuperable advantage of knowing what they wanted while the Texan was never quite sure of his own aims.

In a general way he hoped to unite the great nations of the world behind a policy of peace as he had united the factions of the Democratic party (with help) behind a policy of reform. This idea gradually developed into a vague plan for some sort of accord between England, Germany, France, the United States, and possibly Japan, for good will and the limitation of armaments. Wilson, deep in struggles over Mexico, the depression, a miners' strike in Colorado to which he was sending Federal troops in disastrous imitation of Cleveland, gave his blessing to this pious program. In May his "dearest friend" sailed to interpose his slight figure and rather foggy intentions between Europe and the dogs of war. As credentials he carried only a letter which would hardly qualify him in the eyes of suspicious diplomats as a fountainhead of authority except as it proved his good standing with the President. It read:

> It is hard to say good-by, but knowing what I do it is delightful to think of what awaits you on the other side, and it is particularly heartening to me to know that I have such a friend and spokesman.
>
> Mrs. Wilson and my daughters join with me in most affectionate messages and in the hope that you will both find your trip refreshing and stimulating in every way.

On the strength of this document and his reputation as Wilson's confidential adviser, House received flattering attention and hearty verbal support. The Germans in particular were almost overwhelming. They were even more

poorly informed than other Europeans about American customs. The only American Colonel known to Kaiser Wilhelm's chauvinist advisers was Theodore Roosevelt, who had been enormously interested and pleased by their display of military might. Privately they thought Colonel House a rather odd military specimen, but great captains do not always look the part. So the German army, gathered for maneuvers, was trotted out in all its pomp and glory for the visitor's professional eye. It was an impressive performance. Three years earlier the bellicose Roosevelt, who understood these people far better than House ever was likely to do, had written:

"The German war plans contemplate, as I happen to know personally, as possible courses of action, flank marches through both Belgium and Switzerland. They are under solemn treaty to respect the territories of both countries, and they have not the slightest thought of paying the least attention to these treaties unless they are threatened with war as the result of their violation."

Even less acute observers could see that the Germans took their army as seriously as Americans took their politics, and the spectacle of those dense marching masses somewhat discouraged the messenger of peace. "Militarism run stark mad," he described it to Wilson, but he thought the Kaiser himself very receptive to the grand alliance to banish war. In France he found less interest; he and the French politicians never seemed to understand each other's motives very well, and he wisely moved on to London where his favorite form of diplomacy—perfectly frank negotiations between gentlemen—had flowered in the person of the sad, gentle but so astute Sir Edward Grey. At least the Foreign Secretary always appeared to be perfectly frank, and his gentlemanliness was almost proverbial.

Iouse informed Wilson that it was a pleasure to work out he future of the world with so sympathetic a colleague. But in June, 1914, Sir Edward apparently saw small reason o hasten the drive for peace machinery. The leisurely course of British diplomacy, never so leisurely as when the great families who conducted it were moving through the stately ramifications of "The Season," was lavish of vague assurances, but on June 17 House summed up the status of his mission:

"I find here everything cluttered up with social affairs, and it is impossible to work quickly. Here they have their thoughts on Ascot, garden parties, etc., etc.; in Germany their one thought is to advance industrially and to glorify war. In France I did not find the war spirit dominant."

The French had so mystified him that he added they no longer thought of revenge for '70 and had abandoned all thought of recovering Alsace and Lorraine. So he seemed pleased with the outlook. No one told him that the murder of Franz Ferdinand might upset his plans, and his reports to the White House continued to be optimistic.

Only because it came to nothing was the United States spared the alarm that House's policy must have caused had it blossomed into reality, for it was a flagrant usurpation of authority explicable only on the assumption that the Colonel did not know what he was doing. He was so sure of the purity of his motives that he never realized that his acts would lead, if they led to anything, to a cynical division of the whole earth among the world's greatest powers. As Wilson's spokesman, he was attempting to commit his country to a revolutionary foreign policy, and only after he had broached it to foreigners did he write home that he was working for a vast imperialism "which I hope

fast for the amiable Colonel. Reality caught up with and crushed in passing his naive plan for world peace based on an alliance of the powerful to plunder the weak, a program that was neither born nor died with him.

The man to whom his reports were addressed was not giving them the attention that historians have thought they merited. But then Wilson was not aware that they would be read in the light of the terrible conflict he could not foresee. He supposed his friend to be dabbling happily in the harmless prosecution of a laudable ideal. In the press of domestic affairs and Mrs. Wilson's illness, his attitude toward the mission was summed up in the cheerful line:

"I hope you are getting a lot of fun and pleasure out of these things."

And House was. Innocently pursuing his wholly irresponsible and only vaguely authoritative way through the mazes of a European diplomacy on the verge of war, he chattered of "establishing some plan by which investors on the one hand may be encouraged to lend money at reasonable rates and to develop, upon favorable terms, the waste places of the earth, and on the other hand to bring about conditions by which such loans may be reasonably safe." In spite of Sir Edward's gentlemanly frankness, there were no concrete proposals as to how these reasonable ambitions might be achieved. House, serene in the belief that the situation needed only time and good will to develop satisfactorily, sailed for home on July 21.

He arrived just in time to find his friend going through his private hell as Mrs. Wilson slipped slowly away from him and as "this incredible catastrophe" became all too credible. House tactfully remained in cool New England,

but continued to send advice and comment, such as a note on August 1:

"Please let me suggest that you do not let Mr. Bryan make any overtures to any of the Powers involved. They look upon him as absolutely visionary and it would lessen the weight of your influence if you desire to use it yourself later."

Wilson wanted to use his influence at once, and he had no intention of attempting to do so through his Secretary of State. In New York the Stock Exchange had closed; in Europe the armies were on the march, and on August 4 Great Britain declared war while the President of the United States sat beside his dying wife, writing in penciled shorthand an offer of his services to bring the belligerents together for an amicable settlement of their differences. But when the polite rejections arrived, he was not thinking of mediation. Late in the afternoon of August 6 Ellen Wilson turned to Dr. Cary Grayson and murmured:

"Promise me that you will take good care of my husband."

Then, her hand in the hand of the man who as a young lawyer had fallen in love with a demure, vivacious girl in a Georgia manse, she died, not knowing that war raged in Europe, that the world for which she was sure her Woodrow would do so much was going to need him now more than ever.

Five days later when he returned from the funeral, a lonely, unhappy man, he tried to find relief in work. Seldom has anyone had so much work to do. Thus far his moves upon the international stage had been guided by a profound sense of his own unfitness to grapple with the complexities of the European scene. A man of strong con-

out of prejudice or hasty generalizations. Concerning subjects on which his information was sketchy, his mind was truly, as he expressed it, "to let." By August 12 there was brisk bidding for the vacant place in his thinking, but he was in no hurry to fill it. From the moment he came back to the White House, he set himself somewhat grimly to the task of mastering problems of neutrality and peace. This was imperfectly accomplished, but perfection has never been attained by anyone else, even when the study had not to be undertaken in the midst of the bloodiest war and most intense propaganda barrage yet known.

Because he had an orderly mind accustomed to cutting through forests of special pleading to a distant goal, his steps were remarkably sure, his mistakes few. He was humble, too, in the face of his personal loss and recognized shortcomings. As he sat on the White House veranda through the hot August nights in his enforced moments of relaxation, talking over old times with Stockton Axson, his brother-in-law suggested that the monumental "Philosophy of Politics" which he had projected as his life work nearly thirty years before would be enhanced by his rapidly increasing knowledge.

"I thought of it once as a great book," Wilson replied. "I can put all I know now into a very small one."

So far as possible he was repairing the gaps in his education by the same methods that had fitted him for his professorship. For hours at a time he secluded himself in his study with great heaps of State Department files, mainly produced by diplomats as uninformed as himself and far less able to express their thoughts. Among them he dug for the truth behind the collapse of reason in Europe. He read and listened to the advice of men he respected, but did not always take it. House, for example, had opposed

the tender of good offices to reconcile the belligerents. Eliot of Harvard, smitten with the fury that the invasion of Belgium roused in a great many peaceful bosoms, dashed off an intemperate demand that the United States join an offensive alliance to punish the aggressor.

Wilson submitted it to his Cabinet and then replied that "on the whole our judgment does not accept" the suggestion. Eliot did not accept it himself, his recantation crossing the answer to his first letter.

The lonely man in the White House, thanks to his historian's training, was drawing from the confused scramble of diplomatic dispatches a remarkably clear picture of the greed and folly and procrastination which, quite as much as national hatreds and economic conflicts, had put Europe's armies on the march. No country had a monopoly on base motives; none was guiltless of responsibility, he learned.

"The more I read about the conflict across the seas, the more open it seems to me to utter condemnation," he wrote.

He agreed cordially with House, whose conversations in Europe had supplied him with a good deal of information if not with a workable policy, when that unofficial diplomat predicted:

"If the Allies win it means largely the domination of Russia on the continent of Europe, and if Germany wins, it means the unspeakable tyranny of militarism for generations to come."

As between that militarism and the despotism of the incompetent Romanoffs there was nothing for a Wilson to choose. The theory, evolved only after the Allied cause had become holy, that he meant to join it from the first and only waited until he could educate public opinion at-

tributes to him a talent for deception wholly out of character. Actually there was complete sincerity as well as "utter condemnation" of all the belligerents in his appeal to the country on August 18 to be "neutral in fact as well as in name . . . impartial in thought as well as in action." But already he was being drawn toward a nobler principle, for in this same appeal he suggested the hope of bringing "to our people the happiness and the great and lasting influence for peace we covet for them."

Just because an ideal is impossible of complete fulfillment is no reason for abandoning it. A people who rioted over baseball games were hardly likely to be unmoved by the terrible game of war, and inevitably they would take sides, even those of them without any personal, material or emotional interest in the fortunes of one contestant or another. They knew little about the merits of the case—the men who had the chief share in events leading up to the war were pretty vague themselves as to what actually had happened. But in August the Wilsonian neutrality pleased some who became most bitter about it later. Theodore Roosevelt, his belief in the regenerative value of war undimmed, seemed to have doubts about this particular war. Weeks after it began, he too was advocating strict neutrality, and so were Lodge and most men in public life.

Many of them were carried away by their feelings before long and never tried to curb them. Wilson, who had to deal with both sides and was gaining in knowledge daily, was much longer in selecting a favorite. The motives and methods of the Allies and Central Powers seemed to him a disgrace to the intelligence of all the countries involved. Furthermore, he was desperately afraid that participation in war would destroy the work his administration already

had done. He saw clearly the reactionary nature of belligerency. His study of history had convinced him that the most that could be said for a successful war was that it sometimes averted a worse evil. That any positive good could come of it he never for a moment believed.

"Every reform we have won will be lost if we go into this war," he told Daniels.

The first consideration, therefore, was to keep out of the war in order to save reform. The second was to bring the war to an end in order to save American economy. The glittering prosperity of the later boom, transferring the center of world capitalism from London to New York and pouring billions into industry, was undreamed of in those anxious August days. The Stock Exchange remained closed and McAdoo was soothing hysterical bankers with bundles of emergency currency. The bridegroom Secretary himself was not soothed by the thought that the Federal Reserve System, blocked by these same bankers for so long that it was not yet in operation, would have made the task much easier. Cotton planters were as hysterical as bankers and with more reason as their chief foreign markets were torn from them. The tariff receipts, still main source of Federal revenue, were dropping disastrously. Business in general was taking to the storm cellars, cutting payrolls and abandoning prospective capital investments until it might be seen where money and labor could be used profitably. One avenue was closed promptly by the unsympathetic Bryan, who, three days before the President's plea for impartiality, was informing J. P. Morgan & Co. that any loans to a belligerent would be "inconsistent with the true spirit of neutrality."

Liége had fallen, unbelievably to those experts who accounted the fortress virtually impregnable; Germans were

marching into Brussels; British warships ranged the North Sea hoping for a fight; Austrians were in the streets of Belgrade and battling with Russians for unpronounceable Polish towns; Japan was thoughtfully transferring to herself the German leased territory of Kiaochow in Shantung, and Italy was finding moral scruples for evading her supposed obligations under the Triple Alliance. All this was translated into definite but less dramatic crises in the United States, and the comfortable feeling of aloofness from Europe's ridiculous quarrels vanished in the irritation of disrupted trade, curtailed shipping, the tottering financial system. It was an instructive lesson for a President who at fifty-seven had turned student again in an effort to learn how to regain the peace he regarded as essential to his most important work, domestic reform.

X

Fighting for Conciliation

1

"I HAVE TRIED TO ENTER EVERY DOOR THAT WAS OPENED even by a mere crack but have always found that somebody had his back against it on the other side," Wilson wrote to Frank I. Cobb, editor of the *World*, after months of negotiations so futile that instead of bringing peace to the world the United States was on the verge of getting into war.

The somebodies were not only the belligerents but American diplomats, societies of German or Allied sympathizers and such outstanding patriots as Colonel Roosevelt, whose enthusiasm for neutrality was short-lived. The Colonel seemed at times to regard the war as evil only because it found Wilson in power. He could reconcile love of country with this passage in a letter to the British Ambassador, Sir Cecil Spring-Rice:

"Now, my dear Cecil, do not feel too badly over things. I am bitterly humiliated at what this administration has done. I am not merely humiliated but profoundly angered by the attitude of the professional German Americans. . . . We are not an alert people. We do not understand foreign affairs and, when a President misleads us, as Wilson has done, some very good people tend to follow him."

Of course such communications to the representative of

a foreign power with whom the President was conducting vital, delicate negotiations were sent "in envelopes without my name on them, so as to attract as little attention as possible." Of course "Springy" was an old friend. But it was hardly conducive to peace to have an ex-President plant such thoughts about a successor in the mind of a diplomat.

Roosevelt was an early defection from Wilson's policy. He was followed by traders and bankers and ship-owners who found their business hampered by war and didn't like what the government was doing about it. He was followed, too, by Lodge, who objected that the policy was anti-Allied; by Chairman William J. Stone of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, who objected that it was anti-German; and finally by Bryan, who feared that it was anti-peace. For a time it seemed that only the people of the United States approved. That they did so was apparent from the slightly exasperated way in which both Spring-Rice and Count von Bernstorff, the German Ambassador, reported the fact from time to time to their governments.

Popular enthusiasm for the main point of Wilson's foreign policy—keeping out of war—was not enough to make it effective, and the President knew it. He was obsessed with the unhappy parallels between 1914 and 1812. Then the young Republic, far more truly isolated from Europe, found it impossible to avoid being drawn into what had been the last previous World War. He knew that public opinion then had resented Napoleon quite as much as it resented England. He had studied closely the steps by which Madison's efforts to defend neutrality led to a war which the dominant business interests of the country liked so little that they had threatened secession.

"Madison and I are the only two Princeton men who

have become President," he told House in September. "The circumstances of the War of 1812 and now run parallel. I sincerely hope they will not go further."

Throughout his struggle to prevent them from going further ran an increasing appreciation of basic issues that were not very clear then and became more obscure when the victory of one side completely overshadowed the war aims of the other. Whatever the confusion of guilt that brought on the war, the German jingo conception of the peace that was to follow was terrifying. Predicated on the theory of a France crushed in six weeks, a Russia reduced at leisure and an England starved with satisfactory rapidity, the German settlement envisaged complete mastery of the Continent sustained by ousting Great Britain from first place among commercial nations. It was not materially different from the program that an Austrian house painter later evolved out of defeat, but it was less brutally expressed; the men who had originated it were gentlemen. It was also more prudently held. When the first part of the program—the speedy elimination of France—failed because of an inadequate supply system, duly noted by planners of the next attempt, the more moderate element in Berlin had a chance to make its voice heard. This was a liberty the house painter learned not to allow, but even before his time it was unable to prevail.

The Allied plans, though much else might be said against them, entailed no fundamental change in the status quo. They need not disturb the development of American democracy and prosperity. Even a polite, confidential notice from the Japanese that they proposed to take over the German concession at Shantung failed to alarm the State Department unduly, although in China there was serious apprehension as to Tokyo's designs on Southern Man-

churia and Chihli Province. There seemed nothing in this to prevent Wilson's thoughts from swinging him around to the view Roosevelt already had reached emotionally. But the Rough Rider characteristically wanted to smash the enemy; the professor of politics, just as characteristically, sought to reform him. Roosevelt wished active participation; Wilson's goal was mediation.

House, who shared Wilson's peaceful views and Roosevelt's impatience, was complaining through September and October that the President "seems more interested in domestic affairs" and "does not seem to have a proper sense of proportion as between domestic and foreign affairs." Nevertheless, the Colonel noted in his diary:

"He goes even further than I in his condemnation of Germany's part in this war, and almost allows his feeling to include the German people as a whole rather than the leaders alone."

Wilson of course condemned the Allies, too, but his policy was influenced steadily—only in moments of extreme provocation did he waver—by the conviction that they represented the lesser evil. It was not so much German stupidity in detail as the inexorable implications of German policy, forcing its practitioners into brutally tactless words and deeds, that led him to announce to his Cabinet when an embargo on munitions was mentioned:

"Gentlemen, the Allies are standing with their backs to the wall, fighting wild beasts. I will permit nothing to be done by our country to hinder or embarrass them in the prosecution of the war unless admitted rights are grossly violated."

Such expressions were uttered only in private; publicly and in personal letters he was so careful to observe the

spirit of his own neutrality appeal that the choleric Roosevelt on December 8 burst out to Lodge:

"Upon my word, Wilson and Bryan are the very worst men we have ever had in their positions. It would not hurt them to say publicly what is nevertheless historically true, namely, that they are worse than Jefferson and Madison. I really believe I would rather have Murphy, Penrose or Barnes as the standard-bearer of this nation in the face of international wrong-doing."

2

The Colonel was right. His odd preference for the worst type of political boss over the father of the Constitution and the father of the Bill of Rights certainly could have done no harm except possibly to his own reputation, for the public clung to the belief that Jefferson and Madison had been pretty good Presidents.

The events that had turned Roosevelt's September acquiescence into his December intransigence were the inevitable disputes between an exporting neutral and the ruler of the seas. To a new generation accustomed to the thought that the best way to avoid war is to keep out of the way of it, the rights of neutrals may seem illusory. In 1914 they were very real, although a holdover from an age that knew nothing of submarines, airplanes, radio or the thousand and one industrial and civilian activities without which modern wars cannot be fought. The warriors were forced by necessity to move more rapidly in adjusting their thoughts, and Wilson was confronted by a theory of blockade that outraged the outworn legalities of international codes because it had to conform to the unpleasant realities of war. So his initial disputes were with England. Throughout the fall and winter he was learning that in

practice neutrals can win their rights only by ceasing to be neutrals.

The United States, despite Union precedents set in the Civil War, claimed the right to trade with Germany in everything except actual war supplies and with Germany's neighbors in everything. The claim was ignored for the most part and for the rest nullified by an American Ambassador whose sympathies on this point were all against his own country and whose methods of defending neutral rights were thus described by the appreciative Grey:

"Page came to see me at the Foreign Office one day and produced a long dispatch from Washington contesting our claim to act as we were doing in stopping contraband going to neutral ports. 'I am instructed,' he said, 'to read this dispatch to you.' He read, and I listened. He then said: 'I have now read the dispatch, but I do not agree with it; let us consider how it should be answered.' "

Two factors kept the United States from being dragged very close to war with Great Britain. First was the rising tide of munitions and food orders whose importance soon reached a point where an embargo would have been as ruinous to American industry and agriculture as to British war efforts. That was the insurmountable obstacle to a genuine isolationist policy and to Bryan's attempt to keep his country from becoming materially involved in the fortunes of either belligerent. It was impossible for the United States to keep out of foreign trade unless prepared to revolutionize the economy of a great many other people than bankers. Southern planters would have to learn to grow and dispose of other crops than cotton; northern mills would have to be prevented from accepting highly profitable contracts; western farmers would have to be reconciled to a slump in meat and grain; new economic

frontiers would have to be found to replace the old physical ones. Perhaps it could have been done, but the incentive would have had to be more compelling than an ideal of neutrality or even fear of war.

Sir Edward saw this clearly. His admitted task was to keep the blockade as severe as possible without driving the United States to reprisals. The more American factories and farms depended on Allied buying, the more stringent became the blockade until at last House himself complained:

"The British have gone as far as they possibly could in violating neutral rights, although they have done it in the most courteous way."

For Sir Edward was above all else a gentleman, and his successor, the philosophic Arthur James Balfour, was an even more precious specimen of the British upper classes. Both quite easily charmed the impressionable Colonel.

The second factor in keeping Wilson from a break with England was Germany. Berlin was not content with a situation that saw Wilson becoming daily more involved in disputes over cotton and copper and food, "ultimate destination" and "continuous voyage." In February the self-confidence of a dynamic war machine overruled the doubts of civilian ministers and declared the waters around the British Isles a war zone in which neutral ships might not be safe. The notion that any U-boat commander would dare endanger an American ship in such thoroughly illegal fashion kindled patriotic emotions left cold by prize court procedure over mere freight. The Counselor of the State Department, Robert Lansing, drafted a stern protest, in which Wilson made some changes of phraseology but left intact the warning that if any American lives or ships were lost "the Government of the United States would be

constrained to hold the Imperial German Government to a strict accountability." It was the start of a correspondence that was to have few mollifying phrases.

3

Two days after the German announcement, House arrived in London on what amounted to an official but still highly informal, not to say secret mission. This time he carried two letters. The one that mattered constituted him Wilson's personal representative "to be serviceable, if we may, in bringing about the preliminary willingness to parley which must be the first step towards discussing and determining the conditions of peace." House was to serve as "a channel of confidential communication" and not try to bind anyone to anything. The other letter described him as a relief investigator and was to be used in meeting those not favored with the secret of his real purpose.

The aim of the mission was to pave the way for American mediation, but Wilson and House were far apart in their conceptions of how that should be achieved. House thought an Allied victory was a prerequisite, with the United States intervening if necessary. Wilson realized that his mediation could be acceptable and valuable only if his country preserved the substance as well as the manner of impartiality. A complete victory for either side, he believed, would add immeasurably to the difficulties of a lasting peace settlement if not actually prevent it. Such had been the experience of the South when Tommy Wilson was a boy. Besides, his horror of war and his deep sense of responsibility—he still suffered from the memory of those boys killed at Vera Cruz—led him to reject the logic of his own certainty that Germany was a greater menace to civilization even than Russia.

"I am not justified in forcing my opinion upon the people of the United States," he explained, "and bringing them into a war which they do not understand."

Wilson did not know that his views were not shared down to the smallest detail by House. He did not know that his friend was unfamiliar with some of the details. One of the elements in their friendship was the President's perfect trust and a theory that the Colonel was gifted with perfect insight. The little man gave Wilson an illusion of thorough comprehension and unreserved applause even for unexpressed thoughts. House had worked out a formula for interpreting their relations. If he disagreed with Wilson, he kept silent. If Wilson kept silent, House took it for agreement. He confided this simple code to his diary, but he neglected to confide it to his friend. There is plenty of evidence in the Colonel's own papers that Wilson was not aware that his adviser's silence meant disapprobation or that his own silence was supposed to indicate consent.

The friendship was not the less warm because of this misconception at its base, and it was with a real sense of sacrifice that Wilson let the amiable little man go off on a long trip. There were tears in the President's eyes as he said good-by at the railroad station. Then, dogged by the secret service guards who had caused him to give up walking because it made him horribly self-conscious to be trailed, he turned back to the White House. A doubly lonely man with gray thinning hair, he was left to grapple with a Congressional revolt against a shipping bill, with the establishment of the Federal Reserve System, with the never-ending worry of appointments. House sailed on to the polite world of diplomacy. He had all the best of it.

It is plain now that the United States could only have brought the war to an end by embargoing munitions and

defeating the Allies, a suicidal course. House's negotiations became of chief interest in that they educated Wilson in international politics, teaching him just what diplomatic folly and humbug lay behind the horrid reality of Flanders, inexorably reaching out for American lives as well as American supplies.

The first announcement of the German submarine campaign, dashing hopes for the House mission, was followed by an exhilarating report from Gerard. The astute Ambassador, who understood what was going on about him even when he disapproved of it, declared that if a "reasonable peace" could be offered at once, within a few days, before the U-boats got busy, it would be accepted. Germany still had a civil government, which was struggling to keep from being absorbed by the armed services. Peace meant the Chancellor's salvation.

Gerard may have been wrong about the extent of the Chancellor's influence. He never was able to find out, because the Allies refused to be specific. They had too many secret commitments. Wilson thought it providential that House was in London ready to rush to Berlin with the "reasonable offer." But House did not rush. Instead he had a long talk with Grey, just the two of them alone before one of those cosy English fires in the statesman's library. The spell of the leaping flames, the rows of books, the gentle, sad voice of the Foreign Secretary lulled the visitor into a belief that the perfect gentleman was talking sense when he spoke of hopes for a great success at Salonika and heroic things to be achieved by Kitchener's new army as soon as winter rains stopped on the Western Front. So, said the host, why not wait and see? House waited so long that Wilson cabled with as much asperity as ever crept into that idyllic friendship:

"If the impression were to be created in Berlin that you were to come only when the British government thought it the opportune time for you to come, you might be regarded when you reached there as their spokesman rather than as mine."

"We must be patient," House replied.

At each step in the unfolding drama, the Colonel was to look back, puzzled, at the delays in mediation and decide that chances had been much better somewhat earlier. In February, 1915, he was pointing out that the "psychological time to have ended this war" had been in November or December, at which time he had been urging delay. Meanwhile he continued happily his round of luncheons and talks while Wilson, the opportunity having been missed, wrote friendly letters of praise and hammered fruitlessly at his rebellious Congress.

4

His trouble here was another outgrowth of the war, a lack of ships to carry American produce. The administration had introduced a bill to create a government corporation to buy and build ships. With the British busy and Germans swept from the seas, the few American tramp freighters afloat were clearing their entire cost in a single voyage, but private capital shunned the lucrative field because of the risk—risk that war might end. Private capital insisted upon a subsidy in addition to the enormous freight rates and would build no ships though grain rotted at the docks. Men who wanted subsidies raised a great howl of "socialism" when the government proposed to step in, and as he studied the bill Wilson remarked to McAdoo, its chief author and supporter:

"We'll have to fight for it, won't we?"

"We certainly shall," replied his son-in-law.

"Well, then, let's fight."

They did. They fought it through the House, but the Senate proved that talk is mightier than reason. Under its jealously guarded privilege for balking the will of a majority, a band of brazen-throated solons set out to shout the measure down. Wilson had a little brass in his throat himself, and at the Jackson Day dinner, referring to the fact that most of the opposition to his shipping bill came from the minority Senators, he cried:

"The Republican party is still a covert and refuge for those who are afraid, for those who want to consult their grandfathers about everything."

That did not silence the Senate. Theodore E. Burton of Ohio set a new upper house talk marathon record, thirteen hours. Major Henry L. Higginson of the Boston Higginsons, no Senator but just as fearful of anything that might give government the idea that it could interfere with profits, voiced in much less time the standpat credo.

"It does not seem clear to Washington," he complained, "that the action there and in the States is keeping business men on pins and that, having lost considerable money and lost almost entire confidence, they are not willing to risk their credit. They have simply withdrawn their money in a large way from active business, and are waiting to see whether it is safe for them to pledge their names and their honor in carrying out either old or new enterprises. . . .

"I was glad to vote for Mr. Wilson, and have liked a great deal that he and Congress, with his guidance, have done; but this shipping bill is a terrible mistake. If we can only have peace and nothing new, trust placed in rail-

road directorates and in other great concerns, we shall go on very well."

But business is never as brisk under a policy of stagnation as its leaders promise. Major Higginson's "we" went on very well, but the country got no ships under private enterprise. The attempt to do it cost the country a billion dollars, rather a high price for the brand of oratory expended in Senate filibusters. A billion was the difference between the 1915 cost of the tonnage finally acquired and the price in 1916 when the bill was enacted.

The torrent of Senate eloquence died momentarily with the Sixty-third Congress in March, but House's futile conversations with British statesmen went on. At the same time these gentlemen were conducting equally secret, more practical negotiations by which Italy agreed to enter the war for a share in the loot. The tide of orders for American industry had set in with stocks rocketing upward as optimistically as if August, 1914, had never been. General Leonard Wood, recently finished with his term as chief of staff, was busy with plans for a spectacular but farcical military training project so useless for anything but propaganda that it was natural to assume the General was trying to build a Presidential boom rather than a national defense. All these things were of grave importance, but it was hard for a lonely, driven President to give them proper attention, for the Germans were splitting his administration over the proper definition of "strict accountability."

On March 28 an American, Leon C. Thrasher, was killed in the torpedoing of the British ship *Falaba*. Strict accountability might mean war, and Bryan was dashing off animated arguments in his hasty scrawl. The Secretary of State, a thorough pacifist, clung to the spirit of the President's neutrality appeal long after the author had

ceased to be "impartial in thought." Bryan's logic, based on a premise of strict neutrality, was unassailable nor could the premise be attacked publicly. But Wilson's policy was guided now by realization that German victory would affect the United States disastrously, Allied victory less so and a draw least of all. Bryan grew more and more agitated, and more and more correct in his arguments until on May 1 a U-boat succeeded in sinking a United States tanker, the *Gulflight,* and killing a few more Americans. On the same day the *Lusitania* sailed from New York with 1,257 passengers, most of whom scoffed at a neat little paid announcement in the papers reminding them that they proceeded into the war zone "at their own risk."

In Washington chilly little notes were being written to England about neutral trade when the news came on May 7. The *Lusitania* had carried 1,195 of her passengers and crew, including 124 Americans, to the bottom. Hour after hour details piled up and Tumulty saw tears in his chief's eyes, tears for lives so needlessly lost, tears for millions of lives, just as precious, still to be lost and tears too for the collapse of a policy. All around him and far to the north and south—but not so far to the west—the circles usually called "informed" were sure there was to be another Ally.

"We shall be at war with Germany within a month," House confidently predicted in London, displaying once more something less than complete identity with his friend's thought.

At home the emotional chorus was led by Colonel Roosevelt, who screamed "piracy," while from press and pulpit the barbaric deed was denounced with a frenzy limited only by the inability of words to express the horror felt by editors and preachers and statesmen. But the articulate

organs of expression do not always represent the views of a nation, which is composed mostly of quite inarticulate individuals. These viewed the disaster as a horrible tragedy, akin to the *Titanic's* loss, but not a cause for war. Secretary Houston, who was in California, found a Los Angeles delegation far more interested in irrigation, water power and roads. California editors, reflecting reader apathy, never took the opportunity to ask a Cabinet member what the sinking of the *Lusitania* might mean.

Wilson, more care-worn than Tumulty had ever seen him, refused to be infected by the hysteria. He was determined to get all the facts possible before he acted, and he distrusted what he called "the present emotionalism of the country." He did not doubt that he could sweep the nation into war with a single speech. Instead he went to Philadelphia and on May 10 told an audience of newly naturalized citizens:

"The example of America must be a special example. The example of America must be the example not merely of peace because it will not fight, but of peace because peace is the healing and elevating influence of the world and strife is not. There is such a thing as a man being too proud to fight. There is such a thing as a nation being so right that it does not need to convince others by force that it is right."

It was Wilson's fate to have striking phrases dragged from their context to become the slogans of his supposed policy. "Too proud to fight" nearly choked Colonel Roosevelt, who decided Wilson was not only worse than Jefferson and Madison but "the worst President by all odds we have had since Buchanan with the possible exception of Andrew Johnson." But the new citizens liked the speech

immensely, and it went down so well with older citizens too that Spring-Rice was obliged to report:

"There has been an extraordinary change in the reputation of the President . . . he certainly attained a greater degree of popularity than has been given to anybody here since Roosevelt. A short time ago he was generally decried."

The people had confidence now that Wilson would not fight unless he had to. Thanks to his patience, to the fright that world reaction to the *Lusitania's* sinking gave the German Government and to the fact that Grand Admiral von Tirpitz did not yet have enough submarines to strike a decisive blow, an open breach was prevented.

But the scare cost the administration the services of Bryan. The Secretary's scrawl became larger and more agitated, his underlinings more frequent, his scriptural admonitions more pointed. He agonized and pleaded. In Cabinet meeting he so far forgot himself as to call his colleagues pro-Ally, which brought a sharp rebuke from the President. Bryan's charm and eloquence could not keep him from being a minority of one. On June 8 he attended his last Cabinet meeting, leaning back in his chair with eyes closed, his magnificent vitality worn down by worry and fear. His resignation was dated next day although it had already been formally accepted. Probably he never so much enjoyed being wrong, for his letter of congratulation three months later when his successor, Lansing, and Wilson had avoided war after all was extremely cordial.

5

The ideal of strict neutrality vanished with Bryan. It was replaced by a policy that approached in effect if not expression "all aid for the Allies short of war." The United

States had become their munitions factory and food bin and soon would be obliged to furnish what Bryan called "the worst of all contrabands because it commands everything else"—money. In October, 1915, the moral embargo on loans to belligerents was cancelled because otherwise England would have had to dump American securities on the market with disastrous results or else stop buying, with even more disastrous results. The United States was so tightly bound to the Allies for immediate trade that it blinded later critics to the fact that the country was equally bound by a far broader and more permanent interest in preventing German militarism from becoming the dominating force in a future world order.

As the Germans yielded a reluctant, temporary and partial surrender on unrestricted submarine warfare, Wilson was able to cling to hope that a peace of justice might be won without involving the United States in war. He had no confidence in the good faith of Junkers, but he did believe that a reasonable settlement offer might bring into power in Berlin a regime with which democracies could work. If that happened before a smashing victory, it would prevent such a division of spoils as the world rightly suspected had been secretly contracted for among Germany's enemies.

"It would be a calamity to the world at large if we should be drawn actively into the conflict and so deprived of all disinterested influence over the settlement," he wrote to House, but a little later he also told the Colonel: "My chief puzzle is to determine when patience ceases to be a virtue."

He was still exercising patience as the war went into its second winter, each side boasting of what it would do to the other when spring came. Wilson found patience

easier because the poignant loneliness of his life was lifted. He had been seeing more and more of a handsome Washington widow, Mrs. Edith Bolling Galt, and during his vacation in New Hampshire the previous summer had confided to his daughters that she had consented to be his wife. The public was not informed until October, and the marriage took place in December. It restored that aura of domesticity in which Wilson, a man in almost physical need of sympathy and understanding, did his best work.

The added strength was welcome, for with the German submarine danger quiescent, the British were being difficult. Their blockade seemed even to such sympathetic spirits as Lansing blatantly illegal. The new Secretary of State was a strict legalist, a master of international law, but when it came to formulating the broader policy of his department, "clerk" was not too harsh a description of his status. He was scarcely consulted when Wilson made his next move for winning the war by reason, a project as futile if less ridiculous than the Ford peace ship which had just sailed on its laughable, pitiable cruise to get the boys out of the trenches by Christmas.

Once more Colonel House was to go upon his travels. Bernstorff had conveyed a cordial invitation from Berlin. House knew his English friends would be glad to see him, and he did not know that equally powerful, less gentlemanly members of the British Cabinet regarded his efforts as "pernicious meddling." They liked better the attitude of Page, so thoroughly committed to their cause that when Wilson urged the most legal of protests the Ambassador sneered at the "fierce, blue-bellied Presbyterian tone."

While House greeted his London friends in January, 1916, Wilson elaborated the principles on which a peace

of justice should be founded. His belief then was that mere details of territorial and economic disputes could be adjusted by the belligerents themselves. He did not yet realize that these things were exactly what they were fighting about. The broader plan over which he expected to preside would concern itself, he thought, solely with guarantees for disarmament and a league to prevent war.

That same month he took his first tentative step toward an international commitment. He told House the British might be informed that the President would be glad of an opportunity to co-operate in a policy for achieving peace and making it permanent. This was coupled with a proposal that the United States summon all the warring nations to mediate, and arraign the one who refused as responsible for continuing the war. At this point the unsuspected disharmony between his mind and that of his emissary blocked whatever slight chance of success there might have been.

Wilson meant his offer sincerely to win mediation. House meant to put Germany in the wrong and the United States in the war. He really thought the President understood this without being told, for the Colonel was obsessed with the notion that his silences were recognized as disapproval. He even used this remarkable form of protest, so he noted in his diary, during negotiations with the Germans that winter. Since he frequently though tactfully expressed disagreement with Wilson and recorded many instances of converting his friend, it is a bit difficult to see how unless by sheer clairvoyance the President could have known when his secret envoy's silence indicated difference of opinion and when it meant merely that the Texan had nothing to say. So he approved when House agreed to leave

it to the British to select the moment for the mediation offer. When the Colonel promised "for you" that the United States "would leave the conference as a belligerent on the side of the Allies, if Germany was unreasonable," Wilson contented himself with writing in the one word "probably."

Actually neither Germany nor the Allies would submit to mediation until every possibility of victory had been exhausted. The British proposed to save House's offer for use as an alternative to defeat, as did the Germans. But again the mission served a purpose. The Texan's gift for shrewd, discreet conversation, so invaluable in informing a New Jersey Governor about the personalities in his party, added greatly to a President's store of knowledge about European men and motives, for while House's sympathies were fixed, his eyes and ears remained open.

"In each government I have visited," he wrote in February, "I have found stubbornness, determination, selfishness and cant. One continually hears self-glorification and the highest motives attributed to themselves because of their part in the war. But I may tell you that my observation is that incompetent statesmanship and selfishness is at the bottom of it all."

Such reports confirmed Wilson in his opinion that neither side could be trusted to use victory properly. When it came to the point he did not wholly trust himself either. Meanwhile, with millions of others, he was horrified and disgusted by the 1916 spring offensives. Generals who had learned nothing from nearly two years of modern war unleashed the bloodiest shambles in all history at Verdun and the Somme with a futility that almost ended the war from exhaustion. Without irony he warned the Allies

that if they expected to use his offer of forcing Germany to mediate, they had better do it while they still had armies in the field.

6

Wilson was backing up his peace proposals with a preparedness program chiefly effective, so far as land forces were concerned, in maddening Theodore Roosevelt and Leonard Wood, who saw their ground cut from under their feet. The same program, however, began the expansion of a navy second to none. Secretary of War Garrison resigned because he thought the army schedule inadequate and was succeeded by Cleveland's little reform mayor, Newton D. Baker, a sort of belligerent pacifist.

The first use of the preparations was an effort to impress the irrepressible Mexicans, who were not much daunted by a display of Yankee might. But General John J. Pershing was introduced to his countrymen. It all began because Venustiano Carranza, chief architect next to Wilson of Huerta's fall, was insufficiently bolstered in office by Washington's recognition. He was at odds with his former ally, Pancho Villa, who, seeking to provoke intervention, raided Columbus, N. M. He drew the redoubtable "Black Jack" into a pursuit that failed to catch the bandit leader but established the pursuer's military reputation. Professionally Pershing advanced himself far more effectively than Wood, who was attempting to corner the preparedness market. But the senior General was politically so successful that his friend and fellow Rough Rider remarked:

"The shadow of the White House rests heavily upon him."

Wilson, entering upon the task of converting his 1912 minority vote into a majority, found it hard to do so without compromising his peace policy. The uneasy Sen-

ator Stone and other Westerners were coldly suspicious that he was committing them to war. Roosevelt shrieked because he was not in the war already. The country howled alternately for the blood of Carranza and Villa. The National Guard alternately sweated and froze along the inhospitable border. But the President took the sting out of Wood's criticism by plumping for preparedness with the frank admission on a quick swing around the country:

"I would be ashamed if I had not learned something in fourteen months. The minute I stop changing my mind with the change of all the circumstances in the world, I will be a back number."

That was popular. Even more popular was his unexpected triumph over the German militarists as the submarine controversy came to a truce forced by a Wilsonian ultimatum to stop killing Americans or face a breach in diplomatic relations. That threat went forward on April 18, 1916. Thanks to Bernstorff, almost the only German who realized America's potential strength, the civilian authorities in Berlin won one of their rare victories. They gave a pledge to observe the rules of naval warfare but somewhat weakened it by adding a paragraph that unless Britain also obeyed the rules in her blockade the German Government "must reserve itself complete liberty of decision." Wilson was free to resume his protests to London, protests sabotaged gently by House and with his usual violence by Page.

He was free, too, to round out for use in the Presidential campaign an amazingly constructive domestic record. Beginning in January, 1916, when he sent the name of Louis D. Brandeis to the Senate for a Supreme Court Justiceship —his only previous appointment to that august bench was the "radical" McReynolds, who had been succeeded by

Gregory, the prosecutor of the New Haven case—he was fighting incessantly on several fronts.

The Brandeis battle, of which even reactionaries came to be ashamed, dragged on through May. A bitter railway dispute, starting at the same time, lasted even longer until in the midst of a blistering heat wave Wilson despaired of making the managers see reason. He put through the Adamson Act for an eight-hour day just in time to avert a strike. It was one of those "socialistic," "paternalistic," "revolutionary" measures that the staunchest conservatives soon find admirable, but that did not assuage their bitterness at the time. Their rage was increased by simultaneous Congressional fights to win a bill creating a Tariff Commission and the Farm Loan Act, while Wilson struggled over negotiations with Denmark to buy the Virgin Islands; recriminations over Haiti and San Domingo, policed by marines; careful study and rejection of leases proposed by Secretary Lane to give private operators access to naval oil reserves; long drawn out efforts to devise a Pan-American pact for hemisphere defense and co-operation; Mexican complications, sincere pacifist outcry against supposed war mongering, sincere war mongers screaming against supposed pacifism.

Through it all Wilson moved with amazing vigor, carefully husbanded through long drives in the country, strict diet and a rigid discipline of mind that enabled him to keep his thoughts where he wanted them. One of his thoughts was that if the summer's fighting ended once more in stalemate, the belligerents might be amenable to the reason of peace and international machinery for outlawing war. That last was a policy he was finally willing to make public, and as he prepared the statement he called it the most important speech he was ever likely to write.

He delivered it on May 27 before the League to Enforce Peace, of which Taft was president. The vital suggestion was for "a universal association of nations" to prevent war, ensure freedom of the seas and create "a virtual guarantee of territorial integrity and political independence," a phrase that was to take its place in a more controversial document than any Presidential address. Wilson made it plain that the United States would take part in such an organization, and the public response so far as he could gauge it was highly favorable. In 1916 it hardly seemed a debatable issue, for the American will to peace was strong.

"Nations must unite as men unite in order to preserve peace and order," Lodge had declared while even Colonel Roosevelt applauded, and later the Senator added in a speech frequently to be quoted against him: "I do not believe that when Washington warned us against entangling alliances he meant for one moment that we should not join with the other civilized nations of the world if a method could be found to diminish war and encourage peace."

That seemed to settle partisan attacks on American participation, but Spring-Rice, with his confidential pipeline into the real thoughts of the Republican opposition, recognized another underground reaction. The Ambassador, his pessimism deepened by ill health, was irritable and tactless, but also a reasonably acute observer, and in reporting to Grey on Wilson's speech he wrote:

"But how can the President give us the desired pledge? He cannot pledge the action of Congress in advance." And two months later: "The American people will not accept liability which entails intervention abroad. And if they did so, it would be for the momentary pleasure of the con-

templation of the beautiful vision, but with no fixed intention, and certainly no power, of carrying it out into action."

7

The proposal was not carried into the summer's campaign, which opened with unusual brightness for the Democrats. Roosevelt, rushing back into the Republican fold, forgot about the shadow he thought he had seen hovering over his friend Wood. He also forgot a rather definite promise to Mrs. Wood and every progressive principle he had ever professed. He urged the nomination of Lodge, a choice explicable only on the theory that his frenzy against Wilson now amounted to madness.

"It is dreadful to think that some millions of Americans will vote for Wilson—including men like ex-President Eliot," he wrote. "They can't so vote without incurring moral degradation." And to Spring-Rice he cried: "*Your* country is passing through the flame and will come out cleansed and refined to lofty nobleness. *Mine* is passing through the thick yellow mud-streak of 'safety first.' "

The Republicans, not having grown quite as conservative as Roosevelt, nominated Supreme Court Justice Charles Evans Hughes, but the Rough Rider was not dismayed. He flung himself into the campaign with as much ardor as if he had named the man himself. His belligerence contrasted rather oddly with the candidate's own timid approach to the issues of the day. Wilson, watching the confusion of his opponents and driving Roosevelt frantic by completely ignoring him, was so confident that he explained his own modest campaigning was based on a rule "never to murder a man who is committing suicide."

As the election drew nearer, however, the fact that the

country was normally Republican began to look ominous. House, who with the new national chairman, Vance McCormick, was performing prodigies of organizing valor all across the land, strangled doubts. For once a phrase from a party platform had become a genuine campaign slogan but "He Kept Us Out of War," though effective, was not convincing to the leaders. Wilson himself found it positively distasteful for he suspected and House was sure that whoever was elected would have to get the country into war. House was also a little chagrined to find the President in an occasional anti-British mood. Congress had pleased even the ardent Teddy by voting 137 new ships for the navy in September, and when House suggested that England might not like it, his friend responded airily:

"Let us build a navy bigger than hers and do as we please."

The President was a little annoyed with British persistence in hampering American trade, referring to His Majesty's Government irreverently as "poor boobs." There was very unsavory evidence that in part the restrictions were designed to protect British exporters from American competition rather than crush Germany. Furthermore, he disapproved of British unwillingness to come right out and say specifically what the war was about. He was sure the coyness was due to secret commitments that would not sound well in public beside the idealistic generalizations of which House's London friends were so prodigal. But Germany retained her capacity for being more offensive than the Allies. In October Gerard came home with a veiled threat that if Wilson did not force a peace soon, and on the basis of the present German superiority in the field, Berlin would have to revert to the reservation made when unrestricted submarine warfare had been abandoned.

As the campaign ended, tempers were wearing thin. When Wilson visited New York five days before election, even the urbane House allowed himself to become involved in "the most acrimonious debate I have had with him in a long time." The Colonel was horrified because the President thought he could win without New York. The argument and the obvious closeness of the race shook the candidate's confidence, but he contemplated the prospect more calmly than his friend. He determined that in defeat he would strike a blow for his long-cherished views on government responsibility to public opinion. He explained this to Lansing, adding that if the Republicans won he intended to appoint Hughes Secretary of State. Then he and Marshall would resign to save the country "the extreme disadvantage of living for four months under a party whose guidance has been rejected at the polls."

He went to bed at Shadow Lawn in New Jersey on Tuesday night believing he would have to create this precedent. He was not nearly so sorry as those around him. He was laughing when he spoke over the phone to a heartbroken secretary and said:

"Well, Tumulty, it begins to look as if we have been badly licked."

The loyal Irishman spoke of drifts in the West, and heard a chuckle and a cheerful:

"Tumulty, you are an optimist."

But California was still counting votes and the count went on all next day. Wilson already had a plurality of nearly 600,000 in the country; win or lose he had upset his 1912 minority vote, but he needed California for election. He got it by 3,806 votes at last, but it was thirty-six hours after the polls closed before Hughes's friends stopped calling him "Mr. President." Around the man

who retained the title a gathering crowd explained how they had never lost faith for a moment. In the interval there had been touches of comedy—the heavy gloom of a Democratic victory dinner eaten before the guests knew they had a victory, the triumphant crowing of Colonel Roosevelt, the embarrassment of New York editors as they took back their flat announcements of a Hughes success, a cheerful man at Shadow Lawn thinking himself out of a job but refusing to be interrupted while shaving.

"Tell that to the marines," he called through the bathroom door when an excited daughter tried to convince him there was still a chance.

And then the comedy faded, as election comedies are wont to do, leaving the victor to grapple with the insoluble problems of war and peace.

"Now the burden upon me is heavier than ever," he wrote. "If we can escape entering into the war and bring about a rational peace it is something worth living and dying for, and I believe the country feels that way or it would not have re-elected me."

■

XI

Message of Death

"War now has such a scale that the position of neutrals sooner or later becomes intolerable," Wilson had declared in October, and by November a good many well-informed persons knew that the intolerable stage had been reached.

Within a few weeks of the election the President had drafted his last despairing program for living up to what was widely regarded as his campaign promise. In spite of the pressure of appointments and congratulations, defying a physical reaction from the months of strain, he prepared a demand for mediation as an appeal to the conscience of mankind. Before he could present it, there were some disturbing factors to be considered. As the winter of 1916 set in, the Allies were so close to defeat that if Germany knew the truth she would consider nothing except a dictated peace. The British were running short of cash and the French short of morale. Italy from the first had been almost more of a liability than an asset from the military standpoint, while a few shrewd observers in Russia said that that country would have to choose within three months between revolution and a separate peace.

This was the situation when on November 14 Wilson discussed with House the possibility of calling the belligerents to a conference. This time at least the Colonel was vocal in dissent, but the President went on with his draft.

On the 27th he read it to his friend, who still urged delay, while Lansing was far from enthusiastic. Wilson's own faith that his eloquence and logic could halt Europe's mad race to destruction was not overpowering. While he hesitated the Asquith government fell, to be replaced by the predominantly Tory coalition presided over by the dynamic Lloyd George with Balfour in Sir Edward Grey's post. It was a ministry pledged to a more energetic prosecution of the war—House predicted its speedy fall—and it had a chance to demonstrate its spirit almost at once. On December 12 the German Chancellor launched his own rather arrogant peace bid, leaving little doubt that the terms would be those of a victorious Reich. The Allies, despite a financial crisis and incipient mutiny in the French army, rejected with scorn the idea of discussions on any such basis. They had no time to cool down before Wilson's note was upon them. They fairly sizzled with rage as they read his powerful, reasonable statement that the time had come for each side to announce candidly, so the world could "frankly compare them," the conditions upon which it would lay down arms.

"The objects which the statesmen of the belligerents on both sides have in mind in this war are virtually the same, as stated in general terms to their people and to the world," he declared.

These words were seized upon as an admirable excuse for a display of indignation to mask a refusal. Wilson had said no more than the plain truth—from Berlin, London, Paris, Vienna and Rome, even from St. Petersburg and Constantinople, had come the most high-sounding principles of justice, freedom and peace. Unfortunately these were not the sole issues. Germany could not discard her grandiose aims of conquest, for her people, although pa-

tient beyond most in waiting for the fulfillment of their leaders' promises of future greatness, would tear down a government that tried to tell them their sacrifices were in vain. England had made promises to her allies that she would not dare reveal to her own people. Nowhere did statesmen care to face revolution for the sake of peace. So the peacemaker was reviled for lack of understanding, and General Wood, referring pointedly to his commander-in-chief, told an excited meeting of so-called Vigilantes: "Gentlemen, we have no leadership in Washington."

In the opposition and scorn he aroused, Wilson characteristically found new strength. He clung stubbornly to his policy, and as the Christmas of 1916 gave way to his sixtieth birthday and that in turn to a cheerless new year, he was tenaciously elaborating the last fling for peace.

"It was not in Mr. Wilson's nature to admit defeat, however certain defeat seemed to be to others," wrote Lansing, whose approval of this final step was tepid at best.

In the tension of these gloomy days the amiability of House snapped again. As late as January 18 he was convinced that the German liberals were in control and that peace could be made more quickly than he had thought. When he learned his mistake, he fumed against "slippery customers" in Berlin. His outward manner was suave enough, but his diary showed irritability, impatience with his friend and traces of forgetfulness as to which of them was President. Perhaps Wilson was more clairvoyant than he seemed, for the letters of this period came to "My dear House" instead of to "Dearest friend."

Nothing of coolness or strain showed in the document Wilson was preparing, he frankly declared, as an appeal to the peoples of the warring nations over the heads of

their governments. He had passed beyond the stage of asking others for terms; he proposed terms of his own. They were in the form of an address to the Senate, but the text was cabled to the embassies and legations in Europe to be made public to the real audience at the same time, January 22. It has been put down as one of the nobler idealistic utterances of American statesmanship, but it was more. It was a practical statement of the only basis on which peace and freedom can exist in the world, and therefore more utilitarian than any hard-headed summary of strategic frontiers, buffer states, trade privileges, indemnities and spheres of influence.

Wilson told the Senate and through it the world that peace depended upon "not a balance of power, but a community of power," based upon democratic systems that would insure "government by the consent of the governed." As an instance, he spoke of a "united, independent and autonomous" Poland formed from fragments then incorporated in Germany, Austria and Russia. He plumped for freedom of the seas, including a natural outlet to ocean highways for every nation, and a reduction of armaments within limits that would make aggression difficult if not impossible. This, he declared, was the essence of "a peace that is worth guaranteeing." To a Senate that included Lodge and Hiram Johnson and Borah and Jim Reed of Missouri he explained what guarantees mean:

"It will be absolutely necessary that a force be created as a guarantor of the permanency of the settlement so much greater than the force of any nation now engaged or any alliance hitherto formed or projected that no nation, no probable combination of nations could face or withstand it. If the peace presently to be made is to en-

dure, it must be a peace made secure by the organized major force of mankind."

He did not despair of such a settlement since all the belligerents had paid lip service to it, as had most leaders of American opinion.

"It is inconceivable," he said, "that the people of the United States should play no part in that great enterprise . . . to add their authority and their power to the authority and power of other nations to guarantee peace and justice throughout the world. Such a settlement cannot now be long postponed. It is right that before it comes this government should frankly formulate the conditions upon which it would feel justified in asking our people to approve its formal and solemn adherence to a League of Peace."

The sincerity with which men applauded these aims could be gauged by their reception of one prerequisite, stated by Wilson with a force and clarity that left no room for misunderstanding. He had been speaking of the avowed disclaimer of the belligerents of any desire to crush their foes utterly. These statements had been clear enough but their implications did not seem to be appreciated. Wilson proceeded to make them positively transparent.

"They imply," he declared, "first of all, that it must be a peace without victory."

He went on to explain that a victor's terms accepted in humiliation and sacrifice and bitterness would lead to a peace built "only as upon quicksand." He continued:

"Only peace between equals can last, only a peace the very principle of which is equality and a common participation in a common benefit."

He had been warned about that "peace without vic-

tory." Lansing had remonstrated. Page, on receiving the advance text, cabled that the Allies wouldn't like it. Lansing again urged that the phrase be changed.

"I'll consider it," Wilson replied brusquely.

Of course he let it stand. It was the keystone of his whole edifice for peace. Those who supposed that battered, embittered, more than half-ruined victors could be capable of justice were either fools or more wide-eyed dreamers than anyone ever accused Wilson of being. But there was only one man in America who knew how thoroughly impractical the speech had been as an immediate working program. Bernstorff had had in his safe for three days a note that was bound to bring the United States into the war, and it was to be delivered on January 31. It announced that on February 1 submarines would sink on sight anything around the British Isles except one American passenger ship a week ostentatiously marked and thoroughly illuminated. The exemption was almost more insulting than the warning.

"I could but regard this as a declaration of war against the United States," the Ambassador confessed despondently, setting himself to one last effort to convince his deluded superiors in Berlin that they were throwing away their chance for a decent peace.

Bernstorff had an uncomfortable feeling that the United States would be a fatal antagonist. His whole diplomacy had been directed at keeping his government from a final breach. On the day he got the message announcing the German decision, he radioed a prayer to postpone it, explaining:

"Wilson believes he can obtain peace on the basis of our proposed equal rights of all nations [this was one of the phrases both sides were fond of using]. House told

me again yesterday that Wilson proposed to take action very shortly, for in view of our declaration regarding future Peace League, etc., he regards prospects of a Peace Conference as favorable."

After the January 22 speech, the Ambassador was even more hopeful that Wilson would bring pressure upon the Allies if only Germany kept quiet. But the soldiers and sailors in Berlin refused any delay. The war, the Ambassador was informed, would be over in a few weeks and the United States would be glad to come to terms with the conqueror. The General Staff did permit the civilians to give Wilson, as in confidence, terms on which they were willing to enter a conference—not exorbitant in view of the relative military situation. But they could afford to be moderate since their offer was designed only to weaken their enemies and delude neutrals. It was dated the very day on which Bernstorff handed in the announcement of unrestricted submarine warfare.

When the Ambassador called at the State Department just after four o'clock on the afternoon of the 31st, Lansing noticed that he was unusually solemn. He handed over his note, and it was the Secretary's turn to be serious. The document was rushed to the White House, but there was some confusion in its delivery, and Wilson's first intimation was in the form of an Associated Press bulletin which Tumulty put on his desk without a word at about five o'clock. The color went out of his face as he read, but Tumulty noted a sudden clamping of the strong jaw.

"This means war," the President said quietly.

It did of course, but Wilson was far too stubborn a man to accept without squirming the downfall of a policy on which he had pinned his faith. That night in a conference of nearly two hours with Lansing, next day with

the Secretary and House, who had hurried down from New York, and still later in the Cabinet, he twisted about for a loophole that even yet might postpone the inevitable. He could not find one, although he kept looking so long that some of his official advisers, already launched into the fervor of war hysteria, accused him of irresolution. It was not that. To House he explained his rebellion against the fate that had overtaken his hopes of peace without victory. All that day, the first on which the U-boats were hunting down the unsuspecting neutral ships in the war zone, he was restless, nervous. Mrs. Wilson urged him to play golf, but that seemed painfully frivolous. So he walked about, handling books, matching the impulsive rage of most Americans, refusing to be soothed by anything House could say.

"A madman that should be curbed," he called Germany.

When House suggested it was hardly fair to expect the Allies to do all the curbing, he was still dissatisfied. Though the Colonel thought he winced under the force of the argument, he insisted war should be avoided if humanly possible. House had no alternative to suggest; neither did the Cabinet, and on February 3 Wilson was "listlessly killing time," as his friend put it, waiting for Congress to assemble to hear a Presidential statement. For lack of something better to do, he and House played a couple of inexpert games of pool. At last it was time, and at two in the afternoon he walked briskly to the House rostrum to announce that diplomatic relations with Germany were being severed at that moment.

Against all reason, for even men like Wilson cannot be reasonable all the time, he argued with himself that a state of armed neutrality might be maintained. It pained him that so few of his countrymen agreed. His message

to Congress on Saturday, February 3, had been too late to affect the already jittery stock market, but it was just in time to inspire a vast number of Sunday sermons.

"I think our ministers are going crazy," he told Tumulty after reading samples of the more turgid pulpit appeals to the God of War.

He himself was determined to take no step that might look like over-eagerness to fight. Instead he occupied himself with a paper which he headed "Bases of Peace." This, submitted to a disapproving Lansing, was a four-point program for mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity for all nations, abolition of economic warfare and limitation of armaments to police necessities. He leaned over backward to avoid any imputation that he sought to open hostilities, refusing to allow troops to be moved about ostentatiously, writing sane replies to intemperate advice and hearing with scorn of a boyishly impulsive offer from Roosevelt to raise a volunteer division something on the order of the immortal Rough Riders. Within a week he was having to deal with a cry for a coalition cabinet. It was raised largely by men who were speaking bitterly about the folly of leagues for peace and mingling their flamboyant Americanism with appeals to the British example.

"It is the Junkerthum trying to creep in under cover of the patriotic feeling of the moment," he told House. "They will not get in. . . . The nominal coalition in England is nothing but a Tory cabinet such as they are eager to get a foothold for here. I know them too well, and will hit them straight between the eyes, if necessary, with plain words."

Meanwhile some plain action was called for. The country was getting more and more belligerent, but shipowners

displayed a highly contrasting caution. They did not want to send unprotected vessels out to play hide-and-seek with U-boats. Valuable cargoes remained at the docks. Cabinet sessions grew vitriolic as McAdoo, Houston and Lane insisted that the government "do something about it," their feeling inflamed by a La Follette resolution to forbid the arming of American ships. The Cabinet held that the President had power to do just that, but Wilson wanted Congress behind him for such a step. Armed neutrality combined with a battle with the legislative branch of the government did not appeal to him, and both the extreme belligerents led by Lodge and the extreme pacifists led by La Follette were preparing filibusters.

Then on February 25 he received from Page the bomb that blew neutrality, armed or otherwise, out of existence. It was a note signed by the new German Foreign Minister, Arthur Zimmermann, offering Mexico an alliance for recovering Texas, New Mexico and Arizona, and proposing an invitation to Japan to join in the attack. The British naval intelligence had intercepted this message and decoded it nearly six weeks before. It was what the West needed to convince it that a German victory really might involve some peril for this country. The House, spurred by this outrage, passed a bill authorizing the President to arm merchant ships by a vote of 403 to 14. In the Senate an even dozen were mustered against it, and eleven of them were prepared to talk. They did so, sacrificing the deficiency and army appropriation bills for the chance, and the Sixty-fourth Congress went out on a screaming note of rage at this conduct, popular vituperation echoed by Wilson in a sentence usually misapplied to another band of dissenting Senators.

"A little group of willful men, representing no opin-

ion but their own, have rendered the great government of the United States helpless and contemptible," he cried.

The vigorous arraignment—a bit overdrawn but none the worse for that—marked the opening of his second term. He had taken the oath earlier that day quite privately, the public ceremony being held on March 5 because the 4th was Sunday, but he was in a blazing rage. When Houston, referring to the Senate oligarchy, asked whether he thought he was being inaugurated President of the United States or of Poland, he snapped: "Poland!" But he had no intention of being the kind of a figurehead that had made the chief of the old Polish state laughable, and he decided to arm the ships on his own authority.

Those who were expecting a war message as an inaugural address were disappointed. There was a sober admission that the country was likely to be drawn in, but no attempt to arouse feeling. Many thought the speech as cold as the day, for there were plenty to say, with Roosevelt, that if the President didn't declare war, "I shall skin him alive." As Wilson hesitated, trying to find some justification for continuing armed neutrality, the Colonel would gladly have done it, too. The submarine was taking frightful toll of British ships, working rapidly up to the peak of destruction, which was to be reached next month. A few unarmed American ships were torpedoed, too—lives were lost with the third—and the country began to con the meaning of "Schrecklichkeit." Mutiny spread, unpublished but pernicious, through French ranks. Then on March 15 the Czar of all the Russias scrawled his name at the bottom of an abdication and the Romanoff monarchy came to an end in a railroad car at Pskoff.

No one, least of all Ambassador David Francis and the

State Department experts, quite appreciated what that would lead to. At the time there was only rejoicing for an autocracy overthrown. Wilson was quick to realize the great accession of moral strength, and like millions of others hoped it meant military strength too. Every time the Allies and their sympathizers had explained how they were fighting for liberty and the rights of man, someone had doused the enthusiasm by saying "Russia?" Now the Romanoffs were gone, and from the ferment of soldiers' and sailors' councils was rising something that looked from a distance like democracy. Within a week Wilson instructed Lansing to recognize the new government.

Within that same week he came to the end of armed neutrality. On the 20th he took the opinion of the Cabinet. McAdoo, Houston, Lane and Redfield had been hot for war all along. Lane had been crying that the President, "slower than a glacier," actually resented it when the Secretary of the Interior bobbed up with a yarn about Germans stripping the wives of American consuls to see if they had military secrets stenciled on their skins. Wilson objected to working up "a propaganda of hatred against Germany." If he had to fight, he preferred to do so for something a little more rational than the possible outraged modesty of consuls' wives. When his own son-in-law and the others backed Lane, the bellicose Californian noted:

"The President turned on them bitterly, especially McAdoo, and reproached all of us with appealing to the spirit of the *Code Duello.*"

By the 20th there was no other code left. The last four of the Cabinet to hold out against it came over that day—Daniels, who enraged Lane by speaking of perils at sea ("Think of a Secretary of the Navy talking of danger!")

Burleson, Attorney General Gregory and Secretary of Labor Wilson. They went away without knowing what their chief was going to do, but next day he issued a proclamation advancing the special session of Congress from April 16 to April 2. No one doubted that the purpose was a declaration of war, except possibly House, whose advice at this moment was that the President ignore the Constitution which puts such declarations within the jurisdiction of Congress. House thought it would be well simply to tell the assembled legislators that the country already was at war and they should provide the means to fight it. For a man who had shrunk all his life from responsibility, the Colonel was strangely willing to foist it on others.

Wilson decided against him. Dressed in bathrobe and slippers through the night of March 31, a Saturday, he pecked away at his typewriter, tapping out in loneliness and sorrow words whose eloquence he hated to see turned to such a cause. In the middle of it, Mrs. Wilson raided the White House icebox for a bowl of milk and crackers. Eating, he gained strength for phraseology not at all milky or crackery, and as Sunday dawned the "message of death" was finished. There was nothing to do now but wait.

In the churches that day the ministers, with rare exceptions, were crazier than ever, crying in the name of the Prince of Peace for war and vengeance. In the Atlantic seamen of the first armed American ship to brave the war zone were drowning in cold, gray waters. Their gunners never saw the torpedo, much less the submarine that sank the *Aztec*. In the White House the President suddenly felt a need for talk. His message was finished and with it his hope of sparing American lives, of keeping an island of sanity in a war-mad world, of building in justice

and with cool deliberation a peace that would have a chance to last. Haggard, weary, he wanted something stronger than sympathy or understanding or soothing phrases. So he did not send for House but dispatched an urgent invitation to Cobb of the *World,* who hurried from New York.

The editor reached the White House at one o'clock Monday morning, and through the last hours of peace Wilson talked. Unbowed, though his world had fallen in upon him, he yet was unable to share the savage exultation that the mere prospect of battle brings to some natures. To a Theodore Roosevelt the descent into stench and blood, terror and hatred might involve some vague purification. Wilson knew that, however necessary, it was just stench and blood, terror and hatred. In the silent White House he spoke of what he had tried to do and failed. He seemed to feel he might have done more, but his visitor could not see what. Germany, he argued, had forced America's hand. Wilson agreed.

"But do you know what that means?" he went on. "It would mean that we should lose our heads along with the rest and stop weighing right and wrong. . . . It means an attempt to reconstruct a peacetime civilization with war standards, and at the end of the war there will be no bystanders with sufficient power to influence the terms. There won't be any peace standards left to work with."

He had no illusions about his country's strength, physically or morally.

"The President said," Cobb wrote, "a declaration of war would mean that Germany would be so badly beaten that there would be a dictated peace, a victorious peace."

Nearer home he foresaw, too, the end, if only temporarily, of his own ideals of government and conduct.

"Once lead this people into war," he said, "and they'll forget there ever was such a thing as tolerance. To fight you must be brutal and ruthless, and the spirit of ruthless brutality will enter into the very fiber of our national life, infecting Congress, the courts, the policeman on the beat, the man in the street."

He talked on through the silent night, seeing with painful clarity the manifold evils that the message to Congress must bring, but seeing too that there were greater evils in the world. It was bad enough that civilization should be coarsened and stained by war; it would be worse if civilization lost the war.

Wilson's nightmare did not end in the morning. Flags were flying everywhere in the damp, gray city, whipped by a gusty wind. The trains were pouring excited citizens into Washington. House was on one of the earliest, and he was pleased to find his friend controlling his nervousness. Still there was nothing to do but wait for Congress to organize to hear him. A pacifist delegation, turned away from more important centers of influence, finally ran Lodge to earth in a corridor of the Capitol, and one of its members—the Senator was not the man to overlook the fact that he was a Princeton alumnus—cried:

"You are a damned coward!"

"You are a damned liar!" Lodge retorted, and hit the fellow on the nose.

The pacifist hit back, but was dragged away, somewhat mauled, while the Senator went his way in a glow of belligerent pride. The President found his day less eventful. Pacifists or other strangers could not get near him, for he was guarded with exceptional care. He played a few holes of golf, talked determinedly on indifferent topics, ate an early family dinner and at last, escorted by cav-

alry, made his way down Pennsylvania Avenue. He was whisked through a crowd at the other end, and at 8:35 Champ Clark announced:

"The President of the United States."

The pick of Washington's bravery, beauty and brains cheered madly for five minutes, but the lean, gray man on the rostrum had no answering smile. He unfolded his papers at last, and then silence fell. The voice, a little husky at first, soon turned clear, full, expressively restrained as it read the United States into the war.

XII

The War to End War

1

DESPITE THE MESSAGE OF DEATH, THERE WAS SOME mental relief in having doubts and hesitation swept aside, as House noted when he returned from the Capitol. The two men, Mrs. Wilson and the President's eldest daughter discussed the great day calmly. Wilson read aloud—a familiar and favorite family custom—but this time it was from a clipping that gave Europe's estimate of himself, not from the usual poetry or prose master. Then House offered his gentle tribute.

"I thought the President had taken a position as to policies which no other statesman had yet assumed. He seemed surprised to hear me say this [as an historian, he well might], and thought Webster, Lincoln and Gladstone had announced the same principles."

House disagreed, and out loud. To his diary he added a fear that his friend "did not have a true conception of the path he was blazing." And so they talked and argued amicably, and the day passed into history. It was not until April 6, however, that the state of war became official. Six members in the Senate, fifty in the House voted against it, and were rewarded for their courage by being reviled as traitors and cowards. Many of them lived to see opinion shift until the fifty-six were hailed as statesmen of rare

wisdom. They deserved the praise as little as the blame. They saw clearly the shoddy motives of war mongers and the inadequacy of the immediate cause of war. They failed to see behind that screen to the compelling reasons for not permitting a German victory. They only knew war was evil, and they voted their consciences.

The country divided in about the same proportion as Congress. A minority of determined pacifists held out, scorned and helpless, while in the rest the fever of battle rose, stimulated by recruiting drive and draft, Liberty Loan appeals and Red Cross speeches. The President himself was snowed under with lavish grants of power greater than any man can wield, and he had to delegate them hastily to boards, commissions and individuals.

Of his conduct of the war two great facts stand out—in addition to the greatest fact of all, success. First was the remarkable absence of graft in the handling of unprecedented billions of public money. Second was the exceptional standard set for the welfare of troops. Of course Wilson was not solely responsible for either, but he made both possible. He stuck to the line that furthered them despite criticism, pleas and threats. The achievement was notable not only in comparison with all other American wars but in comparison with the other belligerents in the World War.

Waste, of course, was tremendous, but waste and war are so largely synonymous that in the heat of battle men are disinclined even to try to prevent it. The thievery that goes with it could not be laid fairly in the Wilson administration to the politicians. The army of business men who rushed into the public service to organize the industrial sinews of victory were a mixed lot. They brought with them their own standards. Many believed

that profits came first in war or peace or the hearts of their countrymen. Their activities were so extensive that when publicized later they gave the impression that the whole war had been fought for profits. But against their one-sided contracts, fabulous orders to non-existent factories and shrewd use of confidential information could be set the fact of armies equipped, shipped, maintained and supplied—although not supplied with many airplanes.

Soldiers suffered somewhat when politics dictated the location of a few training camps, but there were no such epidemics as had helped furnish Spanish-American War scandals. This was not only because of the advance in medical science. Whatever else they may have grumbled about, the men were better fed, better clothed and healthier than any army had ever been before. Their lives were safeguarded in the field as well as in the camp because their nominal commander-in-chief kept civilian influence out of general headquarters with a steadfastness that surprised some of those who protested that he did not know how to delegate authority. To Pershing in France and the General Staff at home he entrusted full responsibility, which was usual, and full power, which was not. His military policy was simple. As long as the soldiers got results he backed them to the limit, protected them from interference and as far as possible gave them what they asked.

2

On April 6, 1917, this was still to be done. Except for the navy, raised to unprecedented peacetime efficiency under the decried Daniels, the United States had to start almost from the beginning. But a good deal of the program was on paper. Since 1915 an Advisory Commission to the Council of National Defense had been working

over plans. Most of the members were titans of industry and six of the seven were Republicans. Through them and the Cabinet a swarm of boards and commissions sprang up to mobilize production for war—an Aircraft Production Board, a Shipping Board, a War Industries Board. Herbert Hoover was diverted from his relief activities to head a Food Administration and tell the people what to eat. George Creel presided over a Committee of Public Information to tell the people what to think. On the day war was declared, the President came out with a statement approving conscription. All over the country individuals and organizations were pledging loyalty and sacrifice, and some of them meant it. Bryan offered his services. Samuel Gompers promised to give up fighting for improved labor standards "for the duration," hoping labor would get its just reward afterward. Capitalists talked of furnishing steel at cost, although they recanted in time to make some nice profits. And on April 10, Roosevelt burst into the White House, slapped Tumulty on the back, offered him a commission, shook hands with the President for the benefit of photographers and disappeared into an inner sanctum to explain his plan for leading a volunteer division to France. He came out, beaming, to tell reporters that the President had been extremely polite. He himself had been as affable as if exactly a month earlier he had not written:

"The most mischievous and degrading of cries is the 'Stand behind the President' cry."

That had been in private. In public the Rough Rider managed to contain himself until Baker informed him there would be no volunteer divisions, no amateur commanders. Roosevelt was shocked. Where then was the glory of war?

"I am a retired Commander-in-Chief of the United States Army, and eligible to any position of command over American troops, to which I may be appointed," he protested.

One may speculate on what he would have said had Taft, the other "retired Commander-in-Chief," set up the same pretensions. As it was he pestered Lodge to introduce a bill to let him defy the War Department—Senator Warren G. Harding actually did it—and offered his division to France and Canada, who politely declined.

"The one real arch offender is Wilson," he screamed privately. "If our people were really awake he would be impeached tomorrow; Daniels, and Baker, and the General Staff are merely his tools . . . it is imperatively necessary to expose his hypocrisy, his inefficiency, his rancorous partisanship, and his selfish eagerness to sacrifice all patriotic considerations to whatever he thinks will be of benefit to himself politically."

Of course it would have benefited Wilson a good deal politically to let the martial Teddy play with a division. But he let the chance go, and his impatient petitioner succeeded by intrigues in Congress in delaying passage of the vital draft bill in the hope of getting his scheme hooked on as a rider.

"Roosevelt, for all his professed desire to facilitate the war, is really the stumbling block," Taft commented.

Roosevelt's discarded candidate for President was even more of a nuisance. In 1916, while General Wood was campaigning against the President, someone warned him to go easy or he would never see active service should the United States get into the war.

"They wouldn't dare hold me back," the General declared confidently.

He was the army's ranking major general, the prophet of preparedness, a former Chief of Staff and one of the sponsors of Pershing's spectacular promotion from Captain to Brigadier General in one jump. He was popular, able and no less familiar with the handling of masses of men than any other American. But he sadly underrated the administration's courage and set too much store upon his modest professional attainments. The current General Staff had a small opinion of his talents. Pershing, who was in the best position to judge, flatly said when it came to the point that he would not be able to serve in France if Wood did. So the General stayed home and trained troops—very ably too—while Wilson stubbornly held his ground and refused to reveal that the slighting of Wood was the army's decision, not his.

The incident, trivial enough in the midst of profound, fundamental changes in the history of the world, revealed the strength and weakness of Wilson's war methods. By giving his agents free rein he allowed their talents and abilities full play. By refusing to divert criticism to them, he permitted resentment against himself to be stored up where one day it might break loose. At the same time he somewhat illogically resented abuse, although the nearest he came to an outburst was when John M. Parker, a Louisiana Democrat turned Progressive, accused him to his face of playing politics with the two Republican military heroes.

"Sir," he snapped, "I am not playing politics. Nothing could be more advantageous to me than to follow the course you suggest. . . . General Wood is needed here. Colonel Roosevelt is an admirable man and a patriotic citizen, but he is not a military leader. . . . As for politics, it is not I but the Republicans who have been play-

ing politics and consciously embarrassing the Administration."

He knew other criticism was better founded. The sudden shift from peace to war, long foreseen, had been deliberately allowed to catch the country unprepared. For Wilson, besides realizing that his own generation would dislike active arming and suspect his motives, was still the historian.

"When history is written eighty or a hundred years from now," he explained to his young Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Franklin D. Roosevelt, "I don't want to have it possible for anyone to say that America prepared before the act of war."

So it may be said that he actually courted the indescribable turmoil that very nearly overwhelmed his administration. That fate was avoided because there were a few islands of intelligent order in the sea of confusion, and the White House was one. More than ever, Wilson found it necessary to regiment his day. An interminable procession of visitors, delegations and commissions moved with almost the precision of a ballet into and out of the Presidential presence. They found a man apparently unhurried, calm, who dispatched their business briskly. Always a precise writer, he developed a gift for terse expression that got most of his letters written on single sheets of quite small letter paper. He played golf regularly, rode horseback, visited the theater, took his most serious problems for long drives in the country with only Mrs. Wilson to keep them company. He restricted his meals whenever possible to the family and forced himself to talk on remote, pacific topics at table. Afterward he sometimes relaxed by reading aloud, and sometimes reverted wistfully to his once great project of a "Philosophy of Politics."

It was pleasant to dwell thus occasionally upon the contemplative life. The days were filled with a press of active, deadly affairs and Wilson in almost every case argued for the most active of any possible alternatives. He protested the British Admiralty's caution in delaying a convoy system because of the risk to the navy.

"In my view this is not a time for prudence but for boldness even at the risk of great losses," he tapped out on his typewriter in a message to Admiral William S. Sims, who at the head of the American fleet in British waters was fighting for the convoys and mine fields that were to beat the submarine.

Wilson was a strong advocate, too, of a unified command in France, long thwarted by an unsavory combination of jealousy and military conservatism. He pushed on the building of ships, which Lloyd George was saying were what would win the war. Even while the Allies were insisting that they needed nothing but money and supplies from the United States, he abandoned reluctantly his notion that American boys would not have to die in Flanders. He was able to throw on McAdoo's shoulders the tremendous task of financing the Allies, and gave to those unprecedented fiscal operations only as much attention as would make clear his approval. He hastened the formation of the War Industries Board to co-ordinate the vast machinery for production, which was to be the basis of victory.

With less pleasure he saw the speedy fulfillment of his worst forebodings of intolerance, hysteria and hate. When District police arrested a band of women demonstrating for votes outside the White House, he angrily declared he did not like to indulge their taste for martyrdom. He regarded with dismay the almost religious zeal with which

Burleson was enforcing the censorship, committed to the Postmaster General by Congress. When *The Masses* was barred from the mails, the President remonstrated, saying he knew some of the editors and adding:

"Now, Burleson, these are well-intentioned people. Let them blow off steam."

But "the Cardinal," a man of narrow vision who had learned ruthlessness in dealing with patronage, declared he would resign first. He held to his articles of faith grimly, quite ready to justify them by any sophism. Wilson gave in.

"Well, go ahead and do your duty," he said.

His doubts were not dissipated when Burleson proceeded to do it.

"I think," he wrote to Max Eastman, one of the well-intentioned editors he had mentioned, "that a time of war must be regarded as wholly exceptional and that it is legitimate to regard things which would in ordinary circumstances be innocent as very dangerous to the public welfare, but the line is manifestly exceedingly hard to draw and I cannot say that I have any confidence that I know how to draw it. I can only say that a line must be drawn. . . ."

That was frankly evasive, a most unsatisfactory answer to men who believed that free speech was a good in itself that no other could transcend. But Wilson had seen clearly that war and tolerance are mutually exclusive. It was one of the reasons he hated war. But he could be ruthless, even ungenerous with any opposition that he thought was directed against victory. He could and did condemn such exhibitions of lynch law as mob deportations of I.W.W.s from Bisbee, Arizona. But when the

lynching was done by due process of law, so to speak, he hardened his heart and let it go.

He was ruthless in breaking strikes, but just as ruthless in seizing factories of recalcitrant manufacturers. The strikes, however, were broken by labor's enemies; the factories were seized by boards careful to protect the rights of property by paying ample compensation. In many fields of industry it quickly became apparent that private operation was not efficient enough for war needs. The railroads and the communications industries were the most notable examples, and they had to be taken over. Others probably should have been, and the experience of the government in failing to get airplanes and artillery through a system of private enterprise could hardly be ignored in any future emergency.

3

Wilson was quite well aware, as his talk with Cobb showed, that there is no such thing as a democratic conduct of a war, even a war fought for democracy. Crisis government was called for. Just because that unlovely form of administration will breed its own war if left in power during times of peace, there is no reason to attempt to dodge it when its time comes. The trick is to get rid of it when the crisis is over, and in 1917 that was something for the future to worry about. So, while life itself was being given for the common cause by one section of the people, he was not afraid to ask the rest to give up liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Reading the record of his letters, his speeches and some of his more intimate conversations, it is plain that he could exact these sacrifices only because he was sure America was making them, actually and consciously, "for the principles that gave

her birth." Throughout the tremendous pressure of the next nineteen months, he never lost sight of that goal. The mere fact that, as he told Cobb, American participation in the war and the resultant victory would make his aims more difficult to achieve did not divert him from the attempt. Difficulties had never conquered his tenacity.

Therefore, side by side with the insistent and eloquent cry that all energies be directed primarily to winning the war, went rather less strident but just as steady study of the bases for a peace that would satisfy the aspirations Wilson was affirming for his own people and the nations of the world. He repeated them so often that both he and they came to believe that ideals of peace and justice were as strong as hatred and greed. Yet it is not to be supposed that this idealism, which came to be called "Wilsonian," was held by its godfather blindly or in ignorance of the forces arrayed against it.

One of these forces turned up on April 22 in the languid person of Arthur James Balfour, heading a British mission to enlist American co-operation, especially in finances and combating the U-boat, which that week reached its peak of destructiveness. These matters were satisfactorily adjusted in formal conversations, but Wilson proposed a talk with the philosopher statesman about peace at one of the White House family dinners. House was commissioned to lay the foundation at a preliminary meeting.

"And ask him about the secret treaties," Wilson added.

The dinner was set for the thirtieth, but that morning a statement of an entirely different point of view than Balfour's was presented, apparently with some force and no little bluntness, by René Viviani, member of Marshal Joffre's popular French mission, which had arrived two

days after the British. Viviani made it clear that France must satisfy a grudge dating from 1870 before peace could be regarded as lasting. His remarks confirmed the President in his decision that the United States would be an "associate" not an "ally" in the war. Disturbed by the Frenchman's plain speaking, Wilson rested almost all afternoon for the evening encounter, and House found him in fine form.

Only the three men, Mrs. Wilson and Helen Bones, a cousin, were at table. With his big white face, thin gray hair curling around his ears, ungainly figure buttoned into enormous, badly fitting garments, Balfour brought out his host's best stories, and the conversation was reminiscent of peaceful Princeton days when kindred minds had roamed the fields of history, education and architecture. In the glow of new-found friendship, the men settled in Wilson's study after coffee.

"The President continued to do most of the talking," House recorded.

For two and a half hours they considered the form of post-war Europe. There would be a strong Poland, they decided. Constantinople should be internationalized. The Hapsburg Empire should be split into three pieces—Hungary, Austria and Bohemia. And then they came to the secret treaties. Balfour agreed that Wilson ought to see them. He had explained them to House, who had dismissed them with the comment that it was like dividing the skin before the bear was killed. The President was more interested, and Balfour promised to send to London for copies, having brought none with him.

On May 18 the documents arrived, a bulky portfolio of three treaties and some supplementary data—the Treaty of London which was Italy's price, the Sykes-Picot Agree-

ment for the division of Turkey, the Treaty of Bucharest on Rumania's share of the spoils. By some uncharacteristic freak of absent-mindedness, Balfour forgot to include the Japanese understanding, an Anglo-French deal on division of German colonies and a supplement increasing Italy's bribe. However, there was enough for Wilson to write:

"England and France *have not the same views with regard to peace that we have* by any means. . . . Our real peace terms—those upon which we shall undoubtedly insist—are not now acceptable to either France or Italy (leaving Great Britain for the moment out of consideration)."

But he was not unduly concerned. Being only the eldest son of a seventh son, it was not given him to read in advance the mysteries of post-war finance, so in this same letter he was able to write with comfortable assurance:

"When the war is over we can force them to our way of thinking, because by that time they will, among other things, be financially in our hands."

Wilson, who had defied the power of money under private control, was to learn that this club, even when wielded by public authority, is something less than omnipotent. At the moment he did not worry about it. McAdoo was raising his billions as if they were pennies. Congress was appropriating vast sums with an eagerness usually reserved for the Rivers and Harbors Bill. Even Republican Senators were unexpectedly tractable, although Lodge, returning from conferences with the President, sneered into his diary:

"I watched and studied his face tonight as I have often done before—a curious mixture of acuteness, intelligence and extreme underlying timidity—a shifty, furtive, sinister

expression. . . . The man is just what he has been all along, thinking of the country only in terms of Wilson."

Roosevelt, still dreaming of the glory of leading a division and suffering from a more pardonable anxiety for sons in the service, was cautious in public, too, but pathetically explained how it was his roars were silenced:

"I *can not* run around slopping over about an administration which I despise and distrust, and I *will not* say anything which might in the smallest degree hamper the prosecution of the war."

4

Even without Lodge and Roosevelt, even without the purely technical problems presented by German victories on land and sea or by the mobilization of American credit, industry, agriculture and men, there were plenty of difficulties to be dealt with at the White House. One, appreciated but hardly understood, was Russia. The revolution still seemed glorious, but few realized what bitterness and exhaustion had gone into the making of it. Ambassador Francis, one of the accidents of Missouri politics, chiefly remarkable for an impervious shell of complacency, went through the greatest upheaval in more than a century without a single mark upon the shining blankness of his mind. A mission headed by Elihu Root, recommended to the new republic by Lansing as "a most distinguished statesman, who is devoted to the cause of political liberty and to the sovereign rights of the people," was dispatched to help the new regime prosecute the war. It came back without much information. Nor did it inspire any spirit of true research. Americans and their President were left to watch in bewilderment as the Russians hurtled on into Bolshevism, a separate peace and civil war. Uncompre-

hending and unforgiving, the average American condemned the Bolsheviks not for being Communists but for backing out of the war. This distinction was to be of some importance in the Red-baiting of the next few years when men who didn't know what communism was and wouldn't have minded it if they had were hunting down alleged Bolsheviks as pro-German cowards and traitors.

With communications slow and interest centered on even bloodier events than the Red Revolution, it is hardly surprising that no reasonable understanding of Russia was achieved. In 1917 Bolshevism seemed far less significant than Allied victories at Passchendaele and Cambrai, where the British introduced the world to tanks, or Allied disasters at Caporetto and Ypres. Appalling loss of life was the only result of the battles, and the military situation was relatively unchanged as summer faded into autumn and snow fell in Flanders.

The British armies were exhausted, the French just reviving from mutinies. Italy still trembled from Caporetto, and as the Russians drew out, calling on the world to come to a peace conference with them, new masses of Germans were released to confront the weary Allies. Into the White House as the days shortened poured the flood of bad news and worse forebodings until on December 15 there came from General Tasker H. Bliss, American representative on the Supreme War Council, some bald, unpleasant truths. Bliss, who combined in rare measure the qualities of military administrator and statesman, was disgusted by Allied jealousies and suspicions. The gloomy prospect, he reported, was due as much to these "susceptibilities of national temperament" which prevented unified command as to the collapse of Russia or the defeats in Italy.

"A military crisis is to be apprehended," he declared, "culminating not later than the end of the next spring, in which, without great assistance from the United States, the advantage will probably lie with the Central Powers. . . . There may be no campaign of 1919 unless we do our best to make the campaign of 1918 the last."

While trying to do just that, Wilson never forgot that his chief aim was peace. Early in September he had proposed to House the formation of a group of experts to study the problems involved and prepare the American case. The Colonel gathered a remarkable group of specialists under the general direction of his brother-in-law, Dr. Sidney Mezes, president of the College of the City of New York, with Walter Lippmann as secretary. For lack of a better name, they called themselves "the Inquiry." For more than a year the strategic, geographic, linguistic, nationalistic and economic factors of the post-war world were worked over by thoroughly competent scholars. Wilson's sole contribution to their task was a suggestion to study the just claims of Germany, Russia and Austria for access to raw materials.

While organizing this group with skill, House also familiarized himself a little more with what the Allies claimed. Sent abroad as United States representative in inter-Allied councils, he heard from Lloyd George that among other things the British demanded all the German African colonies, an "independent" Arabia under British protection, Palestine for the Zionists and Armenia free under American control. Balfour went into more detail, using maps, but House cautiously committed himself to nothing and privately thought the whole discussion worse than useless.

Trotzky's eloquent calls for peace and Lloyd George's

imaginary bear-skinning led Wilson to formulate more concretely than he had yet done the American aims. At the opening of Congress in December he drew applause for the statement that after victory the country would consider a peace of "generosity and justice." But he drew louder applause, pierced by the high, happy "Yipeeee" of the Rebel yell, with his request for a declaration of war against Austria.

During the next month he elaborated a more detailed speech, using material forwarded from the Inquiry, conversations with House, reports from envoys abroad. At the last moment he almost abandoned it when Lloyd George beat him to the punch. Seeking Labor support, the little Welshman soared in his loftiest vein before the Trades Union Congress, and not even Wilson could fly as high. Unfortunately the Prime Minister's noble words hardly squared with what all the world was beginning to know of the secret treaties, published by the mischievous Bolsheviks only a few weeks before. So on January 8 the President went before Congress and delivered what afterward came to be recognized as the first and one of the hardest blows the Allies struck in the 1918 campaign. It was an answer to the secret treaties, an appeal to reason and, as House saw it, the basis for a practical territorial settlement.

"We actually got down to work at half-past ten," he wrote of the preparations in which he took part, "and finished remaking the map of the world, as we would have it, at half-past twelve o'clock."

There were fourteen items in what Wilson called "the only possible program, as we see it." He had tried to reduce them to his favorite number, thirteen, but could not. Congress realized as it listened, the world realized

as it read that here was a shaft of sanity thrust into the madness of war. Its force was evident in the cry of rage from Germany, where the insidious work of that speech was to be noted by the country's future rulers as an excellent reason for keeping dangerous foreign notions from the ears and eyes of their people.

"For our part we see very clearly that unless justice is done to others it will not be done to us," Wilson said, and there followed these Fourteen Points:

I. Open covenants of peace openly arrived at, after which there shall be no private international understandings of any kind but diplomacy shall proceed always frankly and in public view.

II. Absolute freedom of navigation upon the seas, outside territorial waters, alike in peace and in war, except as the seas may be closed in whole or in part by international action for the enforcement of international covenants.

III. The removal, so far as possible, of all economic barriers and the establishment of an equality of trade conditions among all the nations consenting to the peace and associating themselves for its maintenance.

IV. Adequate guarantees given and taken that national armaments will be reduced to the lowest point consistent with domestic safety.

V. A free, open-minded, and absolutely impartial adjustment of all colonial claims, based upon a strict observance of the principle that in determining all such questions of sovereignty the interests of the populations concerned must have equal weight with the equitable claims of the government whose title is to be determined.

VI. The evacuation of all Russian territory and such a settlement of all questions affecting Russia as will secure the best and freest co-operation of the other nations of the world in obtaining for her an unhampered and unembarrassed opportunity for the independent determina-

tion of her own political development and national policy and assure her of a sincere welcome into the society of free nations under institutions of her own choosing; and, more than a welcome, assistance also of every kind that she may need and may herself desire. The treatment accorded Russia by her sister nations in the months to come will be the acid test of their good will, of their comprehension of her needs as distinguished from their own interests, and of their intelligent and unselfish sympathy.

VII. Belgium, the whole world will agree, must be evacuated and restored, wthout any attempt to limit the sovereignty which she enjoys in common with all other free nations. No other single act will serve as this will serve to restore confidence among the nations in the laws which they have themselves set and determined for the government of their relations with one another. Without this healing act the whole structure and validity of international law is forever impaired.

VIII. All French territory should be freed and the invaded portions restored, and the wrong done to France by Prussia in 1871 in the matter of Alsace-Lorraine, which has unsettled the peace of the world for nearly fifty years, should be righted, in order that peace may once more be made secure in the interest of all.

IX. A readjustment of the frontiers of Italy should be effected along clearly recognizable lines of nationality.

X. The peoples of Austria-Hungary, whose place among the nations we wish to see safeguarded and assured, should be accorded the freest opportunity of autonomous development.

XI. Rumania, Serbia, and Montenegro should be evacuated; occupied territories restored; Serbia accorded free and secure access to the sea; and the relations of the several Balkan states to one another determined by friendly counsel along historically established lines of allegiance and nationality, and international guarantees of the political independence and territorial integrity of the several Balkan states should be entered into.

XII. The Turkish portions of the present Ottoman Em-

pire should be assured a secure sovereignty, but the other nationalities which are now under Turkish rule should be assured an undoubted security of life and an absolutely unmolested opportunity of autonomous development, and the Dardanelles should be permanently opened as a free passage to the ships and commerce of all nations under international guarantees.

XIII. An independent Polish state should be erected which should include the territories inhabited by indisputably Polish populations, which should be assured a free and secure access to the sea, and whose political and economic independence and territorial integrity should be guaranteed by international covenants.

XIV. A general association of nations must be formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small nations alike.

"For such arrangements and covenants," the speaker continued, "we are willing to fight and to continue to fight until they are achieved."

Seldom have the words of man so thrilled millions. In more than thirty warring nations the speech was hailed as the answer to prayer. An honest peace, disarmament, economic freedom, justice in the delimitation of frontiers, an end to the burden of hate and guarantees to make this Utopia permanent—the Fourteen Points if put into effect would be almost divine blessings. Yet when Lloyd George spoke of them, men shrugged indifferently. They believed the American, recognized his sincerity, trusted his ability. In fact, they pinned their hopes for a just and lasting peace upon a Fifteenth Point, the character of Woodrow Wilson.

5

An official German answer was delayed only until fighting weather returned to the Western Front. Then Hindenburg celebrated the first day of spring by opening the offensive Bliss had predicted. For a brief, perilous interval, the British and French armies were split apart and, as the gray German tide rolled ponderously forward, shells from "Big Bertha" were dropping in Paris.

As the reports poured into Washington, reflecting the fears of Europe, Wilson could only urge Pershing to use his forces to the limit, a superfluous message since the General was already doing it and provided the needed extra strength that finally halted the drive. But for many days there was no certainty that it would be halted, and nowhere in America was that so well understood as in the White House. Wilson did not share the apprehensions of those who feared that a collapse of the Western Front would mean ruin for the United States. But he did see clearly that a German triumph on the Continent must result in an armed America confronting an armed Europe through an exhausting war of attrition. The prospect did not dismay him, but did increase his determination that once was enough. While the British were falling back—those who were not lying in the mud and blood of France—he elaborated his thesis of a League of Nations.

"My own conviction, as you know," he wrote to House the day after the German attack began, "is that the administrative *constitution* of the League must *grow* and not be made; that we must begin with solemn covenants, covering mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity (if the final territorial agreements of the peace conference are fair and satisfactory and *ought*

to be perpetuated), but that the method of carrying those mutual pledges out should be left to develop of itself, case by case."

He still had no doubt it would be possible to determine what was fair and satisfactory. Abandoning his old idea that the United States would not be interested in territorial and economic clauses, he had reached the conclusion that "each item of a general peace is everybody's business." As for a league dominated by the victors of the war, he believed that it must fail through jealousy and suspicion, and besides:

"The United States Senate would never ratify any treaty which put the force of the United States at the disposal of any such group or body."

With relief he saw the unified command established under Foch and heard the first notes of returning optimism as the Generalissimo organized last ditch defenses. Appeals for men and money and supplies rained in upon him, and he met them all in the spirit of a promise to Lord Reading, Spring-Rice's successor, who had been ordered by Lloyd George to explain the situation in all its naked horror.

"Mr. Ambassador, you need say no more," Wilson broke in. "I will do my damnedest."

His damnedest covered a wide range, largely in coordinating the activities of the innumerable war boards and services. He had to keep the peace between rival claimants for food and coal and steel and ships, each passionately convinced that his own needs were the most important for winning the war. He met a growing criticism of the aviation program by appointing Hughes to head an investigation. The defeated candidate of 1916, whose early fame had been earned in unearthing the truth about

such unpleasant messes, disconcerted the critics by discovering that the delay and waste and graft lay at the door of the patriotic business men who had fathered the polite fiction of clouds of planes within a year. For one of the most distinguished, Colonel Edward A. Deeds, one-time head of the National Cash Register Company, Hughes curtly recommended court-martial.

The problem of an expeditionary force to Siberia to encourage the anti-Bolsheviks, opposed by Wilson but reluctantly accepted since otherwise Japan would go in alone, brushed against the problem of an Illinois mob that had lynched a suspected pro-German. The President was struggling to stem the wave of intolerance, writing letters to get professors returned to jobs from which they had been ousted for real or imagined criticism of the government, cautiously objecting to the elimination of German from school curricula, repeating in speeches and messages the theory of a war against an oppressive regime rather than a people. He broke a strike in the munitions industry by denouncing a "breach of faith calculated to reflect on the sincerity of organized labor" and by threatening to withdraw from strikers their draft immunity. With equal brusqueness he ordered the War Department to take over the Smith & Wesson Company arms plant for refusing to mediate a labor dispute. He arbitrarily barred "all further transportation for the importation of sugar to the sugar refiner, Mr. C. A. Spreckels." That rugged individualist had declined to sign one of Hoover's Food Administration contracts for the partial protection of the sugar market. On top of the enormous load of responsibility came the sorrowful burden of the mounting casualty lists, small beside the slaughter among the men of other lands but none the less heartbreaking. Despite the

monastic discipline of his life, he grew desperately tired.

"I every day use up all there is in my brain in performing the tasks from which I cannot in duty escape," he explained, but some of the tasks seemed a little trivial.

"The day seldom sounds impressive when summed up," he told David Lawrence, who wanted to write an article about Presidential routine, "because most of the questions which I have decided come to me in the form of memoranda to which I reply in writing. My interviews and consultations are chiefly with people who need not have taken my time, and lead to nothing except the gratification on the part of those who see me that they have had their say."

For today's investigator turning over the piles of memoranda resting quietly in their folders, there seems still to emerge something of the urgency of the crises they were designed to meet. Bewildering in their complexity and contradictions, they were mastered by a man who had learned in the quiet of academic halls the secret of concentration. Among them were the reports that told of the turn in Europe. The Germans had been checked at last, and although the war was not yet won, it could not very well be lost. Bliss's fears for a 1919 campaign vanished and plans for additional millions to drive the Germans across the Rhine were pushed with gathering momentum.

The hot, steamy summer of 1918 found Wilson unable to escape from Washington save for short excursions on the Presidential yacht *Mayflower*. During these he was far from inactive, using one to study the ideas for a League of Nations embodied in a semi-official report from a British committee headed by Lord Phillimore. He was, he declared, "sweating blood" over the Russian problem with scanty information, and hearing from Assistant Secretary

of the Navy Roosevelt a plea not to be drafted as candidate for the governorship of New York. The young man was earnest about leaving his present work only for active service, and he proposed that if it came to a choice, the President throw his support to President Alfred E. Smith of the Board of Aldermen, a selection Wilson approved.

Hampered by his thousand tasks, Wilson extended his views on a league no further than the general principle. The Phillimore draft was also a little vague, but House was working it over in consultation with Lord Robert Cecil, chief British exponent of a peace league. Meanwhile Wilson found himself in the position of restraining too ardent advocates who wanted the organization established during the war, which sounded dangerously like the League of Allies that was being canvassed with some enthusiasm in France.

The French, indeed, were perking up amazingly. Under the stimulus of the aged Clemenceau's ageless energy and the invigorating news of successful Allied counterattacks, the people were reviving. They had only one fear, shared by generals who should have known better. Since the German-Bolshevik treaty had been signed, Allied military men were obsessed by the belief that Russia, merely because she was big, could supply Germany with unlimited food and recruits. Yet Russia herself was starving and had accepted the Brest-Litovsk treaty only because her armies could no longer fight. When Bliss tried to inject such a note of sanity into the Supreme War Council, he noted "a feeling of irritation."

The soldiers in France and the statesmen in America went on planning an army to knock Germany out in 1919. But while they talked and hoped, Germany already was out on her feet. August 8, Ludendorff recalled, was the

"black day" for his army, staggering in the dawn before a smashing attack to which the tired Germans had no answer. Three days later, while Wilson was entertaining McAdoo at dinner and discussing Chinese finances, the German Quartermaster General was explaining to his superiors that the jig was up. They would have to rely on diplomacy instead of the army to make peace.

Next day the contrast of events was more appropriate. Bliss was arguing for a program to end the war in 1919. The German High Command was deciding to hold its ground in France only until the diplomats could find a favorable opportunity to offer negotiations. Wilson was off for a brief vacation with House at Magnolia, Mass., where there were animated conversations about "organizing Liberal opinion to break down the German military machine." In Washington, embassies fluttered with apprehension at what these discussions might portend—even peace might come of them, rumor ran. But on a lawn in Magnolia, Wilson and his friend spread maps about them and talked of justice. Across the seas the beaten rulers of two empires were preparing the diplomatic offensive which they hoped would save what their armies could no longer defend. Shrewd, experienced, desperate, they were the first of Europe's leaders to attempt, in the picturesque phrase of J. M. Keynes, to "bamboozle this old Presbyterian."

XIII

"Autocracy Is Dead"

It was no great tribute to Wilson's diplomacy that the Germans failed; even a novice is seldom bluffed out of a royal flush. The first move was made by Austria, since it was known that feeling about the Hapsburg was mild compared to the bitterness against the Hohenzollern. So, through the good offices of Sweden, there came a proposal for a compromise peace. As the first genuine indication from the enemy of a willingness to talk reason, it attracted some support. Even *The New York Times,* one of the first papers to espouse the Allied cause, urged that it be considered, but Wilson realized the strength of his hand. He merely pointed out to the Austrians that the United States already had stated terms.

Within ten days Bulgaria threw in her cards. Wilson was on the train en route to New York when her plea that he intercede with the Allies arrived. He got the details in House's apartment, where in pencil he scribbled his reply. He would do his best "if the Bulgarian government will authorize me to say that the conditions of the armistice are left to me for decision and the Bulgarian government will accept the conditions I impose." (Bulgaria could not wait, and her army surrendered next day.) That same night, September 27, to a cheering audience at the Metropolitan Opera House, Wilson announced a refusal ever to bargain for peace with the foe, but he also told what he was willing to pay.

"The price," he said, "is impartial justice in every item of the settlement, no matter whose interest is crossed, and not only impartial justice, but also the satisfaction of the several peoples whose fortunes are dealt with. . . . Let me say also that the United States is prepared to assume its full share of responsibilty for the maintenance of the common covenants and understandings upon which peace must henceforth rest."

Whether or not the world could be made to pay that price, the effect of the speech was startling. Combined with what they knew of the temper of their own people, it led the German civil and military leaders to the conclusion that they would have to ask for terms at once if they were to take advantage of the American principles. On September 29 Hindenburg and Ludendorff so informed the Kaiser, who a few hours later made the empty gesture of offering a parliamentary government to his people. Of such expedients the Generals were impatient. They pressed for more decisive action, and on October 6 Wilson learned that the Swiss Legation had a formal request from Berlin that he personally take steps to call a conference. The German Government for its part accepted the Fourteen Points and the Metropolitan Opera speech as the basis for an immediate armistice "on land, on water and in the air." Austria, using Sweden as intermediary, made substantially the same proposal. Lodge, who lived these weeks in a fever of anxiety lest Wilson be drawn into a trap, was sure the President wanted to compromise. He and millions of others regarded such a course as treason. There had been wide approval for a recent speech in which the Senator had cried:

"No peace that satisfies Germany in any degree can ever satisfy us. It cannot be a negotiated peace. It must be

a dictated peace, and we and our Allies [Lodge had only contempt for the "Associate" by which Wilson sought to dissociate American from Allied war aims] must dictate it."

Wilson took two days to frame his reply. House and Lansing regarded the first draft as too mild—"He did not realize how war-mad our people have become," the Colonel thought. But Wilson was not the man to pander to war-mad feelings. As sent, his note was a request for more information as to what the Germans meant and a warning that he "would not feel at liberty to propose a cessation of arms" while German troops were on Allied soil. The Germans with their usual tact chose this moment to sink without notice a passenger ship, the *Leinster,* with a loss of between 500 and 600 lives.

"That sort of thing is terribly exasperating," Philip Scheidemann, new German Secretary of State, admitted in a gem of understatement.

The undertone of discontent with Wilson's reply broke to the surface when Lodge and Senator Miles Poindexter of Washington agreed out loud that an armistice now "would mean the loss of the war." Lodge was almost as belligerent as Colonel Roosevelt and wanted to march into Berlin (by proxy) no matter how many lives it might cost to get there. Actually Wilson had struck another almost mortal blow at the German High Command. Ludendorff had planned to use the interval of talk to establish a strong defense for Germany proper. Then his government would be in a position to hold its own in a conference. The "mild" Wilson note blocked that possibility. After some thought, the Germans attempted to squirm out of the dilemma.

Columbus Day, renamed in that hecticly patriotic era

as if it had been a cabbage or potato, was being celebrated as Liberty Day, and the Wilsons were in New York for it. They were just going in to dinner when Tumulty caught up with the President and House to whisper that Military Intelligence had just phoned from Washington that the terms were accepted. As they sat down, Wilson handed House a scrawled note, "Tell Mrs. W." It seemed too good to be true—and it was. The acceptance was hedged with a military clause that conditions for evacuation of occupied territory should be settled by a mixed commission. Impatiently, Wilson told the Colonel this wouldn't do. If Germany were beaten, she would accept any terms; if not, he didn't want to waste time writing notes, a diplomatic exercise of which Roosevelt was complaining the President was too fond.

The Rough Rider, his sense of timing unimpaired by the disappointments that had envenomed a once genial spirit, issued a statement which, if taken seriously, could only have prolonged the war. Silent since January on the Fourteen Points, he suddenly called upon the Senate and all leaders of American opinion to "emphatically repudiate the so-called fourteen points and the various similar utterances of the President." This aid to diplomacy, although Baker denounced it as "scandalous," did not delay Wilson's October 14 note, which he ardently hoped would be the last, asserting that the Allies would fix evacuation terms and would accept no impairment of their "present military supremacy."

Ludendorff and Hindenburg thought they could lose no more than that by fighting, although their staff pointed out that the German position was worse than it had been when the Quartermaster General first said an armistice was essential. They wrangled while their armies were

pushed back, the troops ever more puzzled, dismayed and angry. The strategist Ludendorff promised that with reinforcement he could hold out, block invasion. But there were no reinforcements, neither of men nor of supplies nor of morale.

While the Germans argued, Wilson was drafting the most inept state paper of his career. His eloquence had been hammer blows when directed at a foreign foe. It recoiled on his own head when he turned it against Republicans. He had decided to issue an appeal for a Democratic Congress on the ground that he needed his own party to support him in war and peace. He carefully explained this was not an insult to the patriotism of all Republicans, but of course it was interpreted that way, by some in malice, by others in all sincerity. That the statement had been begged by candidates, that it had been advised by such usually astute politicians as Tumulty, that it was endorsed inferentially by such business men as Thomas Lamont was no excuse. Normally Wilson was too canny to take advice as bad as that no matter what the source. But he was unutterably weary, concentrating his last scrap of nervous energy on the climax of the war.

He let himself be drawn into a tactless exposition of a truth that hurt. For of course it was the truth. Human beings are not so constituted that they gladly support a life-long opponent in a course that can redound only to his credit. Research has established that even Republican Senators are human, and Wilson had had plenty of experience of that sort of humanness, the nagging little attempts to thwart policies for which the naggers have previously been known to argue. Furthermore, he forgot that the public did not yet possess his information on the nearness of victory. Had the election come the Tuesday after

Armistice Day instead of the Tuesday before, his statement would hardly have been remembered.

On the day he completed this paper, Wilson also dispatched an equally devastating document, but this one spent its force in Vienna. It was a modification of the tenth of his Fourteen Points, now revised to read that the various races represented in the Hapsburg monarchy should be independent, not merely autonomous.

On Sunday, October 20—churches were all closed because of the influenza epidemic—the German surrender arrived. At least Ludendorff considered it a surrender, and "cowardly" at that. Others were not so sure, for it contained a phrase that the "actual standard of power on both sides in the field" should determine the armistice arrangements. Poindexter, whose military judgment differed from that of Ludendorff, thought the President should be impeached if he accepted. But Wilson had come a long way since he had thought it would be ironical if he had to deal with foreign problems. He sidestepped the last German diplomatic dodge quite cleverly. His reply took for granted an unreserved acceptance of his terms, explaining that the Allies must be left "in a position to enforce any arrangements that may be entered into. . . ." And he added:

"If it [the United States Government] must deal with the military masters and the monarchical autocrats of Germany now, or if it is likely to deal with them later in regard to the international obligations of the German Empire, it must demand, not peace negotiations, but surrender. Nothing can be gained by leaving this essential thing unsaid."

"It was a strong answer," Ludendorff admitted ruefully.

It was more. It was the death blow of the German mon-

archy. Hindenburg called it a demand for unconditional surrender "unacceptable to us soldiers." He should have said "us field marshals," for the German soldiers were at the end of their fighting spirit. They yearned openly for peace. So did some of the Americans, especially that section represented by Bliss, a general who held for war the reasoned hate that a physician might feel for cancer. He was none too hopeful of a cure, for when Baker had asked him how long the war would last, he had replied:

"Thirty years."

"But General," protested the Secretary, "it isn't possible for what is now going on in Europe to last thirty years."

"Oh, no, of course not," Bliss explained. "This particular episode will be concluded in a year or two, then the war will take on a new phase and will be waged for a little while, perhaps with economic weapons, until nations rehabilitate themselves and feel a fresh access of strength for another try on the military side. Unless all the lessons of history are deceptive, thirty years would be about the normal time for a generation that had the passion to breed this war to pass off the stage and let others come who have a new objective and a new point of view."

The General, however, was not content to accept his own dark prophecy. He thought there was a possible way out—disarmament—and on October 24 Wilson was reading a cable from him urging that the military men be permitted to settle nothing except the military clauses of the armistice.

"If such a peace as the United States and her associates have a right to demand can possibly be obtained without the necessity of beating Germany into the ground, it seems most probable that she will agree to some form of disarmament," he explained. "There will then be hope that

other nations will disarm also. But if peace comes with Germany beaten into the ground I think that it means Europe armed indefinitely to try to maintain such a peace. If a league of armed nations is then formed, the United States must be armed like the rest."

The argument was sound, but it was not one that appealed to Foch. He considered disarmament Utopian, and besides what share would Generalissimos then have in shaping the peace treaty? He and his colleagues were at this moment sharing the chief roles with Wilson and the German rulers, for the Generals were drawing up details of the armistice terms. Then these went to the statesmen, who had been joined by House. Some amendments cabled by Wilson were adopted, and the Fourteen Points came up. Freedom of the seas in wartime could never be accepted by any British Prime Minister, Lloyd George declared emphatically. Clemenceau had some French objections to other points. But House knew the value of a royal flush, too. He hinted that Wilson would have to explain the Allied objections in public.

"My statement had a very exciting effect on those present," he commented.

At that moment, as if their thoughts really did run as one, Wilson was cabling to him:

"If it is the purpose of the Allied statesmen to nullify my influence, force the purpose boldly to the surface and let me speak of it to all the world as I shall."

Next day House exposed his hand, and resistance collapsed. The objections to the Fourteen Points could not be revealed to war-weary peoples who had applauded them unless the objectors wished to court revolution. But there was a little more rough water to be negotiated. Pershing thought there was a chance that some fiery German leader

might arise to inspire his people to a battle to the death. He wanted to continue military operations until an unconditional surrender was forced in so many words. If that was not to be, he agreed that Foch's terms were adequate. It was the nearest Pershing ever came to political advice, and it disturbed his superiors a little, but it was not repeated, and when House put the point up to Foch, the Generalissimo replied:

"Fighting means struggling for certain results. If the Germans now sign an armistice under the general conditions we have just determined, those results are in our possession. This being achieved, no one has the right to cause another drop of blood to be shed."

So October slipped into November. The German lines were breaking. An ultimatum went forward to Austria demanding surrender at once, and on the 3rd Vienna signed an armistice. The terms for Germany were pushed through to agreement when the British consented to discuss freedom of the seas in the light of new forms of warfare and House accepted a Clemenceau reparations clause reserving "any future claims or demands on the part of the Allies." The Colonel thought the words out of place but harmless.

The imminence of peace unfortunately was not known to the American electorate as they straggled to the polls on Tuesday, November 5. While they were voting a Republican majority into both houses of Congress, Wilson was informing his Cabinet that the Allies had settled on the armistice and he was sure the Germans would accept. While the returns trickled in, Berlin was notified that Foch was ready to receive plenipotentiaries. And as the monarchy rushed headlong into despair and disintegration, Wilson learned that he would have a hostile legis-

lature at his back during the peace negotiations. The general verdict was that his partisan appeal had done it. But McAdoo thought it an expression of resentment against high war taxes. Lodge considered it the people's answer to "Wilson's attempt to establish an autocracy." Others believed it a reaction from the high idealism of a year and a half. A few commented that the country was normally Republican and in the absence of a Presidential election voted local prejudices.

Whatever it was, it was speedily lost to public attention, for hardly were the results generally known than on November 7 Roy Howard of the United Press cabled from Brest that the armistice was signed, a premature bit of misinformation that sent bells ringing and people dancing and yelling through the streets. Half the country was drunk with liquor or excitement in the few hours before truth could catch up with the rumor, but it was a grand and glorious celebration, and only those with hangovers begrudged Mr. Howard his scoop.

Actually that night a quartet of gloomy Germans drove slowly across No Man's Land, preceded by road menders, for a journey to the Compiègne Forest. They arrived in the early morning, and in a railway dining car furnished with a long bare table and a few chairs they were confronted by their conquerors. In Washington, Wilson was trying to shrug off the dejection of his electoral defeat, and when Homer Cummings saw him he talked more about the European situation than the new Congress. He spoke of a new world, while in the dining car at Compiègne the cold, measured tones of General Maxime Weygand read out the armistice terms. In Germany workers' and soldiers' councils, having taken over Munich, were deposing the King of Bavaria, and Prince Max of Baden, the

last Imperial Chancellor, was telling his furious royal master he must abdicate.

Next day as Red flags flew over Berlin, Prince Max prudently "anticipated" the Kaiser's abdication while that unhappy man fled, bewildered and angry, to Holland. The German delegates in the forest, uncertain and anxious and uninformed, waited for instructions that did not come. A Social Democratic saddler was provisional head of a new German republic, and Allied commanders, apparently unable to believe that the menace of German militarism could be ended, were having nightmares about a Bolshevik Reich suddenly risen up twice as powerful as before. Germans themselves were more concerned about food, and the new chief of state, Friedrich Ebert, observed Sunday by telegraphing the fidgety delegates to sign but with an oral explanation that Germany might not be able to carry out all the terms because of her weakened, starved condition. Nobody paid more than the most formal, polite attention to the protest, Foch dismissing it with a curt "*Très bien*" in a menacing voice. The big thing was that at five o'clock on Monday morning the Germans signed, at eleven the guns ended their four-year thunder and all along what was left of the Western Front men stood erect, breathed freely and walked the earth without fear of sudden, horrible death.

This time the cities of England, France and Italy joined in the celebration. In all the Allied lands the bells of jubilee were pealing and festive fires blazed to the heavens. Carnival swept half the world, but they say that Corporal Adolf Hitler wept with hysterical rage on his bed in a Pomeranian hospital.

For Wilson it was a day of work. The news reached him at breakfast, but it was no surprise. Conscious of the

tremendous task of reconstruction ahead, he could not share the people's wild rejoicing. He spent the morning preparing a message to Congress, and in the early afternoon he delivered it. He noted the thunderous applause for the armistice terms, harsh enough to gratify a Lodge. He noted, too, the silence that greeted his announcement that the Allies were all determined "to set up such a peace as will satisfy the longing of the whole world for disinterested justice." The Congressmen and their distinguished guests—did they represent the country?—were equally indifferent to the information that the beaten peoples were to be fed and saved from "madness and all the ugly distempers that make an ordered life impossible." No wonder Houston thought he look tired or ill.

The rest of the afternoon was given over to guests and reviewing a parade. In the evening he stood at the White House gates and watched the flood of celebration swirling and blazing up Pennsylvania Avenue. He was happy then, Tumulty thought. He ended the great day by dropping in at the Italian Embassy, where they were celebrating their King's birthday. But through it all, his mind was filled with the struggle ahead. Success had never uplifted him; his was a nature that saw in the moment of triumph the vast array of undefeated problems still to come.

"Well, that's over," he had said to Tumulty, but he knew that it was also a beginning.

Victory in the field was the end for many. He must achieve victory in the council, and the forces of ignorance, indifference, greed, fear and jealousy were gathering to meet him. But on his desk was a heartwarming cable from House.

"Autocracy is dead," it asserted jubilantly. "Long live democracy and its immortal leader. In this great hour my heart goes out to you in pride, admiration and love."

XIV

INTERMISSION

IN THE COLD LIGHT OF NOVEMBER 12, MANY CELEBRANTS were a little less certain about the dawn of the millennium. Much later some of them who remembered how clear it had seemed on the 11th were inclined to pick Wilson's policy apart in minute detail, and some of the fragments thus separated from the whole appeared to be greater blunders than they were.

His determination, reached long ago, to be himself the head of the American delegation to the peace conference, was labeled a mistake. But there was no one else he could trust. Had he sent Taft, Root or Hughes—there is no hint that he ever thought of such a thing—his own party would have rebelled. House had proved he was not forceful enough. Lansing, who might have expected the honor in view of his official rank, opposed the whole idea of a league as Wilson envisaged it. Besides, this was to be the crowning struggle of the President's life, and he had achieved all his successes by fighting for them. In the biggest fight of all he could not sit on the sidelines merely cheering or booing.

It is idle to speculate upon what success he might have gained had he stayed at home, exercising by remote control the veto which his prestige conferred upon him. Even if it had been possible to keep him informed across 3,000 miles of water—and a glance at the mountainous piles of

memoranda and reports he studied shows how chimerical such a hope must have been—it seems perfectly plain now that his chief function would have been to delay a settlement until Europe erupted into anarchy, chaos and starvation or slapped together a blank agreement which the strongest nations would have filled in at their leisure. The arguments in favor of this disastrous course were not unknown to Wilson. Lansing presented them in a conversation on that morning of November 12. House cabled that unnamed Americans hoped the Presidential dignity and influence would not be risked by participation. The Colonel added that Clemenceau had expressed the same opinion, which was shared in England, and had pointed out that no head of a state should be active.

"I infer that French and English leaders desire to exclude me from the Conference for fear I might there lead the weaker nations against them," Wilson retorted. "If I were to come to the seat of the Conference and remain outside I would be merely the center of a sort of sublimated lobby. . . . I play the same part in our government that the prime ministers play in theirs. The fact that I am head of the state is of no practical consequence."

He was annoyed at being classed with the King of England and the President of France. He had no intention of being a figurehead. He announced to Lansing within the week that he would not change his mind.

"I prophesy trouble in Paris and worse than trouble here," Lansing wrote gloomily in his diary.

The other four American delegates—each principal Ally was to have five—were more of a problem. House and Lansing were obvious choices. The rules of domestic politics indicated two distinguished Republicans for the other places. One of them ought to have been a Senator, since

the Senate was traditionally jealous of its share in the treaty-making process. But if he chose any save Lodge, the value of the gesture would be weakened, since "the scholar in politics" was to be chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee. The idea of taking a Senator was promptly discarded.

Of other Republicans the obvious choices were Root, Hughes and Taft, believers in a league and respected elder statesmen. Root was ruled out by his reputation which, despite Lansing's encomium, was that of an old line, hard-shell conservative. Wilson's objection to Taft and Hughes is not so explicitly recorded, but he had a low opinion of their persistence in the face of opposition. For a Republican he chose Henry White, a former Ambassador with a blameless record, a friend of Lodge and Roosevelt. He had a German son-in-law and a wide acquaintance among the old European ruling classes. To complete the commission, Wilson picked Bliss, as much for his thoroughly sound views on disarmament and peace as because it might be handy to have a military man.

From a strictly political standpoint it may have been a mistake to ignore the nominal Republican leaders. Yet the obvious political strategy is not always the most successful, and Wilson had scored some notable triumphs by flouting the rules of "the game." In this case, however, political strategy did not enter into his calculations, and he did not think that would be held against him. In 1918 he would not have laughed alone at the notion that fellows like Penrose of Pennsylvania, Harding of Ohio and Fall of New Mexico would be more highminded than he about peace.

Of course he could have been wily, taken Lodge along and jockeyed the Back Bay solon out of any share in the

work. But Wilson was not the kind to gain his ends by such maneuvers, pacifying his opponents and appeasing his critics. He was a fighter. He knew the fighters on the other side were not to be lightly appeased. Theodore Roosevelt, exemplifying the official Republican theory of how an opposition helps in the negotiation of peace, already was thundering:

"Our Allies and our enemies and Mr. Wilson himself should all understand that Mr. Wilson has no authority to speak for the American people at this time."

The Colonel overlooked the Constitution, which made Wilson virtually the sole authority to speak for his country "at this time." But in the face of that attitude, the later criticism of the President for passing over the Republican leaders hardly makes sense. Unknown at the time to the public was a revelation of what kind of colleague Lodge would have been. In a memorandum of the peace he wanted, he proposed to put East Prussia with its German population under Polish rule, exact an enormous indemnity on top of reparations, break the Reich up into the old confused pattern of German states and keep any league for peace from being linked with the treaty of vengeance. The Senator's future passion against "entangling alliances" reads rather strangely in the light of his desire that the United States join the Allies as guardians of the Dardanelles, protectors of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, guarantors of Czechoslovakia's territorial integrity. In other words he was quite willing, if it would gratify his spite, to involve his country in the most prolific sources of European wars; he was unwilling to involve it in an attempt at peace. If his program meant anything, it proposed a standing army of American troops perpetually ready to do battle in the fields of Central and East-

ern Europe. The Senator's very odd conception of patriotism and loyalty led him to ask White to make this memorandum known to the Allied leaders.

"This knowledge may in certain circumstances be very important to them in strengthening their position," he explained.

White kept the paper to himself, but of course Lodge could have had other means of communication. Wilson never heard of it, but he hardly needed the information to confirm his opinion of the Senator. He had weightier matters on his mind as the liner *George Washington* dropped down the Hudson on the morning of December 4. The river was black with tugs, ferries, excursion boats, freighters and all manner of small craft, every whistle screaming, every horn howling. The din was punctuated by the twenty-one guns of the Presidential salute from escorting destroyers, duly answered by the liner. The shore was crowded with thousands watching a President of the United States set a precedent by leaving his country during his term of office, and many of them were praying for the more difficult precedent of a peace treaty that would live up to its name.

Nine days of comparative rest were vouchsafed the almost exhausted man who had set out to lead the world down paths of justice and hope. He knew he needed them, for he did not underestimate the difficulties of his task. He put these quite wittily and frankly, his listeners thought, in a little speech in mid-ocean to the conclave of experts who were being taken along as advisers to the peace commission. He told them they would represent the only disinterested country at the Conference, and that they must use justice as the foundation for their treaty.

"If it doesn't work right the world will raise Hell," he said.

His own prescription for making it work right was a league, and the covenant of the league was more important than its organization. Absolute justice, he recognized, is not of this world, but he expressed his faith that the league would correct errors as passion and hatred subsided. Mandated territories, he believed, would give the members a common purpose and a common interest. As for war, he hoped economic penalties would replace it as punishment for international transgressors. He was not alone in thinking economic sanctions could be applied without using force. But of course he was not indifferent to the details of the treaty outside the covenant. His hearers long remembered the strong sincerity with which, after declaring the American delegation would work for the new order "agreeably if we can, disagreeably if necessary," he concluded:

"Tell me what's right and I'll fight for it; give me a guaranteed position."

He was rested, vigorous, alert when the *George Washington* slipped into Brest through a whole fleet of warships firing salutes so fast that smoke lay thick upon the sea. It was Friday the thirteenth, but Wilson had always thought thirteen was his lucky number. Cheers of sailors carried across the water in the intervals of guns and bands. Then, while destroyers steamed by in review, he received a French delegation headed by Foreign Minister Stephen Pichon. He was rushed through streets of yelling Frenchmen to the train for Paris. The capital was to receive him next day, and his car was run off on a siding so he could get a quiet night before the ordeal. So he slept and woke and came to the climax of his career.

Men said on that Saturday morning that the world's lust for war was dead. They could well believe it buried, too, under the tightly packed masses standing silently in the chill Paris streets. The rank on rank of captured cannon crowding every city square, perilous now only to boys scrambling onto them for a vantage point to watch the show, might serve as its tombstone. Its funeral oration had been preached by the man millions were waiting to see go by.

A rustle, a murmur, a roar heralded his approach, and as he actually came in sight the waiting thousands were transformed from almost dreary, colorless throngs, shifting wearily from one foot to another, into exalted and highly vocal communicants of a new evangelism. Wilson saw nothing of the stolidity, resignation or weariness that had been so evident before he appeared. No Louis in splendor, no Napoleon in the gaudy glamor of conquest, no revolutionary with a new vision of happiness, no artist with a new dream of beauty had ever drawn so great a reception from this people who above all others appreciated splendor and glamor, visions and dreams.

Yet all they saw in the spare, soberly clad figure bowing to right and left behind the pale gleam of spectacles and the wide-swung arc of a silk hat was a magnificent negative. All he represented to them was the absence of war, but it was as if one spoke to a galley slave of freedom as being only the absence of chains. They had dubbed him "Wilson *le Juste*." The title, staring largely from a placard, was lifted up before his eyes as his carriage rolled slowly through clamor and tears along the Seine, through the Place de la Concorde of happy augury into the splendid Rue Royale and the Champs Elysées, built for such demonstrations. Looking only in front of him and to

either side, Wilson had ample excuse for believing that the doubts that sometimes assailed him were the bitter fruit of an overly-pessimistic reading of history.

"People will endure their tyrants for years," he had reminded George Creel only a few days before, "but they tear their deliverers to pieces if a millennium is not created immediately. Yet you know and I know that these ancient wrongs, these present unhappinesses, are not to be remedied in a day or with a wave of the hand. What I seem to see—with all my heart I hope that I am wrong—is a tragedy of disappointment."

Paris, which contrives to be a cross section of the Western World without losing its essentially national character, was doing its best to convince him he had been wrong. Its people gave tongue to idealism, and their physical aspect bespoke a sincerity behind the enthusiasm. The background for this strange festivity was dully dark, for women and civilians predominated, and what Frenchman was not in mourning? Patches of khaki with here and there specks of dressier blue broke the solid sea of black from which the white faces, alight with new hope or faith or perhaps mere curiosity, shone momentarily as the carriage passed.

Doubts might have returned had he looked behind him with the eyes of prophecy. The dissolving crowds were scattering to more immediate pursuits—the pursuit of food in a city where an egg brought the price of a pre-war meal, the pursuit of forgetfulness from sorrow, the pursuit of fun, of gain, of a sense of security amid the crashing values of a vanished world. Nearer, even more inscrutable, was a more personal embodiment of rational doubt. This was a small man, plump and comfortable to look at but acute and angular in thought as Wilson

in appearance, Raymond Poincaré, President of the French Republic.

If the lust for war was supposed to be dead and duly buried under the weight of mankind's abhorrence and Wilson's phrases, the lust for revenge was very much alive and nowhere burned with a hotter flame than in the bosom of the implacable Lorrainer who sat beside Mrs. Wilson listening impassively to the tumultous greeting for the idealist from overseas. He too was in the grip of an idea, an idea that Germans were brutes to be rendered and kept harmless with whip and chains for the greater glory of France. That, according to his philosophy, was the way to prevent war. All he asked was a race whose arms would not weary from wielding the lash.

Wilson did not look back; it was not his habit. He drove on, uplifted in soul as only a reserved nature can be by unreserved emotion, while Paris, perhaps a little surprised at itself, roared approval. In blind admiration the spectators—their gaze so concentrated upon him that even women among them never knew what Mme. Poincaré, who sat beside him, was wearing—told themselves that he looked like the demi-god they thought him.

All through an exhausting day of dull official trivia, that somehow pitiful note of reverence did its best to inflate the Wilsonian ego until he was too tired to appreciate the incongruity of the final touch. For France had chosen to house him in one of the mansions of her own honored great, and he slept that night in the Murat palace with its gaudy reminders of an era when war had been very glorious indeed, when common soldiers could be transmuted by the alchemy of battle and power politics into kings and the brothers of emperors. That time seemed very far away, a survival of barbarism. Mankind had

come, perhaps by excessive suffering and sacrifice, to a better understanding of its needs and desires. At least so men said in December, 1918, and Wilson with the echoes of the day's reception resounding pleasantly in his ears could take added delight in the thought that he had done not a little to bring about that understanding.

XV

Victory Without Peace

THE LUST FOR WAR HAD DIED, BUT WAR ITSELF WAS VERY much alive. The thunder of the guns had stopped along the Western Front, and in the resultant hysterical rejoicing it was easy to lose sight of the dozen small but bloody conflicts that still ravaged half Europe. Thoughtless men in remote security could proclaim an era of universal peace, but Poles were fighting Ukrainians and Lithuanians, Czechs struggled with Polish "invaders," Serbs hunted Montenegrin "bandits," Rumanians prepared to loot a prostrate but belligerent Hungary, Finns battled each other with a good deal of foreign help, assorted riot and bloodshed kept scores of cities on nervous edge, and Reds tore at Whites along half a dozen fronts in Russia.

In the cessation of the larger pain, it was easy to ignore the fact that four years of a wasting disease never strengthened a patient for a serious operation. The problems and animosities that had brought on what was now called "the madness of the German autocracy" remained. It was impossible in those early days of deliverance for most men to understand that this was not the millennium.

Wilson had only to look a little way beyond the adoring Paris multitude, or even look a bit deeper into that same multitude, to see that it is easier to knock a man out than to live with him afterward. As he studied the

flood of reports, advice, complaints and lies that threatened to engulf his secretaries, it was plain that victory in the field, as he had suspected, was not enough. Like many a victor before him, he had to ask himself just what it was that he had won. The answer—a chance to effect a settlement along reasonably just lines—satisfied him because he was a modest as well as a discerning man. But it was hardly likely to appeal to the opinion of mankind, which expected a greater return for the price of the dead, variously estimated since at ten to twenty millions, not to mention millions maimed, whole provinces wiped out, whole communities destitute, whole nations and races impoverished. Nothing less than eternal peace and prosperity would be adequate compensation, and prosperity was to bulk rather larger than peace. At the moment neither could be said to exist in a world that had only victory.

The emptiness of the military triumph was painfully apparent. Even the United States, where workingmen (some few of them) wore silk shirts and owned cars, was in a slump. Soldiers were being demobilized but found jobs scarce; industry was drawing in its horns after the war boom; two-dollar wheat was just something farmers remembered when they could no longer pay the mortgage so optimistically contracted while prices had been rocketing.

From the Baltic to the Black Sea and beyond the grim specters of starvation and loot had doffed field gray for civilian clothes. Their guerrilla raids were as devastating as anything accomplished under the cruel rules of more regular warfare. In Paris, Hoover, not yet as inured to the imbecilities of politics or the baffling failures of public office as he was to become, railed angrily against a stupid or vengeful officialdom that would not permit him

to feed a hungry Europe with the surplus stores of New World granaries. The blockade, instrument of victory, still was clamped tight upon neutral and enemy alike, so that Scandinavian and Dutch children got scarcely more to eat than underfed Germans and Austrians, some of whose fathers and brothers were able to recall after more than twenty years how they returned from the front to find their families staggering from malnutrition. They forgot in much less time that when food did arrive, for many of them it was as charity from their recent foes. But Germans are not the only race in whom the memory of wrongs endured or fancied easily survives gratitude.

A greater bar to peace than starvation was even more widespread. Fear had by no means been conquered. In England, for example, it was reflected in the extremely sensitive reactions of Lloyd George. On Armistice Day the facile Welshman had spoken in language as elevated as any Wilson ever used about peace terms.

"They must lead to a settlement which will be fundamentally just," he had proclaimed with all the eloquent sincerity of which he was a master. ". . . We must not allow any sense of revenge, any spirit of greed, any grasping desire to override the fundamental principles of righteousness. Vigorous attempts will be made to hector and bully the government in an endeavor to make them depart from the strict principles of right, and to satisfy some base, sordid, squalid idea of vengeance and avarice. We must relentlessly set our faces against that."

A month later, responding to the fears of British opinion, the Prime Minister was fighting his "khaki election" on a "Hang the Kaiser" and "Make Germany pay the whole cost of the war" platform, upon which the larger issues of territorial settlement and future peace sat in

uneasy obscurity. Lloyd George was far too wise to use the silly, petty slogans himself, but he allowed them to sweep him to an unprecedentedly overwhelming (and unprecedentedly hollow) electoral victory, thinking all the while that he was being exceedingly clever. No doubt he was.

Fear of Germany paled beside the more widespread dread which the mere name of Bolshevik inspired. It did no good to point to the obvious fact that Germany was prostrate or that Russia was torn by civil war and the disorganization inevitable in any revolution, multipled in this instance by generations of misrule, ignorance and prejudice. The terribly lucid prophecies of Lenin and Trotzky, translating into plain but burning eloquence the ponderous periods of Karl Marx, were as frightening to the nervous statesmen of the West as the tales of the Red Terror. In their nightmares the rulers of powerful, victorious, and still united allies saw a Soviet revolution sweeping through the world to the accompaniment of massacre and ruin that would make the World War look like a backyard squabble.

Armies and navies, buffer states and strategic frontiers were no protection against this enemy. Buffer states might be suddenly Bolshevized. Soldiers, converted to communism by a supposedly diabolic Soviet propaganda, might turn on their masters. Of course the Western statesmen would try the very means they knew in their hearts to be inefficient. Since fear had deprived them of reason, they were incapable of applying the sensible rule that to beat an idea, you need a better idea; just as to beat an army, you need a better army. European and American democrats, mouthing liberal slogans, were scared out of faith in their own idea and soon would be baying frantically

down the ugly trail of the witch hunt, baiting the most innocent dissenters in the name of civilization. First of the Fourteen Points to fall by the wayside was the "acid test" of the treatment accorded Russia.

Companion and strongest ally of the world's fears were the world's prejudices. Many of these had seemed to fade and die before the harsh realities of war, for the all-absorbing conflict left room only for hate of Germans. Then, as had happened to every other great coalition in history, the removal of the one great menace created a vacuum into which rushed all the old prejudices of a thousand years, plus some new ones invented on the spur of the moment.

Religious sects re-discovered their ancient animosities. Britons assumed again their irritating mantle of cool superiority to all Continentals—of every continent. Frenchmen reverted to a belief that Italians were not to be taken seriously. Italians nursed old claims to Savoy and refurbished their doubts as to the essential humanity of Balkan races, whose own bewildering enmities bobbed up as fresh as ever. Poles, Czechs, Germans, Ukrainians and Balts continued to regard each other as akin to the lower animals, and they were not animal lovers. Turks and Greeks cherished mutual hatred and suspicion. In the East, the Japanese held to their view that Chinese were designed by heaven to serve a superior race ruling from Tokyo, while Chinese remained strong in their scorn for Japanese barbarism. In the West, Americans after a sentimental orgy of admiration for heroic Belgians, Frenchmen, Czechs, Poles, Slavs, even heroic Greeks, Rumanians, Arabs, Senegalese and Englishmen, donned the old armor of contempt for all things foreign.

Contemplating the sorry scene after the lapse of years,

one fact emerges. To fly in the face of world-wide misery, fear, ignorance and prejudice would take courage, even though the flier might be backed by equally world-wide aspirations. The man to whom the world turned to save its hopes from its fears had plenty of moral fortitude. It was a part of that sober common sense of his, so rare in the post-war hysteria. Less clear-sighted or less well-meaning enemies sneered at it as "Wilsonian idealism." They meant by that to contrast it with their own supposedly "practical" views, so called because a more accurate label might insult too openly the public opinion they were seeking to win from what was not only a more generous but a more intelligent program than their own.

At this stage Wilson knew that powerful forces were arrayed against his conception of a peace of justice, but he had met few of the men. House, who shared his aims and was on more intimate terms with the leaders of France and England, had warned him frequently that his future colleagues in Paris would comprise "a hostile rather than a sympathetic membership." From Lord Robert Cecil he had heard that European bureaucracies, a group capable of almost unlimited passive resistance and no little initiative in policy, were against him. Thanks to such suggestions, Wilson came to the conference with an exaggerated opinion of the conservatism if not the actual villainy of the statesmen with whom he was to draw new maps. Yet most of them longed for peace as keenly as he, hoped for its permanence as ardently, worked for its realization as devotedly, each in his own way. What they lacked was his faith and, some of them, his courage.

Their people, Wilson believed, were not so skeptical. Why else should they have so heartily acclaimed the Fourteen Points? He had expressed the opinion, not for

publication, that the Allied Cabinets did not truly represent the masses of their nations. The enthusiasm for him personally, evidenced everywhere as vociferously as it had been in Paris, confirmed him in that view as he traveled about waiting for the conference to begin.

But if Europe's governors did not represent the full measure of popular idealism, they accurately reflected other, equally powerful facets of European emotion. They reflected the fear, prejudice, greed and distrust which were as much a part of their people's psychology as idealism and hope. European children, confusing Wilson with Santa Claus, were sending him their lists of desired Christmas toys—he read and answered some. Their parents were lavish of pledges of deathless devotion, blessing America through him for food and clothing and a new belief in the future. When these same parents had more material claims they wrote to their own governments. Pathetically they relied upon an exact fulfillment of the generous, prosperous era foreshadowed in Wilson's great speeches. At the same time they wanted to grab a little something for themselves before the regime of strict justice began.

Meanwhile, with the world crying for a peace settlement, the opening of the conference, which House had expected to have ready for business within two days of Wilson's arrival, was put off until 1919. Lloyd George had his election to win. Clemenceau had a vote of confidence to extract from the unpredictable Chamber. Foch believed it would do the Germans good to squirm for a while in uncertainty and hunger. And in Washington Lodge was haranguing the Senate on the need for a harsh peace. His view was that the United States had no interest in the details and could trust the Allies to impose terms that would crush the foe forthwith. Delay, he cried, was

playing into Germany's hands. Actually the Germans were more anxious for a speedy decision than anyone else, for the blockade was still on. White, although a friend, thought poor Cabot remarkably ignorant about the actual conditions in Europe, but found the task of educating him hopeless.

So far as there was any conscious purpose in the delay, it was to let Europe get used to Wilson. In the eyes of the populace he would descend to a level a little nearer that of other statesmen when it was realized that his mere presence wrought no miracles, that food was still scarce and expensive, that war restrictions still operated, that the lamb was just as uncomfortable in the company of the lion as he had ever been.

■

XVI

Versailles, First Phase

1

Since the Congress of Vienna the world had seen no such assembly as gathered in Paris in the first days of 1919, and memory of that century-old conclave of cynical intrigue and brutal betrayal rose before the newer generation as a horrible example. Few of the men who came to Paris were the type to make a conference the glittering affair of balls and flirtations that their predecessors had romped through in Vienna. They had neither the costumes, morals, tastes nor digestions. Vienna had been brilliant with gold lace and jewels, as fair women and lavishly uniformed men moved under a blazing light of candles across polished floors. Paris had to rely for brilliance on the personalities and minds of the statesmen and their attendant experts, journalists, interpreters and sublimated lobbyists.

The city was full of such disappointments as came to a group of Britishers who, after a weary session, heard Wilson call for his typewriter so he could get their agreement on paper. The beauty of American secretarial aides was legendary, and there was a brighter air in the room until a servant marched in with Wilson's own portable on a tray, and the Englishmen learned that in the strange argot of the States a typewriter is a writing machine, not a blonde.

The army of frock-coated gentry—the monotony of their garb relieved occasionally by a gorgeously appareled stranger from some outpost of empire—taxed Paris accommodations to the limit. From east and west, north and south they came, from the islands and continents, from deserts and mountains and towns, the pick of the world's statesmanship. There were tens of thousands of them, 1,300 in the American delegation alone, but three were set far above the throng, dominating the peace—Wilson, Lloyd George, Clemenceau.

David Lloyd George was the only one of the three who showed no signs of war weariness. He had worked as hard as any, but the pudgy little Welshman, his gray hair swept back from a smooth brow, thrived on work. He was always alert, keen, happily conscious of his vigorous personality, charm and abundant energy. He smiled often, a friendly smile, for he had many friends and his whole life had been an almost uninterrupted crescendo of success. No other British Prime Minister up to then could boast of having risen from such humble beginnings as this Welsh solicitor. Luck and industry brought him to Paris panoplied in the full prestige of Britain's strong man.

Before the war he had revolutionized the British budget, his financial legislation drawing from diehard Tories such rabid cries of revolution and outrage that when they later wished to denounce Lenin they could do no more than repeat what they had said about Lloyd George. Then he had turned his talents to reorganization of the munitions industry to such purpose that only he could be thought of for Kitchener's War Secretaryship after the blunt hero of Khartoum went down with the *Hampshire*. There was a genuine popular call as well as

intrigue behind his ouster of Asquith in the dark December of 1916. Since then any mistakes he may have made were buried under the magnificence of his success.

Fertile in resource, quick in debate and gifted with a mind that saw through windings of red tape to the heart of a problem, he could sway a mob by words even more easily than he could influence a council by reason. He had the actor's eloquence, his golden voice stirring vast audiences even when what he said was platitudinous or meaningless. He was a keen judge of men, too, able to use to the full limit of their talents those he most disliked. He had actually preserved for as long as he needed it an alliance with the impossible Northcliffe, the great publisher with delusions of being a great statesman. That acute press lord was lulled into a belief that he was thoroughly trusted, but at the same time the Prime Minister was flippantly urging Wilson to take him as a free gift. Lloyd George, while flattering Northcliffe, was eager enough to get rid of him that he even offered to accept Colonel Roosevelt in exchange, for a short time. For all his optimism, gay opportunism and easy charm, Lloyd George was under no misapprehensions as to the dangers and opportunities of the peace conference. He knew that only a just settlement could prevent future wars and that more than abstract justice was needed.

"In my judgment," he had declared in his eloquent, generous Armistice Day speech, "a League of Nations is absolutely essential to permanent peace. We shall go to the peace conference to guarantee that a League of Nations is a reality."

But through the Welshman's genius and character ran a fatal flaw. Lloyd George saw too much. Only justice and co-operation could save posterity from repeating the

mistakes of 1914 and before, but his own generation might be made safe by force. He was as convinced as Wilson that only by international co-operation in which all nations would yield something of their jealously held "rights" could war be outlawed. But Lloyd George, the fiery and daring war leader, had all the courage in the world save only the courage of his convictions. He simply could not keep himself from attempting to provide for the alternative of force should justice fail. That desire to play safe blinded him—perhaps he only closed his eyes—to the fact that such timidity must cost him the advantages of either course. Force tempered by a sneaking regard for partial justice could never be a match for force exercised ruthlessly, while a partial justice relying on uneasy force, hated and feared, could never offer security.

2

Georges Clemenceau was troubled by no such double philosophic allegiances. At this time nearly 78 years old, the Tiger asked and got no consideration on the score of age. Like the big cat supposed to be his spiritual counterpart, he grew more dangerous with the years. He knew how to be patient and how to spring.

While an eight-year-old Tommy Wilson was seeing how men lose a war, while a two-year-old David George was finding a home with his Uncle Lloyd in the village of Llanystymdwy, Clemenceau, a doctor of medicine at twenty-four, was failing to find patients in New York and deciding to become instructor in French at a Connecticut seminary for young ladies. Neither occupation suited him. He had returned to France just in time for the Franco-Prussian War and as Mayor of Montmartre got his baptism of political fire in the terrible days of defeat, of

siege, of bitterness and recrimination. He had survived that time—by a narrow margin—and went on to become one of the most turbulent elements in the incredibly riotous French Parliament. As deputy and political editor he found his niche, greater at overthrowing ministries than at forming them. Zola's "J'Accuse" appeared in his paper, and his own articles in defense of Captain Dreyfus were only a little less brilliant. Fighting, snarling, sneering, he clawed his way through the tangle of coalitions, alliances and feuds—a radical without being a doctrinaire, fierce in public and unexpectedly genial in an aura of bourgeois comfort during hours of relaxation, never losing his head no matter how often he might lose his temper.

"Keep yourself always in readiness to break with your friends," he once told a younger man to whom he was explaining the elements of political success. "Otherwise you will be lost, lost. You will never be able to carry through what you have decided to do. In politics it is your friends who hold you back."

Clemenceau never allowed himself to be so hampered. Premier briefly in 1906, he subsided into grim opposition, dealing in contemptuous truths about the rapidly shifting French War Cabinets until in November, 1917, he himself was called to the head of affairs. Now the "Father of Victory," he could bask in complacent popularity, second only to Wilson as the idol of France, a triumph of personality over the traditional hero worship for victorious generals rather than victorious politicians.

Everything about him was unusual. His face was almost an Oriental mask with small eyes peering through in shrewd, cynical but not unfriendly appraisal. His heavy white mustache, his skull cap, his perpetual gray gloves —worn to conceal his claws, Albert Thomas used to say—

were the idiosyncrasies of an old man who found life full of zest and interest, who never wearied of a fight. Somewhat to his surprise he had liked Wilson at their first meeting the day after the American's great Paris reception. But the liking was modified by realization that the visitor was a more talented opponent than the narrow, sour Presbyterian he had expected to see.

Clemenceau went into the peace conference with the most definite program of any man there. The Franco-Prussian War was only yesterday to him, as to Poincaré, and a French Premier's duty was to place his country forever beyond the possibility of invasion from across the Rhine. For that a League of Nations might be tolerable, even useful, but it ought to be a League of Allies. Clemenceau's idea of how it should be framed was expressed on December 29 when he went before the Chamber to win a four to one majority on a question of confidence. He paid tribute in passing to Wilson's *"noble candeur,"* but he drew cheers and votes by announcing that France relied for her security on a balance of power —Wilson said the phrase made him sick—based on alliances. More to the point, he thought, were economic, territorial and military guarantees nicely balanced, if ever such things can be nicely balanced, to keep Germany forever impotent without driving her to madness.

"I alone was representing Continental interests," he put it years later, "against me were England and America."

Yet the old warrior did long for a permanent peace. His cynicism did not permit him to believe in men's justice, not even in Frenchmen's justice. In his days of greatest power and greatest service to his country, he had known that some of his own people, the President of the Republic not the least, were working against him, "be-

hind my back, before my eyes at the very time when I was having to struggle with Wilson and Lloyd George to conduct the war and negotiate the peace."

Clemenceau was not unique in his belief that he stood alone against his two chief colleagues. Lloyd George expressed the feeling that, in certain important features of the settlement that later turned out to be mistakes, Wilson and Clemenceau had combined against him. And at one time there was a very widely held belief that an innocent, naïve, trusting Wilson had been duped by the guile of the British and French Prime Ministers. Actually the three came to know each other well, respect each other's abilities and learn each other's weaknesses. If they had been quite as all-powerful as they seemed, the treaty might have been a more lasting tribute to their genius.

3

Around and behind them were clustered by the hundred men of fame in their own right. The generally accepted colleague of the three, Vittorio Emanuele Orlando, Premier of Italy, brought little strength to their councils and it was painful to his compromising nature that he was obliged to bring a good deal of discord. A man of comfortable appearance with white hair brushed back from a good brow and tired eyes, he was the archetype of the unconvinced liberal, doubting the value of his own beliefs. The measure of his character may be taken from the fact that a few years later he was to delude himself into an attempt to reconcile democratic principles with service under Mussolini. But he could be stubborn if driven into a corner, and he had the support of his Foreign Minister, Baron Sonnino, a shrewd, able nationalist who did not care to look beyond the horizon of Italian

interests. All Sonnino knew and all he wished to know about the conference problems was that Italy had fought for loot and meant to have it regardless of what idealistic phrases might be injected into the debate.

Among the Americans, House loomed the largest. To the Europeans he was the best known and they had found him delightful to work with. Indeed they came to like him better as a colleague than did his "dearest friend." For in Paris Wilson was seeing a side to the Colonel that had been only hinted in their previous relations—the side of a born compromiser who yielded here to clinch a point there. That was not the way Wilson did things, but he had never worked officially with his friend before. Always hitherto the Texan had been a gatherer of information and a mouthpiece. When he negotiated on his own, the results had come back only in the form of advice. It was shortsighted of the President not to realize that the little man who conformed so agreeably to his opinions was a natural conformist and generally adapted his tone to his company. This gave him the appearance of vacillation when seen at close range, although the Colonel thought he was moving straight toward his goal.

Their chief colleague, Lansing, was in the unfortunate position of a man whose power is not proportioned to his position. His admiration for Wilson's talents did not extend to Wilson's policies, and he found himself shunted aside. He was remarkably free from jealousy, but it hurt him to see his advice ignored and his most carefully elaborated theses slighted. Lansing pinned his faith to legal codes and contracts. His idea of perpetuating the peace was a legal agreement binding the nations not to go to war, "a self-denying agreement," he called it. He sincerely believed it was as simple as that. Wilson, as scorn-

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ful of Lansing's profession as he had been as a young practitioner in Atlanta, was not particularly tactful.

"He said with great candor and emphasis that he did not intend to have lawyers drafting the treaty of peace," Lansing noted.

Since the Secretary of State was the only lawyer on the commission, the remark rankled, probably more than Wilson in his weary, harassed condition ever realized. But what was plain to both was their essential disagreement. The Secretary thought at times that he ought to resign, but feared the effect on public opinion. So he stayed on, an unwilling helper, handsome, distinguished, sketching on scratch pads with his left hand the features of his colleagues while he listened and disapproved. He was a little timid in the expression of his disapproval, trying to tone down his objections to meet his chief's wishes. The result, to a man of Wilson's forceful views, was that the Secretary seemed weak, tepid.

Bliss was anything but that. The soldier, a bulldog of a man reminiscent in facial appearance of Dean West of the Princeton Graduate School but with a shiny bald head, maintained his principles more strongly than all the others put together, and Wilson paid more attention to him. White, a suave and friendly man who had not expected to play a leading role and was not disappointed, watched proceedings objectively and helped unostentatiously. He was converted by what he saw of Wilson and Europe into a belief that the President was far wiser than most Republicans knew and that a League of Nations was a better plan than he had thought in the isolation and security of America.

Many of the experts and attachés were of equal or more importance. The gigantic, shrewd Baruch, the suave

Lamont, the stubborn Hoover, Norman H. Davis of the Treasury and a host of others dealt with economic questions. Almost the entire Inquiry was on hand, a bright galaxy of academic and practical talent. Pershing was in and out for good, soldierly advice on getting American troops home from Europe. Admiral Benson gave counsel on marine problems. Any obscure point of history, language, geography or law could be referred to a ready specialist.

Behind Lloyd George stood an equally impressive array. Balfour was there with his facility and his philosophy. Lord Robert Cecil, burning crusader for the League, was balanced during part of the conference by Winston Churchill, dynamic and forthright, who proclaimed his faith in the British navy as a pacifier. The Dominion Prime Ministers were an interesting lot. Above them all towered Smuts, grim and cold and with an uncomfortable habit of being right, putting into the service of international co-operation his classical Cambridge scholarship and his reputation for backwoods warfare. William M. Hughes of Australia furnished dramatic contrast, for this deaf, dried up one-time Labor leader had turned into a jingo and a colony grabber. The handsome Sir Robert Borden of Canada held the newer ideas, and so did Massey of New Zealand, but his zeal was tempered by an itch for colonies.

Among the Frenchmen there were similar divisions. There were enthusiasts for a genuine league, men like Leon Bourgeois. There were the coldly logical Klotz, Minister of Finance, and the shrewd but not illiberal industrialist, Louis Loucheur. Pichon ably defended French territorial claims and André Tardieu was everywhere pleading French cases of every kind. In the background but

not too far to be seen was the rocklike figure of Foch, heavily insistent upon putting what he regarded as military safeguards into the treaty. Weygand was usually his representative in Paris, but always there was the possibility that the Marshal would fling some wild appeal for military security into the delicate machinery of the negotiations, and Clemenceau sardonically professed inability to control him.

A swarm of other strong and notable figures buzzed industriously. The brilliant Greek Premier Eleutherios Venizelos, too brilliant for his country's good since he had bitten off for it more than it could chew, presented his ingenious pleas and arguments, convincing his hearers that he had one of the most powerful intellects in Europe even when he could not convince them of the truth of his reasoning. Ignace Jan Paderewski, metamorphosed from the world's greatest pianist into President of Poland, strengthened the hands of the assorted soldiers, rebels and exiles who were fighting strange, outmoded wars for their country. Paderewski succeeded by sheer force of sincerity and patriotism in putting their battles in a fairly decent light and even winning support for his people as a bulwark against Bolshevism. A young but already widely-known Czech, Dr. Eduard Benes, represented Central Europe's newest and best democracy. Lawrence of Arabia, picturesque in an unusually rich burnous, came trailing clouds of desert glory and native chieftains. Baron Makino and Viscount Chinda appeared for Japan, living up to the best storybook traditions of Oriental inscrutability, silent and unobtrusive and watchful. Watching them in turn was the genial, loquacious Chinese, Wellington Koo, who to Occidentals was less typical but more popular than the Japanese.

And so the roll could be called all down the list of twenty-seven Allied states, Rumanians, Serbs, South Americans, Belgians. There were missions from the would-be states—Montenegro, Albania, Armenia, Arabia—and a whole catalogue of minorities seeking special protection—Jews in Eastern Europe, Christians in Asia Minor, fractions of most of the races of Europe who knew that they must live among traditional enemies.

4

Considering the mass of conflicting personalities and interests, the wonder is not that in six months they failed to cure the world's ills but that they managed to get a treaty at all. Progress was made only by throwing overboard preconceived programs and adopting a loose form of organization that could adjust itself, though tardily, to the ever changing problems, for the world refused to stand still and wait for the peacemakers. These decided that the order of precedence should be the League, reparations, new states, other territorial adjustments and colonies, but the schedule was not amplified in advance. That was sensible, although the French did not think so, preferring a detailed agenda that would make everything quite simple if only events would conform to the pattern. But Clemenceau accepted what his advisers considered lack of method and his hearteningly brief speech accepting the presidency of the conference ran:

"The program of the conference was drawn up by President Wilson; as you see, it is not merely a territorial peace having regard to expanses of territory however vast that will occupy our attention. It is not merely to establish a peace, speaking in the terms of continents, that we

are called together. It is to establish for all time peace among the peoples of the earth.

"This program speaks for itself. A superfluous word should not be added. Gentlemen, to our task—let us work speedily and well!"

A good deal of spade work had been done before Clemenceau made that speech. All the delegations had been busy putting their cases in the best possible light. Lengthy discussions had occupied the delay of four weeks, most of which Wilson spent in travel, speaking to immense enthusiastic audiences in England and Italy on the peace of justice. The French tried to persuade him to tour their devastated regions, but he refused. There were enough angry men in the world, he said, and he had no desire to let his judgment be warped by anger, sacrificing perhaps the welfare of the future to futile gestures of rage against the past. Instead he attended some preliminary conferences and acquired a grasp of the enormous complexities that confronted the peacemakers.

He soon learned that even his tentative outline of a program could not be followed. Neither Russia nor Poland could wait upon the League and reparations. Before the new year he was deep in correspondence about American troops in Siberia, the possibility of withdrawing them, plans for getting all Russian leaders together for a conference. Bolshevism was an expression of popular protest against "the way in which the world has worked," he thought, but no one seemed able to suggest a method for removing the causes. Wilson confessed more frankly than most his own inability except as he thought communism's spread might be discouraged by feeding the people in its path. For that reason he resisted attempts to persuade him

to make condemnatory speeches. He did not propose to denounce what he could not remedy.

Meanwhile there had been conferences on how the various nations should be represented, ending in a decision that the five chief Allies—the United States, Britain, France, Italy and Japan—would settle everything, calling in delegates of the smaller powers when their interests were involved. It seemed a high-handed procedure, but it was the only practical alternative to attempting to settle pressing problems by interminable debate in full conference. The world could not wait for that kind of a peace, even if it should be a good one at last. Some of the details of these problems also came before the pre-conference meetings. For example, Wilson saw Orlando and Sonnino for two hours a few days before Christmas with House, who commented:

"The President talked well but he did not convince the Italians that they should lessen their hold on the Pact of London. On the contrary, Sonnino convinced the President that from a military point of view Italy was pretty much at the mercy of the nations holding the Dalmatian coast."

Wilson did not stay convinced for long. Within three weeks he was drafting an earnest appeal to Orlando to use the emergence of Yugoslavia out of Serbia as an opportunity to win a friend. The President pointed out that the Pact of London had been designed to protect Italy from the Hapsburg Empire. Now that the empire was being broken up, he argued, Orlando could afford to be generous, for he would still have security. Privately Wilson declared that Italy had sought only booty on a basis of cold-blooded calculation, but he offered Orlando a way to save his face.

The Italian attitude, more openly proclaimed than most, illustrated the force of Wilson's old fears that victors could not make a lasting peace because they would not know how to use their victory. The Italians were ready to set up machinery for international co-operation, but they envisaged that machinery as a device for freezing them in possession of all they could seize before it became operative. So they clung to the Pact of London, but were not so ready to regard as sacred a "Pact of Rome" by which, after Caporetto and in a mood of doubt, they had agreed with the Serbs to "solve amicably the various territorial controversies on the basis of the principles of nationality and of the rights of peoples to decide their own fate, and in such a way as not to injure the vital interests of the two nations, such as shall be defined at the moment of peace."

It would only be confusing, as the peacemakers found it, to attempt to keep clear the various conflicting provisions of the secret understandings irresponsibly entered into in moments of despair or cold calculation. Wilson maintained that the simplest way to solve them was to throw the whole lot into the discard and begin again on the basis of "self determination" tempered by the necessary economic, strategic and geographic modifications. That was complicated enough, but the eager beneficiaries of the secret treaties had a retort if not an answer. The United States, seeking none of the territorial gains, could afford to be generous. Americans, who had suffered far less in material devastation and man power than the Europeans, should not deprive comrades in arms of some slight recompense for their sufferings in the common cause. This was illogical but appealed highly to national

constituencies, who were not so ready to applaud practical application of the Wilsonian idealism.

"And yet," the President pointed out, "there underlies all these transactions the expectation on the part, for example, of Rumania and of Czechoslovakia, that if any covenants of the settlement are not observed, the United States will send her armies and her navies to see that they are observed.

"In these circumstances is it unreasonable that the United States should insist upon being satisfied that the settlements are correct?"

Men who believed enough loot would give them better security than a league thought it reasonable to heed the protestations of the Lodges from over the water who maintained that their country was supremely disinterested in territorial settlements. Colonel Roosevelt's shrill invective was no longer added to their clamor, for he died on January 6, leaving a country to mourn the reformer, the Rough Rider, the Governor and the President, and to forget the querulous, jealous critic. But he left a legacy of hatred for Wilson that a great many Republicans cherished to the exclusion of Roosevelt's more valuable principles. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that some of their Senators screamed for a treaty at once only because they could hardly wait to get their knives into it regardless of what it might contain.

Wilson was as much in a hurry but on other grounds. He, and most others in Paris, assumed that there would be a preliminary treaty, hardly more than a continuation of the armistice, and a leisurely, less passionate elaboration of the definitive settlement. Wilson expected to tie the League into the preliminary peace so it could grow up with the new order. He also proposed to have the perma-

nent document drawn up by negotiation with the Germans represented, and the Russians too if they had evolved what the Allies could consider a stable government.

5

When the peace conference finally and formally got under way on January 12, it began to be apparent that a new world is not easy to define in a preliminary treaty. By the time the first plenary session was held six days later amid pomp and ceremony that was conspicuously absent from the real business meetings, the peacemakers had been inundated with such a confusion of claims and counterclaims that it hardly seemed possible that mere mortal men could ever get their heads above the flood. No single problem, if one could believe the pleaders, might be delayed without dire peril, and all should take precedence over any league.

Wilson stood out against this thesis. He still hoped for a preliminary treaty, but even if that proved impossible he correctly gauged the importance of having the detailed settlement drawn in accordance with the League constitution. He had a chance to illustrate this point of view almost at once, for the earliest discussions showed the need for a workable instrument of international co-operation to give effect to simple solutions.

The self-appointed steering committee of the five great powers met in the high-walled precincts of the French Foreign Office to direct the future of mankind. Soon known as the Council of Ten, for each nation had two delegates, it sat in judgment or argument or even on occasion bewilderment to grapple with the legacy of war. In Pichon's big study, walled in Gobelin tapestries depicting the more discreet incidents in the life of King Henri

le Grand, the statesmen were ranged with their backs to the fire, and across a pearl gray carpet adorned with red roses the representatives of the world's special interests marched to present their cases.

Clemenceau, tigerish qualities hidden behind an assumed appearance of bourgeois placidity, presided, curtly cutting off those who sought to exceed their time, but otherwise preserving an attitude of bored tolerance broken by an occasional sarcastic question. At his right Wilson, polite and patient, the target of all pleas, would have an expert within easy whispering range behind him. Next was Lloyd George, perched on the edge of a chair, interrupting and interrogating, a strange contrast to Balfour beside him, apparently asleep. The philosopher sat on the back of his neck, stretched his long legs straight out in front of him and kept his eyes closed, but he heard everything. The two Japanese would be silent and attentive. Orlando and Sonnino faced Clemenceau. Lansing sketched absent-mindedly, a pad held on his knee.

This was a formidable tribunal, but it was not an organization that could work out a constitution for a League. It passed on general principles and then referred them to commissions, establishing fifty-eight of these bodies, which were staffed with specialists and kept busy studying, reporting, drafting and redrafting tentative clauses for a peace. On January 25 at the second plenary session, the entire bloc of Allied nations voted unanimously that a League should be an integral part of the document, and Wilson pushed on the organization of a League Commission. It was a surprise only to those who did not know him that he took the chairmanship himself. The League, he knew, would be the part of the treaty that would perpetuate the peace, if it worked. It was the point on which

he held the most profound convictions. It was the point on which the world had come to look to him for leadership. It was not in him to delegate work like that.

At the same time he could not devote his full time to it nor allow himself the luxury of indulging his "single-track" mind. He had to be ready to take up any other problem that came along while keeping watch in the Council of Ten as a guardian of his Fourteen Points. His colleagues had not his interpretation for them. Lloyd George, for example, referred one day to "reparation and indemnity," the first mention of that thorny subject in the Council's minutes, but Wilson promptly and a little drily suggested that "indemnity" be omitted. Reparation was going to be difficult enough.

Before the League Commission could be formed, he was confirmed in his desire for haste. One of the strongest props of the League, in his eyes, would be the property it would hold in trust, so to speak, for all members. He had accepted with alacrity Smuts's term "mandate" to describe the relationship of administering nations to former enemy territories too weak or backward or undeveloped to shift for themselves. But before the League that was to control them could even be discussed, there was a concerted rush by individual states to grab some of these lands in fee simple.

Although the question of colonies had been put last on the tentative program, it intruded itself almost at once. A secret treaty—one that Balfour had neglected to send to Washington—allotted the northern group of Germany's Pacific islands to Japan and the southern group to Britain. Some of these latter had been conquered by Australia and New Zealand, and they proposed to keep them. South

Africa felt the same way about the jungle taken by her troops.

Today representation of the Dominions in international bodies is taken for granted. It did not seem so natural in 1919, and the professional lion-tail-twisters in America were bitter about what they regarded as extra votes for London, although Lloyd George often found his Dominion colleagues as intractable as any Allied Premier. They argued their case for outright annexation briskly before the Council of Ten, Hughes of Australia being particularly frank.

"Do you mean, Mr. Hughes, that in certain circumstances you would place yourself in opposition to the opinion of the whole civilized world?" Wilson demanded.

"That's about it, Mr. President," the Australian replied.

He meant it, too, but Wilson was determined to make the distribution of these spoils of war wait upon the League so that the mandate system could be preserved. The Dominions were forced to yield, but not before Hughes delivered himself of some exceedingly bitter comments in public, seized upon by the press to prove that all was not smooth sailing in the carefully veiled proceedings of the conference.

6

At 2:30 on the afternoon of February 3, the League of Nations Commission met in House's office on the third floor of the Hotel Crillon, headquarters of the American delegation. The Colonel and Wilson were the American representatives. Cecil and Smuts were there for the British Empire and Bourgeois for France, choices that showed their governments were sincere in desiring a League. Or-

lando, Makino and Chinda made the Big Five complete, but lesser powers also took part. Belgium, Brazil, China, Czechoslovakia, Greece, Poland, Portugal, Rumania and Serbia had delegates on the Commission, which met ten times in eleven days and produced a covenant.

It was not quite as simple as that indicates; neither was it the most difficult part of the conference. The idea of a League had been in men's minds as a practicable postwar undertaking for at least a couple of years. There was fairly close agreement on general aims among those who believed in it at all. The biggest split was between what might be called the Anglo-American plan and the French plan. The difference was that the French proposed to give the League an armed force sufficiently large to carry out its decisions—under the command of a French general, of course. The League was even to have power to levy troops from members, and the French dropped this clause only after Wilson pointed out that he could not accept such a violation of the United States Constitution.

On the French theory that Germany must be a perpetual enemy, there could be no doubt that a League army was necessary. But Wilson, House, Cecil and Smuts envisaged a world organization in which Germany eventually must stand on an equality of duty and privilege. An international army—in practice it could be only an Allied army—imposed upon the conquered for all time would be a permanent bar to real peace and disarmament. There were valid arguments for such a force in an all-inclusive League. They fell flat when argued on behalf of an organization from which Germany and Russia were temporarily barred. That these two must prove their fitness to join was one of the few points on which unanimity was achieved without debate. If the French scheme were

accepted, the outlaws would be bound to seek a means of defense, and in time would find it, probably in joint action that would prove disastrous to the world. The dilemma was another of the difficulties arising from the smashing Allied triumph in arms, another illustration that Wilson's "peace without victory" was a practical statement.

Against the opposition of England and the United States, not to mention the smaller powers, France's League of Allies collapsed. The working model in the commission was a composite of British and American drafts. Wilson's own share was that of editor and advocate. About the only bits original with him were use of "covenant" to describe the finished product and the phrase "political independence and territorial integrity," familiar from his speeches. Fundamentally the model was drawn from the Phillimore report, a plan written by Cecil, "a practical suggestion" from Smuts plus revisions and additions emanating from House, the Inquiry and Taft's League to Enforce Peace. The whole was drafted several times, once by Wilson himself, then by the American legal sharps, David Hunter Miller and James Brown Scott. Then Miller and C. J. B. Hurst, the British expert, combined the British and American ideas into a composite whole, and that was the basis for the Commission's further work.

The members met mostly in the evenings, and their sessions were long and arduous. Words and definitions and aims were debated and reconciled. The distribution of functions between the Assembly and the Council was worked out to preserve the rights of smaller nations without dominating the larger powers who would have to carry out decisions, a series of practical compromises reminiscent of those worked out in the United States Consti-

tution between large and small states. Innumerable details were thrashed out, including the plan for a World Court, originally opposed by Wilson in his distrust of lawyers but supported by House, who won his chief over. It was all done in the midst of such pressing problems, such chaos in Europe where whole peoples were starving and fighting, that Bliss cried:

"I wish there never had been a war—or else that it lasted longer—for peace seems to be worse than war."

During their close collaboration in this atmosphere, the relation between Wilson and House took a new turn. The Colonel was as always affable, amiable and sympathetic. Little notes flew back and forth between them with undimmed confidence and cordiality. But that utter harmony of thought, which to Wilson was the basis for their friendship and their work, was more than ever a figment of the imagination. House seemed to realize this, but Wilson did not, although he must have been puzzled by the Colonel's apparent vacillations. If he could have seen inside his friend's mind or even into his diary, he might have understood.

"Cecil and I do nearly all the difficult work between the meetings of the [League of Nations] Committee and try to have as little friction at the meetings as possible," House wrote. "The President often tells me that under no circumstances will he do a certain thing and, a few hours later, consents."

Such implied criticism was common in the diary these days. House was inclined to exaggerate the importance of his conciliatory gestures in winning agreement in the Commission and elsewhere. Furthermore he never overcame his belief that he ought to be the mentor in European relations and that he would have been able to han-

dle Lloyd George and Clemenceau far better than Wilson did. But the underlying divergence in the views of the two principal American delegates was exemplified in a remark House made years later, when the failure of the peace was becoming glaringly apparent.

"We wanted to outlaw war, make it as difficult as possible," he explained. "That's what the League of Nations was intended to mean. But no intelligent man believes that you can abolish war altogether, any more than you can crime. Keep it from paying, that's the best you can do."

If he ever put that point of view before Wilson, no record of it has been given to the world. Certainly his friend would have been astounded. For he had made it quite abundantly clear to all mankind—it was the basis of his hold upon common folk—that the League was to make war not only difficult but impossible. The nature of modern war itself already had taken care of seeing that it did not pay. But perhaps that was not House's judgment at the time. He was so agreeable that he agreed with everyone. At the time he was throwing himself ardently into the work of the League Commission, he was understood by Lansing to declare himself "entirely converted" to the Secretary's view, which was simply that the League was folly, hopeless if not dangerous.

Finally, if one may believe the Colonel's latest and most partial biographer, House held his convictions with a lightness that in a man of his responsibilities was downright frivolous. Arthur D. Howden Smith reports that in January, 1919, he suggested to the Texan that Constantinople be internationalized as the seat of the League. House is quoted as regarding this with great favor as a likely solution to what was expected to become one of the confer-

ence's knottiest problems. But he was counting on being the first United States delegate to the League Council and on inquiry learned that Constantinople's climate would not agree with him.

"So," says Smith, "he plumped for Geneva, where he had always been comfortable."

The sacrifice of a good idea for such a reason was not surprising in a man of House's temperament and habits. He had spent a lifetime avoiding responsibility and it was second nature now. But Wilson, whose sense of duty was if anything overdeveloped, could hardly fail to sense his friend's weakness even if no concrete examples came to his attention. It made him wary of committing any irrevocable decisions to his chief adviser. Lansing was a stronger character, but he was in fundamental disagreement with his President and was so remote from this phase of the treaty that he thought all the delays in fifty-seven other commissions were due to the League. It was another example of the unfortunate political conditions that left first-class minds at home or in subordinate positions in the delegation.

7

One of the first-class minds belonged to Bliss, who saw more clearly than either House or Lansing. Indeed, he saw more clearly than Wilson. The President had centered his hopes for future peace on a mutual guarantee of "territorial integrity and political independence" for all members, the future Article X, which he called the "heart of the Covenant." A great deal of the Commission's work, spilling over into the Council of Ten, had been resistance to French demands for specific interpretations of that guarantee. In the end it had to be left vague, for Wilson knew he could never persuade the Senate to accept anything

definite. (It turned out that the Senate was equally chary of vagueness.) There is evidence that he himself saw no danger in concrete guarantees, an opinion that the future history of the League abundantly justified.

Bliss shared a concern for "territorial integrity and political independence," but he realized that a mere covenant to respect them was not enough. The binding force of paper was not, he maintained, reliable. He believed that the only way to make nations safe from predatory aggression was to abolish the tools of aggression. Since the first sessions of the Supreme War Council to consider the armistice he had been preaching disarmament, to the scandal of professional brothers in arms. He had proposed to disarm Germany and demobilize the Allied armies as part of the armistice terms. A few weeks later he wrote:

"You must remember that a League of Nations will be born not only from a feeling of incipient international confidence and trust, but also from the existing feeling of international distrust. The problem would be bad enough, but not thoroughly bad, if it were a League entirely of wolves or entirely of sheep. It will be a problem indeed, if you try to make it one of wolves *and* sheep."

With that prophetic vision, Bliss came to the conference to fight for a league of sheep. Wilson backed him, for he regarded armaments as subordinate to Article X but only to that. In arguing the matter they could point to repeated declarations that destruction of militarism was America's chief war aim. She was entitled to get it if the Allies were to collect colonies and ships and cash and economic privileges. There was scattered support among the other delegations, wider support among the peoples. Opposition came from the fears and prejudices of poli-

ticians soon spread by a thoroughly controlled press all over Europe.

"It seems, off-hand, a declaration easy to realize; but it is not," Bliss noted before the conference began. "We have to hammer the idea into the minds of the world while the common people are in a receptive mood for it, or the governments of the world will defeat it. It is now, while the prestige and influence of the United States is predominant that we should do this. The peoples just now are sick of the whole thing."

In his first Covenant draft, Wilson had incorporated the principles of "arms reduced to the lowest point consistent with domestic safety." This principle had worked well enough as between forty-eight United States (except for the Civil War). Although its application to Europe was obviously more difficult, it did not seem hopeless. But Wilson had not supposed that the Poles, for example, who had suffered for generations under the heels of militarist masters, would want to rely on their own armed might for any part of their security. Yet Dmowski, the able Polish diplomat who spoke for material interests after Paderewski had struck the idealistic note, demanded for Poland an exceptional armed strength because she would be a buffer between Russia and Germany. He was unmoved by Wilson's obviously sound reply that Poland could never maintain a force capable of dealing with either, let alone both, but must rely for her safety on general disarmament.

The British were as strong as he for disbanding armies. On January 21 Balfour proposed to the Council of Ten a committee to study the problem, saying that a league "would be a sham if there is no disarmament." This was almost an exact quotation from remarks by Lloyd George

in the Imperial War Cabinet nearly a month earlier. They were all agreed that disarmament would have to begin with Germany, so the discussion was linked to renewal of the armistice, which would be necessary in February. Wilson and Lloyd George defeated Clemenceau's attempt to amplify the conditions on which Germany had surrendered, but a resolution was finally adopted—it shared the fate of many good resolutions—that final military and naval terms be drawn up and presented to Berlin in the form of a preliminary treaty of peace. Clemenceau had to accept that and House wrote:

"If after establishing the League, we are so stupid as to let Germany train and equip a large army and again become a menace to the world, we would deserve the fate which such folly would bring upon us."

The naval terms did not present the complications of land armaments, but simplicity did not help win reduction in the size of fleets. Wilson himself was not blinded by faith into setting a lone example. On January 27 in reply to a cable from Daniels that some of "our friends" in the House opposed the shipbuilding program because there was to be a league for peace, the President explained that passage was necessary to his work in Paris. He was willing to insert a clause in the contracts providing for cancellation if there should be any arms reduction, but he did not propose to give up the bargaining value of these unbuilt ships. That remained for Hughes to employ in the Washington naval limitation treaty nearly three years later.

As discussion developed, it became clear that the Continental nations were far too frightened to consent to any practical limit to their armed forces. Nor would they accept Wilson's program for abolition of conscription and

the private manufacture of arms or full publicity for each nation's strength. Against Continental timidity and despite a good deal of British support, the best he could get was Article VIII, which begins:

"The Members of the League recognize that the maintenance of peace requires the reduction of national armaments to the lowest point consistent with national safety and the enforcement by common action of international obligations.

"The Council, taking account of the geographical situation and circumstances of each state, shall formulate plans for such reduction for the consideration and action of the several Governments.

"Such plans shall be subject to reconsideration and revision at least every ten years."

Then followed a pious agreement that private manufacture of arms had evil aspects and the Council should do something about it. There was also an undertaking to exchange full information of military programs and resources. This of course was a good deal weaker than the similar aims expressed in the Fourteen Points. Yet it is worth observing that if this article had ever been carried out with a fraction of the good faith needed to make Article X effective or with half the will needed to keep Germany forever impotent, limitation of armaments would have become a reality and the real "heart of the Covenant." Furthermore, in the clauses disarming Germany there was a very definite pledge of reciprocity.

8

Up to this point in the conference everything had been comparatively plain sailing. Clemenceau had had an occasional outburst of rage over refusals to permit Foch

to occupy whatever parts of Germany he might find convenient. But the League principle had been accepted and disarmament was an avowed goal. Through these weeks Wilson had been doing an incredible volume of work. Every minute of a day that began in the late winter dawn and ended often after midnight was budgeted and busy. Besides the League Commission and the Council of Ten there was a steady stream of visitors to be seen, reports to write. He had to keep a directing hand on the entire American delegation, hear the pleas of the others and spare some time for affairs at home, exercising final decisions in important features of the complicated task of turning the government back to peacetime operation. Besides personal letters and routine correspondence, a typical collection of papers to which he gave his attention on an average day consisted of the following:

Three cables from Tumulty on domestic issues; a report from Bliss on a plan by Foch for American officers to accompany Polish troops being sent home across Germany; a letter from Hoover on relief ships; a Lamont memorandum on reparations; arguments by Lansing against a criminal trial for the Kaiser, with the views of the Japanese appended; abstracts of a plan by American experts for the Saar; a letter urging Wilson to write a kind word to Ella Wheeler Wilcox, then ill in London, because she would appreciate it; a memorandum from White giving Bratiano's complaints about the treatment of Rumania; a sheaf of telegrams on steel prices in the United States; a package of press comments from various capitals; a plea from the Siberian expedition for spare parts for Russian rifles; a request for approval of Red Cross personnel for Siberia; a notice of the release of prisoners of war in Schleswig; a report on Senatorial

speeches and labor troubles at home; assorted messages on the woes of Austria and Hungary; a summary of South American and Italian views on the peace; arguments for taking Swedish ships off the blockade blacklist; the story of a trip through Russia; a tale from McAdoo about a fellow who had a wonderful solution to the Syrian problem; an analysis of opinion in Denmark; a report from Admiral Bristol announcing the closing of the consulate in Odessa as the city was a place of great peril during the evacuation in the face of the Bolshevik advance; a report from the Inter-Allied Sanitary Commission.

Lloyd George thought the President the hardest driven of the Big Three, although his own day began at seven and Clemenceau, rising at 4 A.M. and working until 9 P.M., frequently enraged members of his Cabinet by commanding their presence for important business at six in the morning. In Wilson the strain, noticeable by evening when lines of weariness showed in his face, further evidenced itself by an intensification of the suspicion with which he regarded the diplomatic scene and a certain nervous shrinking from unnecessary contacts. He had never been an indiscriminate mixer, but his reserve took the form of dominating discussions when he was not thoroughly at ease. White, whose opinion of him rose steadily, said:

"I have noted that he is much more 'get-at-able' in conversation with one other person, whether on account of his natural shyness or what, I do not know. But certainly when we talk to him as a Delegation, he is apt to do most of the talking, whereas when I see him alone, as I sometimes do—and certainly I am always able to do so when I seek an interview—I have found him a good listener, and apparently appreciative of what is said to him."

The trait of dominating a discussion, coupled with the fact that in the Commission he was working with convinced believers in a League, enabled him to get the Covenant approved by unanimous vote of fourteen countries in ten sessions and eleven days. But hė got a bad press for it.

Reporters and special writers had flocked into Paris in unprecedented numbers. They represented a press willing and able to publish columns of material as fast as the conference could furnish it, hot off the wire, to eager readers all over the world. There had never been any such concentration of correspondents anywhere before, and there was at first no machinery to handle them. They and their editors had taken literally the slogan "open covenants of peace, openly arrived at" as meaning negotiations conducted under the eyes of the press, and the British and American journalists would have been disappointed with anything less. What they actually got drove them into indignation meetings and concerted protests. The sum total of information furnished after the first business session, the big event about which they had expected to send full descriptions and an almost verbatim account, consisted of this completely colorless, uninformative announcement:

"After the meeting of the Supreme War Council authorized to study the necessary conditions for the renewal of the Armistice, the representatives of the Powers took up the examination of the procedure and methods to be followed in the conversations to settle the preliminaries of the peace."

Naturally the reporters scented the most frightful rows behind the scenes if this was the sort of camouflage the assembled statesmen felt they had to put out to conceal their differences. Actually the full text would have sup-

plied only a dull story. Three days later Wilson commented "that what had transpired so far in these private sessions would not set the world on fire, even if it became public." He argued for more publicity and finally got it, but the press relations of the conference remained unsatisfactory. This did not bother the President, who underestimated the importance of news. He could have corrected a good deal of error by explaining his case to the correspondents, but mass interviews bored him. He pleaded lack of time, which was true, but he failed to understand that if a reporter had no facts he had to speculate on what the facts might be. That was his job. Wilson thought the writing tribe ought to wait a week or two until finished work was placed before them, and then comment as they pleased. He had never meant anything so foolish as publicity for discussion of what the terms should be, but publicity for terms that had been agreed upon.

The chief result in American papers was some rather wild stories of dissension and unkind articles on secrecy and the old diplomacy. These drew anguished cables from an alarmed Tumulty in Washington, but as a system of carefully considered communiqués was evolved, the American correspondents were more or less pacified. But Wilson missed an opportunity to win them, and through them their public, to active support of his program largely because few of them could find out just what that program was. He gave the impression of being suspicious of the correspondents and jealous of his prerogatives. Actually he was only trying to preserve his strength, but the impression of a cold, unfriendly man remained.

More immediately disturbing were the French newspapers. They were at best a venal lot. The control imposed upon them by the French censorship, unrelaxed as

yet, made them available for any sort of twist the powers that be might choose to have publicized. The French Foreign Office was full of carefully contrived leaks, so that any news Clemenceau or Pichon or Klotz wished to release appeared mysteriously in the Paris dailies. There was an organized campaign to end Wilson's popularity with the French people, and the privacy of the conference furthered this aim. The idolatry of mid-December could hardly have been maintained in any case, but positive dislike was fostered by government order. Documentary evidence that officialdom had instructed the papers to play up Republican opposition to the President fell into Wilson's hands, and he stormed:

"If this keeps on I shall suggest moving the Conference to Geneva, or somewhere out of Paris."

The attacks were modified just enough to avoid that, but malicious little innuendoes, impossible to combat, continued to sap European faith in Wilson. He, supposing this faith had sprung from the logic of his cry for justice rather than from the unreasoning hope in the breasts of common men, never attempted to counteract the growing distrust. He was sure that right must triumph in the end, and he never believed it more ardently than on February 14 when he stood before the whole body of delegates and read them the Covenant of the League of Nations. He accompanied it with a glowing little speech in which he described its elasticity, its guarantees for peace, its value in all sorts of international co-operation. Next day he sailed for home—a flying trip to tend to pressing business and the work of the outgoing Congress. He was coming back, but as he waved his hat and grinned toothily from the deck of his liner upon a small but cordial crowd gathered to see him off, he thought that the chief part of his task was done.

XVII

Washington Interlude

As the "George Washington" plunged westward across a sea made safe at last for travelers, Wilson had a little of that precious time to think, so conspicuous by its rarity in the last six years. He thought a good deal about the problems he had left in Europe, particularly the immediate problems of sheer existence. Shortly before leaving he had introduced a resolution that resulted in formation of the Supreme Economic Council. With Hoover at the head of its food and relief section, it was designed to end delays in feeding Central Europe. Hoover had been complaining that the Italians blocked food shipments through Trieste to Serbs, Austrians and Czechs. He wanted to clamp down on Italy, withholding credit from her until she became amenable.

But Wilson had revised his pre-armistice view that the United States could dictate to Europe because of American money power. When it came to the point, he had neither the heart nor the short-sightedness to try. The idea of increasing the already staggering hardships of war-torn peoples because their leaders were unreasonable was not a course he could bring himself to adopt. He realized, too, that he could not cram justice down unwilling throats along with the food. They might take it because they must, but it would never seem just to them and they would rebel as soon as they could. The arguments against driving Germany to madness applied to the Allies.

As for holding up debts as an argument, the idea of repudiation had appeared, although no one used the horrid word, in the guise of demanding that the United States balance with treasure the blood shed by the Allies. House had noted "evidence that the Allies have a growing intention not to repay us the money we have loaned them." Baruch had warned of a European tendency to jockey the United States into a position of assuming more and more of the debt burden.

But the feature of Continental politics that most deeply shocked the Americans and led many of them to a greater distrust of Allied aims than perhaps was quite fair was the callous attitude toward the defeated. Relief for the starving was something Republicans and Democrats could agree upon. Hoover's great popularity was based on the efficiency with which he gave away food. The people back home, with enormous surplus stocks of grain, were eager to feed the world. Americans in Paris shared Hoover's fury that the French, who were not in a forgiving mood, blocked his every effort to get bread and milk to the Germans, although that had been promised in the armistice three months before. Wilson's thought on this subject on the way home inspired a radio message to Carter Glass, who had become Secretary of the Treasury when McAdoo resigned to run the railroads, to find $25,000,000 for relief and allow the money to be spent outside the United States if that proved essential to speed.

He had time to think over the Russian situation, which still confused him. Among his colleagues in Paris he was actually called pro-Bolshevik, a designation at which the real Bolsheviks, swept by the torrent of revolution toward the impossible goal of a socialist island in a capitalist world, would have hooted. The basis for the charge was

that Wilson was willing to deal with the Soviet regime as a de facto government. In this he had the support of Lloyd George, even against the advice of the Welshman's good friend and supporter, Churchill, whose "ducal blood," as the Prime Minister put it, "revolted against the wholesale elimination of Grand Dukes in Russia." There had been a good deal of debate in the conference with Lloyd George and Wilson insisting that the Russians had a right to their revolution and their choice of a government. Both men were sufficiently contemptuous of communist philosophy that they doubted its ability to sweep their people into the same sort of uprising. Both were demanding withdrawal of Allied troops. But Clemenceau threatened to resign if any Bolshevik were invited to Paris, and every other country recoiled in horror from the British suggestion that one of its cities might be the scene of a conference.

"It was as if I had proposed that we should invite a delegation of lepers from the stricken isle of Molokai," Lloyd George recalled, but he did not ask them to London.

The fear of Bolshevism was very like the fear of a plague, and all Continental rulers were uneasily aware that their people were going through hardships that made them susceptible to communist propaganda. The Allies would only agree to let their emissaries meet the representatives of all Russian factions under a sort of quarantine at Prinkipo in the Sea of Marmora. Wilson himself drew up the eloquent public invitation in which the nations represented at Paris expressed a desire to be of service in bringing peace to a great country and disavowed any wish to interfere internally. The Soviet leaders were not unnaturally suspicious, and refused to treat. They

declared they already were the government of Russia. They did not intend to discuss anything with rebels and bandits under foreign arbitration, particularly arbitration by powers already in arms on the side of the same rebels and bandits. That ended the prospect of negotiation.

But the British Prime Minister took advantage of Wilson's absence to go home and do a little fence mending himself. While he was gone, Churchill swept the conference into a mood of firm intervention. House wirelessed a warning and Wilson replied from mid-ocean that he would not be led any further into "the Russian chaos." The only course he would agree to was speedy withdrawal from Siberia. But the British delegation already had squelched Churchill and the policy of letting Russia severely alone—highly unsatisfactory but better than armed intervention—was permitted to go forward, albeit with interruptions.

On the day that Wilson was taking this stand, he was definitely replaced as the hero of Paris by Clemenceau. The Tiger was shot twice by a French anarchist—both wounds were slight—and the whole capital was in a frenzy of rage on the old man's behalf and of admiration for the sturdy insouciance of his first remark:

"The animal shoots well, but it is nothing."

All the same, Clemenceau had to lick his injuries in bed for a few days, and the *George Washington* steamed on. Her passenger, who had been allowing his thoughts to dwell on the scarcely touched problems of the conference—the Rhineland, reparations, boundaries of new states, Italian claims, French claims, Rumanian, Serbian, Greek, Belgian and Japanese claims—turned to the enemies who were waiting for him in the New World. He had proposed that his Senatorial critics restrain them-

selves until he could get back, have the Foreign Relations Committee in for dinner and explain the League to them, for as yet they had no authoritative information on which to base opinions. The dinner had been one of House's conciliatory ideas; the only trouble was that he was not on hand to do the conciliating, having been left in Paris as chief American delegate.

Lack of data was no handicap to the sturdy isolationists of the Senate. Some of them found it an advantage. Lodge, to be sure, heroically kept silent, feeling "as a gentleman and man of honor that having accepted the invitation to dinner I should comply with his request." But Poindexter and Fess of Ohio were denouncing the League in Senate speeches and Jim Reed of Missouri was shouting "infamous" all up and down the countryside. Wilson decided they ought to be answered at once, and arranged to address a meeting in Boston, where he was to land—"my own city," Lodge complained bitterly, ". . . while I am reduced to silence because I wish to observe what I think is required of an honorable man." Lodge thought Boston was picked just to spite him. The real reason was to avoid a New York welcome by Mayor Hylan's reception committee, for William Randolph Hearst was a member and Wilson refused to meet him.

The novel spectacle of a Senator silenced was not fully appreciated, certainly not by Wilson, who was tapping out on the back of a sheet of ship's stationery, just like any tourist, the notes for his speech. It did Lodge no harm in his constituency, being merely a general appeal for a League to implement the peace. Wilson attacked no man, named no names, but warned that the alternative was a world plunged once more into hatred, jealousy and despair. He spoke and took the train for Washington

where the next evening, February 26, he gave a dinner party.

Covers were laid for thirty-six in the State Dining Room of the White House, but that did not represent the full membership of the Senate and House Foreign Relations Committees. The diehard isolationist Borah refused to come, and an equally bright ornament of Republican statesmanship, Albert B. Fall, also was absent. Lodge, as the senior guest, escorted Mrs. Wilson, and after dinner the guests adjourned to the East Room.

"I thought the President appeared extremely well," wrote Representative John Jacob Rogers, a Republican. "He submitted himself to quite rigorous cross-examination for two hours, answering every question, easy or difficult, as freely as possible and with apparent candor. He showed not the slightest vexation, even when Senator Brandegee was pressing him rather closely on certain of the difficulties which in his mind were of importance. I never saw Mr. Wilson appear so human or so attractive as that night. There was no suggestion of a feeling of militant arrogance about him. . . . But some of the Senators there that night thought he was not at all adequately informed. As I said, my own impression was quite the opposite."

Two of the Senators, the two most important ones, Lodge and Knox, a former Secretary of State, sat perfectly silent, refusing to ask any questions, offer any recommendations, state any objections. Rogers is evidence that Wilson kept his temper admirably. But two days later in the bosom of his own party, before members of the Democratic National Committee, who had been invited to the White House for a pep talk on the League, he cut loose.

"The President, if my experience is a standard," he said, "is liable some day to burst by merely containing restrained gases."

He was pretty nearly at the bursting point, and he said in part:

"There is nothing I would like to do so much as really to say in parliamentary language what I think of the people who are opposing it [the League]. . . . Because of all the blind and little, provincial people, they are the littlest and most contemptible. It is not their character so much that I have a contempt for, though that contempt is thoroughgoing, but their minds. They have not even good working imitations of minds. They remind me of a man with a head that is not a head but is just a knot providentially put there to keep him from raveling out, but why the Lord should not have been willing to let them ravel out I do not know, because they are of no use. . . . If I did not despise them, I would be sorry for them.

"Now I have sometimes a very cheering thought. On the fifth of March, 1921, I am going to begin to be an historian again instead of an active public man, and I am going to have the privilege of writing about these gentlemen without any restraints of propriety. . . . Anybody in the Senate or House can say any abusive thing he pleases about the President, but it shocks the sense of propriety of the whole country if the President says what he thinks about them. And that makes it very fortunate that the term of the President is limited, because no President could stand it for a number of years. But when the lid is off, I am going to resume my study of the dictionary to find adequate terms in which to describe the fatuity of these gentlemen with their poor little minds . . ."

His hearers thought he had done pretty well without any special study of the dictionary, but they listened to more than abuse. Wilson urged them to get together with Republican state organizations to propose an agreement that would prevent the treaty from becoming a party fight, "because, believe me, gentlemen, the civilized world cannot afford to have us lose this fight." He analyzed the League and declared it was "as near being a guarantee of peace as you can get." He noted in answer to demands for a clause permiting withdrawal that he was the only man in Paris who had not believed any member could quit the League. He pointed to the glory of Article X. He expressed his faith that the people of the country would give a triumphant welcome to the new idea, but he urged his politically sensitive listeners to forget politics, forget elections, work for the League.

"I cannot imagine an orator being afforded a better theme, so trot out your orators and turn them loose," he cried with something of young Tommy Wilson's faith in the power of the spoken word, "because they will have an inspiration in this that they have never had before."

In his few days at home, Wilson was able to see how far the country had returned to normal and how far it still had to go. The most obvious sign of the end of the war emergency was a Senate filibuster which kept appropriation bills from passing. Republican solons were crying against administration "dictatorship," like Lodge, or like Knox who, recovering his voice after the White House dinner, shouted that the League was "a betrayal of the people," a phrase that came fluently if meaninglessly from the lips of Andrew W. Mellon's pet lawyer. Of course their very outcry proved the folly of the "dictatorship" yell. Dictaıors, as the world would soon learn, have a short

and highly unpleasant way of dealing with recalcitrant politicians.

Wilson, watching the antics of his foes, could take comfort in the thought that the "crisis government" which any nation needs if it is to fight a war successfully was being liquidated. American democracy was proving its vitality by emerging slowly from the fog of self-imposed authoritarianism, borne cheerfully enough on the whole during actual hostilities but now becoming intolerable. There was still to be some highly obnoxious (but not, unfortunately, highly unpopular) Red-baiting by the Quaker Palmer, soon to be Attorney General. His pacifism did not extend to scruples against hunting down economic or social dissenters. Burleson's censorship wound on its arbitrary way. But for all these flaws, the Wilson administration proved that the forms of crisis government could be relinquished voluntarily. To a generation that has seen these regimes rise in time of peace and then by their very nature create the crises they are equipped to handle, this relaxation of control may well seem the most notable of achievements. In 1919 and 1920 men accustomed to exercising great power fairly free from bureaucratic or democratic restraints were surrendering it back into the hands of responsible authority. Democracy was strong enough to reassert itself, imperfectly to be sure but with vigor.

One of the imperfections, as Wilson saw it, was the prohibition amendment, which he signed at this time. He had always argued that liquor was a matter for state regulation, and he had preserved a strict neutrality, strongly condemned by the Anti-Saloon League, during the debates in Congress. Although he was obliged to put his name on the Eighteenth Amendment, he was trying to find legal means to end wartime prohibition, but the law stipulated

that it was to be effective until demobilization was complete. With a million or more men still under arms, he could hardly justify the necessary proclamation and had to let the country drift along to the incredible experiment.

Another unlovely manifestation of the democratic process was being enacted as the lame duck Senate talked its way out of existence. Brandegee, a tricky Yankee and a clever machine politician, evolved the idea of a round robin to be signed by enough Senators of the next Congress to make treaty ratification impossible. Knox drafted the thing in the form of a resolution declaring it the sense of the Senate that the League as then constituted was inacceptable, that peace should be made at once and the League left to future negotiation. They got thirty-seven signatures by the time Lodge read this into the record—it never had a chance of passage or even consideration—just before midnight on March 3. They got two more signers later, and the total was more than enough to defeat any treaty, even without Senator-elect Truman Newberry of Michigan, who had spent too much for his seat to be allowed to take it.

Within twenty-four hours Wilson took up the challenge. He was as sure as he could be that the thirty-nine did not represent the people's opinion. Indeed, as the political battle developed, the thirty-nine did not think so either. All reports to the President indicated that the country was still overwhelmingly in favor of the ideals for which, he had so often proclaimed, they had fought. On March 4, as he drove through cheering crowds to the Metropolitan Opera House in New York, the impression was confirmed. He heard Caruso sing "The Star-Spangled Banner" on the great stage, and then he marched out

arm in arm with Taft to be greeted with tumultous applause. Both men were smiling, for they were in pretty close agreement, but the President looked worn and gray and tired beside his companion's ruddy robustness.

Wilson had asked his predecessor for comment on the Covenant, and Taft had approved thoroughly but said that certain additions would cut the ground from under American opposition. He suggested a specific safeguard for the Monroe Doctrine, specific provision for withdrawal, a requirement of unanimity in the Council before action could be taken against any state, and a bar to consideration of exclusively domestic matters such as tariffs and immigration. Wilson was willing, so willing that in three of these points he used Taft's exact language in pushing through amendments to the Covenant, and the meeting at the Metropolitan was a League love feast with the popular Governor Al Smith introducing the two chief speakers. But Wilson interrupted the note of complete cordiality to pay his respects to the thirty-nine Senators, declaring hotly:

"When that treaty comes back, gentlemen on this side will find the Covenant not only in it, but so many threads of the Treaty tied to the Covenant that you cannot dissect the Covenant from the Treaty without destroying the whole vital structure."

This was defiance, not argument, but the crowd cheered and Taft beamed and whistles tooted, and in a few hours the *George Washington* was slipping down the harbor carrying a weary warrior back to the war for peace.

XVIII

Versailles, Second Phase

1

The tilt with the Republican opposition was no more than a mild foretaste of the battles Wilson must face in Paris. First of all, he would have to get amendments to meet the objections of professed League supporters, tenuous as these objections seemed to him. But that would be only the beginning. He would have his guarantees for the peace, but the peace worth guaranteeing was still to win.

In working out the details, the negotiators were both hampered and helped by the fact that the settlement was not embodied in a single treaty. Agreement on the fate of Germany was possible much more rapidly than if final distribution of the Hapsburg Empire, dismemberment of Turkey and reduction of Bulgaria had had to be included. On the other hand, the unfinished business with Germany's allies rose at intervals to plague the peacemakers. The uneasy fragments once held in subjection to Emperor and Sultan were by no means content to wait until their liberators and mentors got around to them. Their delegates were in Paris, early and often. News of battle and riot, starvation and boycott came out of them with depressing regularity and increasing urgency, while Italy, in a position of influence at the center of negotiations,

kept interrupting with awkward questions about Austria.

Wilson, under the careful professional care of Dr. Grayson and the devoted attention of Mrs. Wilson, used his nine days at sea to store up rest and strength for the ordeal. For a man of sixty-two who had not enjoyed robust health for many years, he displayed excellent recuperative powers. Some of the lines were smoothed from his face, the gray of his skin was replaced by a healthier tint and the weariness of manner into which he had relapsed after periods of tension vanished. But his trip did not mellow him. House, who came down to Brest in filthy weather to welcome the traveler, found him looking fit but talking bitterly.

"Your dinner to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee was a failure as far as getting together was concerned," he told his friend.

House tried to soothe him, saying the people would like the spirit he had shown. But the anger may not have been meant entirely for the Senators. The Colonel, who had cabled a daily report, elaborated at this meeting on the progress or lack thereof during Wilson's absence, and the President listened without comment. Later, however, Mrs. Wilson found him as thoroughly enraged as she had ever seen him, and he burst out:

"House has given up everything I had won before we left Paris. He has compromised on every side, and so I have to start all over again, and this time it will be harder, as he has given the impression that my delegates are not in sympathy with me. His own explanation of his compromises is that, with a hostile press in the United States expressing disapproval of the League of Nations as a part of the treaty, he thought it best to yield some other points

lest the conference withdraw its approval altogether. So he has yielded until there is nothing left."

This was hasty and exaggerated, although the diplomat White had distrusted the Colonel's genius for compromise in recent weeks and more than once interceded to smooth relations after Bliss's more forthright expressions of the same feeling. House had done nothing irrevocable, but in an effort to speed things so decisions would be ready for his chief he had endangered the idea of a preliminary peace and of the League as an integral part of the treaty. At least Wilson thought so. Certainly the optimistic resolution for settling military and naval terms at once so that armies could be demobilized, adopted before he went home, had been allowed to drag on more slowly than it should. Then it had been smothered in a complementary resolution that the preliminary peace should also include Germany's "approximate future frontiers," reparations, economic clauses and "responsibility for breaches of the Laws of War."

In agreeing to this, House believed he was hastening the work of the conference, and anything that moved Europe a little faster toward peace was highly desirable. But he had made a preliminary treaty impossible because the questions whose answers the resolution called for were exactly those complicated problems that needed time for consideration and debate.

But Wilson had other grounds for anger. The Colonel had allowed himself to be understood by Lloyd George as saying that Wilson was "very interested in" the favorite French plan for a Rhineland Republic under Allied auspices and bayonets, a flagrant violation of the Fourteen Points or any other principle of justice. Nor was the Texan as vigilant as Wilson when Lloyd George lightly

heaped indemnity upon reparations, explaining that if the first had to wait upon the second, Britain might get nothing. It was proposed therefore that German payments be earmarked, three parts for reparations to two for indemnity. Clemenceau shied, but the amiable House, said Lloyd George, "thought that it was a very fair plan and he afterwards repeated this observation." Yet nothing was further from Wilsonian doctrine than indemnity, even if it could be collected.

Finally, the President permitted himself to be swayed by rumor. There was on his arrival in France a widely credited report that the League was to be sidetracked. It was not based on anything tangible, but Wilson, already worried by other evidences of his friend's complaisance, feared that House had been "conciliated" into yielding this, too. Although it had not happened, Wilson on the day after his return announced that the January decision to put the Covenant in the treaty "is of final force."

His outburst against House was never repeated in public, nor to its object. With all his resoluteness in a fight for principle, Wilson shrank from the unpleasantness of personal rows. Some of the delegates sensed a lessening of cordiality in his attitude toward his friend, but the Colonel himself seemed unaware of any change. He remained at the President's right hand while the theory of peace through genuine international co-operation came into head-on collision with a plan for peace through destruction of former enemies.

2

The military men had proposed armaments for Germany sufficient to justify her neighbors in keeping large forces on foot. But to prevent aggression from the Reich,

a complicated, burdensome, perpetually irritating and humiliating set of Allied commissions was to be imposed to pry into various phases of German life. Foch would have preserved the importance of his class by allowing Germany to raise 200,000 conscripts for one year's training. He took the stand that the ten-year total of 2,000,000 men would be less formidable than 100,000 men kept in service for ten years and able to serve as non-commissioned officers of a vast undrilled army.

The British, except for a few staff officers, liked Foch's plan as little as Wilson, and they had little difficulty in getting it squelched. But schemes for weakening the ancient enemy were not so easily driven from French minds. Even before he went away, Wilson had seen that his hosts were going to be difficult about Germany's western border. Clemenceau had no faith at all in a League as protection against invasion, and he was among the most reasonable, least frightened Frenchmen. He spoke almost the literal truth when, asked by Lloyd George if there were not some "conciliatory" type of Frenchman available for a certain task, he tapped his chest and replied:

"Only myself."

On the question of security even Clemenceau was a fanatic. If he had not been, he could not have remained Premier. Poincaré, who was to hound him from office in the end, sat watchful at the Elysée, egging the delegates on to vengeance and threatening a quick political demise for any French minister who dared show leniency. The implacable Lorrainer had popular support to lend to his demands a weight not usually associated with his office. His vindictive spirit was hardly the guide to any peace of justice.

"He had the logical mind," said Lloyd George, "which,

starting from false or incomplete premises, always arrives unerringly at the wrong conclusion."

Wilson was not that philosophical. Poincaré was the embodiment of all the narrow poisonous hatreds that made the American's work at once necessary and impossible. It may well have been of this period of the conference that he was thinking when more than three years later he burst out at the mention of Poincaré's name:

"He is a cheat and a liar."

The task of applying "self determination" and the "consent of the governed" to Germans in the teeth of such men was not one for the timid to undertake. Yet, considering only the preference of local populations, the boundary between France and Germany was one of the easiest in Europe to draw. Except for the Saar, whose coal was held necessary to France to replace mines destroyed by the invaders to cripple French industry after the war, Clemenceau did not ask for the annexation of any considerable German area. But he did propose to set up an "independent" Rhineland Republic, independent of Germany, that is. The Reich proper would be halted at the Rhine. The provinces on the left bank would be put under Allied tutelage. Not only would they hate this as oppressive, but their natural and fostered economic ties would be cut. It would be years if ever before their trade and industry could be reshaped to fit the French orbit. But it would be a blow from which German prosperity would suffer as long as separation continued; it would in effect give France the Rhine as a frontier at which to halt any future German invasion; it would be a greater hardship than Germany meant to inflict upon France; it would, in Wilson's view, be one of the most likely causes of another war that the ingenuity of man could devise. He set

his jaw and flatly refused to agree to splitting off German states, writing some forthright indignant letters when the French attempted to instigate an artificial rebellion in occupied territory. He also rejected French annexation of the Saar, although recognizing the French claim to the coal.

He had to fight on more than one front. The French demands were joined to extravagant claims for Poland—supported eagerly by Clemenceau and opposed more strenuously by Lloyd George than by Wilson—and to Foch's unpleasantly Napoleonic plan for invading Russia. With lordly indifference to the cost of such an enterprise, the Marshal outlined a campaign that involved taking a monstrous Allied army right across Germany into the heart of Russia to bring the Soviet to heel. France could not begin to finance the mad scheme, the British and Americans would not. But Frenchmen seemed to think they should be rewarded for renouncing this insanity by being permitted to dismember Germany, physically and economically. Day after day the Council of Ten went over and over the same ground. The history of France's losses and dangers was rehearsed voluminously in answer to the repeated expositions of the safeguards and material benefits she would derive from the new order. Wilson, Clemenceau and Lloyd George wrangled through hours upon hours of fruitless circling in the same verbal woods. Into their discussions Orlando injected worried interpolations about Austrian terms, out of which Italy expected to get her winnings. He feared that if the German treaty were settled speedily, his own claims would be left to a vague and uncertain future.

The Council of Ten was a crowded forum for this sort of debate. There were often fifty or sixty men in the room,

what with experts and observers, and there were leaks among them. Distorted versions of the quarrels trickled out to the newspaper-reading world. When there were no distortions the leaks were even more disconcerting. As the grass turned green in the formal gardens of the Quai d'Orsay and the sentry on the flat roof of the Crillon paced his rounds with sprightlier tread in recognition of the springlike air, the real business of the conference was transferred to a Council of Four—Wilson, Clemenceau, Lloyd George and Orlando—so secret that there was no American secretary to take the minutes, that being left to the discreet Sir Maurice Hankey.

The first result was that tempers were lost more frequently, violently and picturesquely. One morning Clemenceau went so far as to call Wilson "pro-German" and stalked away. The President summoned his experts to help work out a solution that would be fair to France, yet not outrage justice.

"I do not know whether I shall see M. Clemenceau again," he added. "I do not know whether he will return to the meeting this afternoon. In fact I do not know whether the Peace Conference will continue."

But he wanted information just in case, and then he went for a long drive in the Bois to let his own temper cool. Of course Clemenceau did return, and that afternoon Wilson put his case once more. The meetings of the Four were held in his study at the little palace of the Bischoffsheim family, an ornate town house with an excellent art collection, with French sentries outside in the Place des Etats-Unis and American sentries inside. In their more amicable sessions, the Four were known to spread maps on the floor and crawl about among them on hands and knees debating doubtful frontiers. But this afternoon Wil-

son stood on his feet, pleading so earnestly, so wisely and so eloquently for justice and reasonableness that the Tiger sheathed his claws and, obviously moved, purred gently:

"You are a good man, Mr. President, and you are a great man."

He was not so moved, however, that he relaxed his demands on the Rhineland, where Allied troops were already being billeted, and the arguments went round and round again until once more Clemenceau exploded into wrathful expletives.

"Then if France does not get what she wishes, she will refuse to act with us," Wilson interpreted the outburst. "In that event do you wish me to return home?"

"I do not wish you to go home, but I intend to do so myself," Clemenceau retorted, and stamped out.

Their behavior may appear a little childish since they were dealing with the fate of half the world and more. But no men can be everlastingly Olympian, and the Four were, one is tempted to say, exceptionally human. They were also under terrific strain. Every day there came to them news of the latest disasters—wars, riots, governments tottering, peoples crying for food, three-fourths of Europe disintegrating into chaos while they talked. Around them stormed the advocates of every reform and every case, good, bad or indifferent, mad or sane. The Four were truly, as Lloyd George very feelingly said, working with "stones crackling on the roof and crashing through the windows, and sometimes wild men screaming through the keyholes."

As if there were not enough of these last, additional screams were being re-routed across the Atlantic from America, many of the shrillest being condensed for easy reading by Tumulty. The resistance to French demands

was no secret to the French press, and the papers retaliated with scathing attacks that were reflected in American opinion. The United States could not easily give up the war vision of a gallant and all-suffering France for whom humanity could not do enough. There was emotional, sentimental support for Lodge's desire to let the French crush Germany.

Even the League was blamed for delays that were due mainly to the deadlock in the Council of Four and not at all to the commission through which Wilson was steering amendments to meet American objections to the Covenant. This was done in five sessions, the Europeans finally yielding virtually all the points men like Taft and Root had urged. Those five meetings, furthermore, were held at times that did not conflict with other conference business, but the theory of delay was so firmly fixed that when Wilson sought to dispel it, Lansing virtually called him a liar.

"Why attempt to refute what is manifestly true?" the Secretary demanded of his diary.

How completely Lansing was in the dark may be seen from reading the then unknown tale of Council bickerings side by side with the comparatively harmonious discussions of Covenant amendments.

3

Hagged out of all peace of mind and driven so hard that he often kept two groups of conferees going at once in adjoining rooms, darting back and forth from one to another, Wilson soon dissipated the strength stored up during the Atlantic crossing. Evening visitors found him haggard, gray of face, the muscles around the eye that had been temporarily blind in Princeton more than

twenty years before twitching convulsively. A night's rest seemed to restore him, but each day's work and fret drained a little more of his reserves of health.

On April 2 he was almost ready to accept the terrible consequences of a clean break. That day he spoke in confidence of abandoning the negotiations altogether if he could not get his principles recognized within a week. The deadlock was worse than a confession of failure. The tide of communist revolt was rising in Hungary and Bavaria. Hoover was raging against the French for refusing to permit food to get into Germany. Italians were battling Yugoslavs along the Dalmatian coast, and Orlando was complicating the Rhineland problem with demands for the port of Fiume, not even assigned to Italy in the Treaty of London, and declaring that he could only regard the Croats and Slovenes as successors to the enemy Austria, not partners of the ally Serbia.

On April 3 the Four went over the weary business once more, but that evening Wilson was more than tired. Dr. Grayson, who had thought him looking well at three in the afternoon, found him with a fever of 103 and coughing violently by six. The Doctor, with the suspicion that had been growing on all Americans in Paris during these weeks, at first feared that the Presidential food had been tampered with. He was somewhat relieved to be able to diagnose influenza, but it looked for a time even more serious and Grayson called that night "one of the worst through which I have ever passed."

The danger was over in the morning, but there could be no question of getting out of bed or working at the usual conference pace. The most Grayson would permit was a daily visit from House, who was promptly called upon by the President to take his place in the Council

of Four—ample evidence that his sense of betrayal had been removed, although disappointment lingered. So House had his chance to show how well he could handle Clemenceau and Lloyd George. He was so confident of his prowess that he assured reporters that "peace could be made in an hour." But not on American terms. Every day the Colonel listened to an elaborate revision of the French thesis, but the more the phraseology was twisted, the more the meaning was the same. Every evening when House came to the sickroom to read out the latest formula, the patient shook his head.

Lying in a charmingly decorated bedroom with the Four arguing on the other side of the wall, Wilson was making up his mind to a bold stroke. He would find out once and for all if the diehards at Clemenceau's back really would wreck the conference on the issue of their untenable demands. His own appeal to reason and justice and the world's hopes of peace had been as great a failure as Lloyd George's efforts to laugh Clemenceau into a yielding frame of mind by playful letters in which he shrewdly listed the enormous French gains. The virulent French press supported the most intransigent French politicians, but that there was another French public opinion was evident in such little touches as the arrival of a pair of stockings knitted for Wilson by the widow Kolb.

"There are thousands of stitches," she wrote in her cramped French hand, obviously more accustomed to the needle than the pen, "and each stitch says 'Thank you!' "

Wilson moved as soon as he was able to stand. The speed of his recovery astonished even Grayson, and on April 7, with the lucidity that so often follows fever, the President gave the peace conference its biggest shock. He sent orders that the *George Washington*, then in Brooklyn

for repairs, sail for Brest at once. It was a plain ultimatum that he intended to go home forthwith. The obvious sequel to that would be a separate peace between Germany and the United States.

On the main issue the French surrendered at once. They had held out to the limit of their power, and in doing so had worn down their more clear-sighted American and English colleagues. Clemenceau won some apparent concessions that were to prove worse than illusions, for they alienated British and American regard for France in the ensuing years and led directly to the disastrous policy of appeasement.

In giving up the idea of the Rhine frontier and Saar annexation, Clemenceau pressed for effective substitutes. He thought he got them in four principal measures, which were: occupation of the Rhineland by Allied troops for fifteen years as a military guarantee for German observance of the treaty; League of Nations administration of the Saar for fifteen years, the ultimate fate of the territory to be decided by plebiscite at the end of that time; a definition of "reparations" to include Allied war pensions as well as property damage, in which Lloyd George ardently concurred; a separate Anglo-American agreement to come to France's assistance if she should be attacked, the pact to be effective until the parties to it were agreed that the League afforded ample safeguards.

The first two of these measures were temporary gains for France, and were to work out in a manner indistinguishable from losses. The effort to hold the security that occupation of the Rhineland seemed to offer and means of influencing the Saar to vote itself into France gave the French governments in the next few years an unpleasantly militaristic appearance, which was not im-

proved by desperate French attempts to bind Germany within a ring of Central European satellites of France.

The second pair of concessions of which Clemenceau was so proud were no better than swindles. The French, supposedly so wily and expert in the diplomatic game, were badly bilked, although they were more the dupes of their own fears and greed than of their fellow negotiators. The reparations compromise raised French hopes to heights impossible to scale. It was thoroughly weakened by Wilson's refusal, on the advice of his experts and his own realization of the position at home, to allow Allied debts to the United States to enter into any settlement with Germany. Although the treaty was not as foolish as later interpretations made it look, it was the basis for the long French drive to collect hopelessly large sums, since the document itself specified no figure. It was to lead to the downfall of Poincaré as the oracle of profitable vengeance, but only after the fiasco of an invasion of the Ruhr had led millions in England and America to regard France rather than Germany as the chief menace to peace. Wilson's own decision to include pensions was not unassailable but when his experts protested that the logic of economics was all against him, he cried:

"Logic! Logic! I don't give a damn for logic. I am going to include pensions!"

The Anglo-American alliance was an even more obvious trick. Its origin is still rather vague except as it was an outgrowth of French desires. Among the Americans House was the first to think of it as a feasible bribe for the surrender of the more extreme French positions. Wilson agreed to it although he very much doubted that the Senate would or should ratify such a treaty. It had all the earmarks of what Jefferson had meant by "entangling al-

liances." However, at this stage of the conference, the President was willing to let the French deceive themselves. His conscience was clear; he was party to the deception only to the extent of signing the treaty; he never encouraged French hopes of ratification. Neither did he discourage them, so Clemenceau gained a gag to silence Poincaré's most insistent yappings.

The other outstanding obstacles were hurdled, in principle, within six days. On April 14 Wilson gave out the Four's first public statement. It was to the effect that the treaty was so near completion that the Germans were to be invited to come and see the result on April 25. It was added that the other questions affecting the general peace would be pushed with vigor, those affecting Italy, "especially the Adriatic question," having priority. That day the call of undergraduate fellowship reaching across forty years prompted Wilson to write to the Auditor of the War Department to ask if it would be possible to raise a clerk in that division, one Paul W. Pope, from $1,600 to $1,800 a year. Pope was one of the "gang" from Princeton, class of '79.

The same six days saw the final polishing of the Covenant, including the amendment to safeguard the Monroe Doctrine. The discussions were sufficiently involved, only not so acrimonious as those among the Four, for the French thought that if they made concessions to American susceptibilities, there should be a little modification in the direction of a League of Allies. The British and others considered the occasion appropriate for getting the Monroe Doctrine defined, a long cherished desire of foreigners, and even on occasion of Americans. But Wilson believed opinion at home would resent any definition by treaty of the country's favorite dogma in the realm of

foreign politics. It had always been a statement of policy interpreted solely by the United States, never an understanding with anyone else, although it rested on the firm foundation of the British Fleet. As an historian, Wilson placed perhaps too much emphasis on this factual role of the Doctrine. Lodge was to give him some object lessons in the purely emotional value of Monroe's famous pronouncement.

4

Of course the general agreement of mid-April did not end the differences between the peacemakers. The invitation to the Germans was premature if it was really intended to confront them with a completed treaty by the 25th. The reparations question was by no means settled, agreement lacking on whether or not a lump sum should be stipulated, and if so, how large it should be and what shares should be allotted to whom.

The Italian demand for Fiume and a slice of Turkey was more insistently pressed. It was countered by a careful study prepared by American experts to show that the proposal could be justified neither on ethnological, strategic nor economic grounds, nor on any grounds save sheer desire to grab territory and dominate the development of others.

The Japanese made it clear they intended to keep German privileges in Shantung, and Poles were contending eagerly for frontiers that would include a good many millions of Germans, Ukrainians and Lithuanians who were either frightened or disgusted at the thought. These claims and the difficult problem of Polish access to the sea across territory that was not predominantly Polish had for weeks been agitating what moments the conference could spare from arguing about the Rhine, armaments and repara-

tions. No matter how the disputes were to be settled, there must be an ugly residue of minority races under the rule of hereditary enemies, and the Poles were giving evidence of how necessary some checks on the majority would be. The Poles were also using the attempted justification that minorities refused to co-operate.

Other small countries were displaying keen appetites for neighboring lands. This was particularly true of Rumania, seeking in Hungary the nine-tenths of the law that goes with possession, and of Greece with large aspirations in Asia Minor. Thanks to the Rumanian grab and a policy of blockade engineered by French officers, Count Karolyi could not keep his Bolsheviks suppressed, and his government collapsed while the Red flag floated over Budapest and a Hungarian Soviet began to imitate the worst excesses of its Russian model.

In the crush of these problems, Wilson's theory of a peace worth guaranteeing was pushed off its foundations. He accepted the fundamental alteration after some heart burning and soul searching. From this time forward his efforts were directed to obtaining a peace that would not be so unjust as to be past remedying after the League of Nations should become the forum of the world. Human nature, he knew, was pretty much the same in the Balkans as in the corn belt. He had seen in his own lifetime Southern hatred of Yankees and Northern vindictiveness toward Rebels fade to such feeble proportions that he, a Southerner, could be elected governor of a Northern State and never once have the bloody shirt waved in his face.

He realized of course that the bitterness between European enemies was deeper and more traditional than anything the United States had ever experienced. But he expected these passions to subside through years of peace.

With an effective organization for hearing and adjusting grievances, the causes for quarrels could be counted upon to dwindle into peaceably settled controversies. That had happened in the past as between individual European rivals. Even with the disillusioning lessons of the conference before him, Wilson did not believe that the statesmen of Europe could be so shortsighted and narrow as to continue on a blind path of hate and recrimination. And of course it never occurred to him that the enthusiasm of his own country for a share in maintaining the peace of the world was no more than a passing phase.

The change in aim from a settlement worth guaranteeing to a settlement that could be reached altered the very nature of Wilson's work at the conference. Hitherto he had been attacking the encrusted prejudices and methods of Europe to win new ground—a league, the right of peoples to select the sovereignty under which they would live, justice even if not tempered by mercy for the vanquished. The rest of his stay in Paris was devoted to a rearguard action, fighting to save as much of his earlier program as possible and preserving the machinery that might, in a future of reasonable good will and good faith, correct the mistakes he was now being forced to make.

He could not hope forever to bludgeon his colleagues into acceptance of his views by threat of withdrawal. Furthermore, in many of the disputed cases, it was not possible to assert with confidence that any one of possible alternatives represented real justice. For example, the Sudeten Germans of Bohemia could not be separated from the Czech population of that liberated Austrian province. Not only was there a valid strategic argument for giving the new state a frontier that might be defended against

Germany; there was an even more valid economic argument. The Sudeten Germans were an integral part of Czech industry, the most highly developed and successful in Central Europe, and the world was to learn that the peacemakers were quite right in assuming the essential unity of the whole area. When the Sudetenland was returned to the Reich, the rest of Bohemia perforce followed. Dr. Benes, who in 1919 explained to the conference why "neither could exist without the other," was the same Dr. Benes who as President of Czechoslovakia in 1938 was compelled to acquiesce in the first steps toward proof of his argument, although the brutality of the demonstration by a rearmed Germany went far beyond economic necessity.

This point, as well as the more complicated task of fixing Poland's new borders, was overshadowed for the time by disputes that were of less future significance. The one that had all the delegates and observers in Paris nearly frantic with excitement, worry and rage was precipitated by the Italian demand for Fiume. The port was an outlet for Yugoslavia and a good part of Hungary, too. Italy's only real reason for wanting it was that it would enable her to exercise some unwarranted control over the commerce of these countries. The ostensible excuse was that a majority of the population of the actual city called Fiume were Italians, but they were in a minority if the suburbs were added, while the hinterland was as exclusively Slav as any district on earth. On the day Wilson ordered the *George Washington,* he expressed himself as firmly about this as about the French plans.

"Then Italy will not get Fiume?" asked Ray Stannard Baker, who was serving as liaison man to the press.

"Absolutely not—as long as I am here," was the reply.

Wilson kept his word. In the Council of Four the debate was as furious and repetitious as the fight over the Rhineland. Wilson was willing to make Fiume a free port under international control. Orlando would accept nothing less than annexation, and Italian opinion had been heated to a pitch that made it impossible to recede, while Sonnino took the offensive, sneering:

"Because America had given in in the case of France and Great Britain, because she had been immoral here she tried to re-establish her virginity at the expense of Italy. The impression in Italy was that for five months she had been allowed to expect all she had asked for [not by the Americans] and now she was asked to give up because of President Wilson's principles."

Clemenceau and Lloyd George, who had steadily insisted that they must agree to let Italy have everything stipulated in the Pact of London, supported Wilson in the Council on Fiume but were mum in public. Both seemed to derive considerable intellectual enjoyment from the daily exchanges between the other two members of the Four. The Tiger used to tell with relish how, when Orlando declared that he must have the port because 100,000 Italians lived there, Wilson jumped up with the interjection:

"There are two million Italians in New York! You are not going to demand New York, are you?"

Both men used exaggerated figures, but the anecdote is typical of the roundabout arguments that developed. Today these arguments are only tedious and unprofitable. The whole Fiume incident, so devastating in its effect on reputations and international good feeling, now is of value chiefly as showing the limitations of prestige and power such as Wilson possessed. He could overthrow a

government, hold out against injustice, appeal to the faith and honor of mankind, but he was powerless to dispose of an Adriatic port in accordance with principles the whole civilized world had applauded.

The sanctity of treaties, so eagerly insisted upon because it was ostensibly Germany's violation of Belgian neutrality that brought Britain into the war, could also be appraised in the light of the Fiume incident. Lloyd George and Clemenceau had used up hours of valuable time explaining why they had to give Italy every inch called for in the Pact of London. They could never yield in honor. But the same document assigned Fiume to Croatia. That pledge was as sacred as the pledge to Italy. It was a triumph of sophistry to distinguish between them in any way, yet France and England were not willing to proclaim publicly an insistence on complete fulfillment.

Many observers who had seen the reverent acclaim that greeted Wilson on his arrival in Europe believed that he had only to speak and whole nations would follow with religious zeal. These observers overlooked the fact that men often violate their religious professions when they think their material interests are at stake. By April, 1919, the first fine frenzy of the new international religion had worn off. In Italy Wilson was being caricatured and excoriated as viciously as the Kaiser had been a year earlier. When, toward the end of the month, he tried the experiment of appealing to the Italian people over the heads of the government, a storm of fury against him broke out among the populace. Citizens who had only a vague idea of where or what Fiume might be, demonstrated violently in the streets of Naples, Rome and Genoa, and it was not safe to talk English in public.

Orlando and Sonnino replied dramatically by abandon-

ing the conference and returning to Rome where they kept popular enthusiasm at a high pitch by promising never to yield. They left Wilson grappling with the Japanese and finding himself up against men who held the strong position that he had occupied as against France. The Baron and the Viscount, supported by a Marquis, Saionji, nominal head of the delegation, stood fast on the simple threat that they would not sign the treaty with Germany unless they got satisfaction in Shantung. Their government supported them with positive instructions not to compromise, although they were willing to promise to turn the province back to China in two years. Japan kept that pledge, without giving up her plans for hegemony in East Asia, but she would not hear of permitting the conference to include it in the treaty. Wilson battered for days against their imperturbable front and made no impression at all. On April 29 he got Bliss's opinion, for which he had asked. The blunt soldier, in a phrase that appealed to Wilson's every instinct, summed up his belief in what should be done.

"It can't be right to do wrong even to make peace," he declared.

That same night Wilson determined to ignore Bliss's advice although he recognized its force. Fully realizing the storm of denunciation he would release, he decided to let the Japanese have their way. He himself had spent a sleepless night worrying about his decision. Whatever it was, he declared, it would be wrong. His reasons for thinking he had selected the lesser evil were that he preserved the conference and the League, and if he held out Japan would not only refuse to sign the treaty but would be drawn eventually into a triple alliance with Germany and Russia. In no case would China regain her sovereignty

over the leased territory. His decision at least won for her a promise of eventual restoration. Next morning the agreement was concluded.

It was the same day that Lodge in a message to the Italians of Boston was declaring that if Italy thought Fiume necessary to her defense, she ought by all means to have it. The Senator, who claimed to be an expert on the Adriatic, having read a history of Dalmatia, reached the unique conclusion that assignment of Fiume to Italy would be a fine rebuke to the secret treaties. Since the Pact of London allotted the port to the Croats, he said, it would be eminently just to take this one justifiable gift under that treaty and add it to the many unjustifiable benefits to be enjoyed by the chief culprit.

"I cannot help feeling that my efforts to keep you accurately informed in respect to the situation have failed signally," White wrote to him sorrowfully.

5

In Lodge's defense it may be said that the delegates found it difficult to keep themselves accurately informed. The treaty was to be presented to the Germans in a week, with or without the Italians, and as the last compromises were whipped together, the crushing effect of the document in its entirety was apparent for the first time. Almost any clause taken by itself could be excused, but a good many of the British and Americans thought that the whole constituted a burden Germany could never bear.

The economic conditions, unpredictable as to result but obviously onerous, were more important than, although linked to, the territorial changes. Reparations were to be left to a commission that would fix sums and methods of payment, so that a huge debt of unknown size hung

over the conquered. Germany was carefully stripped of mines and factories. She was to lose her colonies and be hampered in obtaining raw materials elsewhere. Her merchant marine was to be confiscated and tariffs erected against her goods, but reparations could only be effected by a profitable foreign trade.

The treaty, a volume of 440 articles and 214 pages, was not easy reading. The League Covenant was by all odds the most hopeful section, but it was not one that could encourage Germans very much since they were not to be allowed to join until they had proved themselves fit for the society of decent nations. Men like Lansing thought the vast use made of the League in implementing the peace was Wilson's device for increasing the importance of his creation. Aside from the fact that he could not and did not claim a creator's role, the League was employed because it gave strength to the settlement, not the other way round. Danzig was to be a free city under League auspices in the hope that such a government would be the less objectionable to both Poles and Germans. The Saar, the Upper Silesia plebiscite, the International Labor Organization, control of the opium traffic, etc., were put into League hands because only so could these phases of peace and international reform be made to work.

But it was not of these aspects of the treaty that men were thinking on a sunny May 7 as the chiefs of twenty-seven Allied and Associated Powers assembled at the Versailles palace to deliver the treaty to the enemy. Watched by a small group of journalists, the delegates sat like judges, severe but a little anxious, as the Germans, led by a tall, thin, nervous figure, Foreign Minister Count Brockdorff-Rantzau, were haled before them. A

copy of the treaty was placed upon the table, and Clemenceau rose for his moment of supreme satisfaction.

"You have asked for peace. We are ready to give you peace," he said, but it sounded more like a threat than a promise.

In a speech of two minutes, the Tiger concentrated all the fury of forty years into one blast which, without overstepping the bounds of coldest courtesy, struck the Germans like a blow. Brockdorff-Rantzau, who looked and acted too much like the representative of the old German Empire, had not Clemenceau's gift for brevity or drama. He was not well and he was horribly nervous, but neither of these facts were apparent as he unfolded a paper and began to read. Sitting stolidly in his place and without apology for not rising, he allowed all the anger and humiliation and bitterness of the defeated nation to be distilled into his harsh tones.

Wilson, at Clemenceau's right, leaned forward and stared at the speaker, his first and last glimpse of the new German Republic in action. The old Tiger's color was rising. At his left the cheerful Lloyd George set his features in lines of unaccustomed sternness. Brockdorff-Rantzau, with almost criminal tactlessness, was making a speech of defiance and exculpation. It was shameless effrontery, his hearers thought, to deny Germany's war guilt, which she was called upon to acknowledge specifically in the treaty. It was dangerously provocative to stress Germany's sufferings before men whose people had suffered more. It was, in brief, a stupid speech that seemed to prove Germans learned nothing and forgot nothing. The Count with his Junker manners succeeded in rousing such resentment that hardly anyone heard his more reasoned, pitiful appeal for a peace based on the Fourteen

that the German Army was invincible, had in fact never been defeated, but had been "stabbed in the back," were major factors leading to the second German attempt to win the mastery of the world.

Synopsis of Events Between the First Battle of the Marne, A.D. 1914, and the Battle of Midway, A.D. 1942

1914. Following the Battle of the Marne, each side extends its lines westward in an attempt to outflank its opponent. This "Race to the Sea" ends when German efforts to break through are stopped at Ypres. Trench warfare then develops all along the Western Front.

Russia is initially successful in an invasion of Austria but German troops, after their victory at Tannenberg, are rushed to the assistance of Austria, where they aid in halting the Russian offensive. In November, Turkey enters the war on the side of the Central Powers.

On the high seas the British and French navies establish supremacy. A German fleet defeats a British squadron off the coast of Chile in November, but in December another British squadron almost completely destroys the German force at the Battle of the Falkland Islands, off southern Argentina. Keeping their main fleet in home waters, the Germans begin to concentrate upon submarine warfare.

1915. Trench warfare continues on the Western Front; neither side is able to break the deadlock. In May, German and Austrian forces launch a huge offensive, break through the Russian lines and advance over 200 miles beyond Warsaw. Italy joins the Allied Powers.

The Allies land on the Gallipoli Peninsula. After a vigorous campaign the troops are withdrawn in January, 1916, with a resultant great loss of prestige in the Near East. A British expedition from India invades Mesopotamia. By the end of the year a large British force is invested by the Turks; after a long siege it is forced to surrender the following April. In October, Bulgaria joins Germany and Austria; together their troops overwhelm Serbia.

Meanwhile, in February, Germany had announced a submarine blockade of the British Isles. In May the British transatlantic liner *Lusitania* is sunk with the loss of over a hundred American lives. Germany eventually gives the United States assurances against future occurrences, but continues her submarine campaign.

throw Germany into complete chaos, involving a long expensive era of policing by the Allies with no hope of repayment. His proposals for making the treaty more palatable did not extend to sacrificing any British interest, and he met with little encouragement from his colleagues in the Council. At the last minute he wanted to reduce occupation of the Rhineland to two years or even to abandon it.

"Wilson arranged that matter—fortunately," Clemenceau commented.

The President's attitude throughout was that there existed in the treaty sufficient machinery for correcting the worst injustices, and that the world could not wait for peace while the whole weary business of negotiation was gone through again, probably for another four months.

"The Treaty is not a good one, it is too severe," House wrote, and Wilson agreed. But he also agreed with the Colonel's further comment: "However, the time to have the Treaty right was when it was being formed and not now. It is a question if one commenced to unravel what has already been done, whether it could be stopped."

In this spirit Wilson informed the protesting Germans that the authors of the treaty "can admit no discussion of their right to insist upon the Terms of the Peace substantially as drafted." He stood with Clemenceau on this, but he agreed with Lloyd George in feeling that the Austrian settlement, even apart from the Italian claims, was shaping up more unfortunately than the German. Lloyd George complained that the little nations of Central Europe, new and old, were more imperialistic and nationalistic than the larger powers. He was an expert on these matters, for he was then engaged with the French and Italians in parceling out the more valuable portions

of the Turkish Empire. The American share was to be the mandate for Armenia, a region poor in resources. Wilson refused to commit his country on this point although ardently hopeful that the United States would agree to this practical application of his ideals. As for the buffer states of Central Europe, he confessed on June 14, while the world was anxiously waiting to see whether the Germans would sign:

"What these small countries are doing causes me the profoundest uneasiness and I am going to try to see what can be done about it. Indeed, I have been trying to see what could be done about it."

One of the most disturbing features was the enthusiasm with which nationalities whose sufferings under oppression had wrung the heart of the world embarked upon the oppression of alien strains placed under their rule. That had been true in Europe for so long that it often seemed inevitable, but this peace settlement, for all its resemblances in territorial shifts to such conclaves as the Congress of Vienna, had provided redress. One of the achievements of which Wilson was proud was the League machinery by which the plight of any minority could be brought into the open for adjudication. It was to be buttressed by special treaties safeguarding the rights of these minorities. The treaties were duly drawn and signed; they were not so duly observed. But that was another failure that lay in the future. In Paris, Paderewski for Poland, Benes for Czechoslovakia, Ante Trumbich for Yugoslavia and Ion Bratiano for Rumania were profuse in assurances of the Utopia that awaited their unwilling subjects under the new order. That they were not too greatly trusted is plain from the more concrete guarantees that the treaties attempted to establish.

Through the warm June days, the peacemakers stuck doggedly to the task of bringing the secret treaties and open greed for Austrian and Turkish territory into some sort of harmony with the professed principles of international justice. Over the negotiations hung doubt as to whether Germany would sign. In this atmosphere it must almost have been a relief to have Fiume cropping up again, and Wilson was able to carry out his promise that Italy would not get the city "as long as I am here." Italy should have been grateful, for Wilson's stubbornness gave Gabriele d'Annunzio his opportunity for a last picturesque gesture in a career devoted with the energy of genius to picturesque gestures. The comic opera scene provided after Wilson's departure by this hero of aerial warfare and a hundred tawdry love affairs helped the post-war world forget its tragedies for a moment. D'Annunzio, whose synthetic emotionalism and cheap posturing amid incense and cushions kept him in the ranks of second-rate poets, missed being a conqueror by as wide a margin as he missed true literary pre-eminence. The once cataclysmic Fiume controversy was finally settled on the basis of joint Italo-Yugoslav administration.

In June, 1919, there was little to relieve the tragedy of the European outlook. Wilson, weary and anxious, believed he had obtained everything it was possible for him to get in Paris and was willing to leave the detailed negotiations of the Turkish and Austrian settlements to others while he went home to start the League rolling and attend to pressing internal business. On June 20 he actually agreed to inform Foch that he might move forward if Berlin did not announce its acceptance in three days. Germany yielded at the last moment, having set up a new government for the purpose.

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The great struggle was over. For Wilson the greater struggle was about to begin. On the 27th, the day before the treaty signing and his departure for home, he got a plain warning. Tumulty cabled that Republican Senators were working up a scheme for Congress to declare a state of peace by joint resolution without any terms and in tacit avowal that America had been fighting for nothing at all. Wilson thought the suggestion mad and treacherous, and asked incredulously whether it could be seriously proposed.

After all the weeks of dispute and worry, the formalities next day were an anticlimax. The previous publicity even dulled the edge of seeing cowed Germans signing away their greatness, so it was triumphantly believed by prematurely rejoicing Frenchmen. In the same Hall of Mirrors where an arrogant Bismarck had humiliated a beaten France, the great men of twenty-six victor nations —China refused to sign—crowded up to put their names to the Treaty of Versailles.

It was Wilson's farewell public appearance in Europe and basically no more harmonious than the dinner given for him a night or two earlier at the Elysée Palace. His nerves had been so near the breaking point that he had been guilty of his one display of bad manners, ignoring the invitation until anxious Frenchmen came rushing to their American friends to ask what it meant. White hurried to the President to explain how deeply the French nation would be insulted. House remonstrated, too, but Wilson retorted peevishly:

"No, I'm not going. I'll be damned if I do. I'd choke if I had to sit beside Poincaré again."

For the last time, however, he yielded to the Colonel's powers of persuasion.

"But," the Texan said later, "he sat beside Poincaré glowering, and he hardly said a word all evening, and left as early as he could."

Only a few hours after the signing of the treaty, there was a mild ovation at the station where he entrained for Brest. It was a dead frost compared with the idolatrous reception of December. House, who went to the ship with him, thought their parting conversation was "not reassuring."

"I urged him to meet the Senate in a conciliatory spirit," the Colonel wrote in his diary next day; "if he treated them with the same consideration he had used with his foreign colleagues here, all would be well."

"House," was the reply, "I have found that one can never get anything in this life that is worth while without fighting for it."

"I combated this," the Texan recorded, "and reminded him that Anglo-Saxon civilization was built on compromise."

Thus the two friends remained true to their characters to the end. They never met again.

XIX

Men of Ill Will

". . . THE VICIOUS NARROWNESS OF REED, THE EXPLOSIVE ignorance of Poindexter, the ponderous Websterian language and lack of stamina of Borah, the vanity of Lodge as an old diplomatic hand on the Foreign Relations Committee, the selfishness, laziness and narrow, lawyerlike acuteness of Knox, the emptiness and sly partisanship of Hale, the utter nothingness of Fall in the face of this great world's crisis . . ."

Wilson could hardly have characterized these distinguished Senators more to his taste. But the words were not his, nor those of any Democrat. They were the considered verdict of the genial, gentle Taft, who knew to his sorrow the fate of a President who attempted to conciliate such men. Wilson has been blamed for not following his example, but was there any basis for compromise? They were men who understood nothing but a fight and a beating.

A frail, exhausted warrior was sailing back to America. His opponents were fresh, eager for the fray, and they had had plenty of time to elaborate their tactics. Yet they comprised an uneasy alliance. In addition to the gentlemen stigmatized by Taft there were isolationists such as Hiram Johnson of California, a liberal of the old muckraking days when the New Nationalism and the New Freedom seemed to promise Utopia. He was virtually im-

pervious to lessons of history that involved anything outside the continental United States. Neither war nor peace, the struggles of sincere men seeking a system of international co-operation nor the rise of ruthless men seeking international dictatorship could move the Californian from a point of view as divorced from the realities of this planet as if he had been a Martian. Johnson didn't like the rest of the world, and he said to hell with it.

On the League issue he was aligned with Boies Penrose, the gargantuan, aristocratic Philadelphia hoodlum who was too lazy to pit his brains against his intellectual equals and had become the boss of the country's most corrupt machine. Reed Smoot, the withered Utah reactionary, guardian of the interests of sugar and sheep, was in the battle to win a Republican victory by smashing the treaty. So were George Moses, the New Hampshire wit, full of Yankee shrewdness and political craft; Brandegee, the author of the league round robin; Warren G. Harding, amiable man to whom life was one long poker game with the deuces wild, whose tragedy lay in the fact that his political deck contained a great many more than four deuces, most of them wilder than he dreamed. The coalition included, too, the party hacks, Jim Watson and Harry New of Indiana, Charles Curtis of Kansas and their like.

There were Democratic diehards, the most conspicuous being James A. Reed of Missouri, who hated Wilson and was despised by him. He was a doughty campaign speaker and one of the ablest cross examiners in the country. In the days before the treaty was widely published, Reed used to employ a very effective oratorical trick. In the midst of a passionate attack in which truth played little part, he would draw a slip of paper from his pocket, wave it impressively and bellow:

"I have it here, and I seem to see the bloody footprints of John Bull tracking all across the dastardly document."

Well, the footprints must have been mighty small, and no doubt the treaty was written on Jim's single sheet by a man whose usual occupation was engraving the Lord's Prayer on the heads of pins.

Knox's character should have been fairly well known to Taft, whose Secretary of State he had been for four years. But the forefront of the opposition was Lodge. No one understood better how to steer a measure to its doom through the intricacies of Senate procedure. The "scholar in politics" had once been the spokesman of a generous internationalism, of course before Wilson topped him in the field. He had been the faithful servant of Massachusetts bank and mill managers, but outside of that grim record he had on occasion followed the more adventurous course, at least often enough to win Roosevelt's regard. One may speculate how much of the Back Bay solon's acidity was due to personal sorrow, for his wife, a woman of great charm and good sense, had died in 1915. Certainly her husband's worst side became more pronounced after that.

His jealousy of Wilson had grown to insane proportions, so that he denied furiously the President's claims to scholarship and eloquence. He professed great contempt for the freedom from classical allusions that less prejudiced judges have considered one of the virtues of Wilson's prose style, and he was almost hysterical with ridicule when he recorded that the only time he ever heard Wilson draw on mythology it was to confuse Hercules with Antaeus. The Senator was of the opinion that absence of quotations "would seem to indicate that Mr. Wilson . . . was not a widely read man, for a lover of

literature almost inevitably thinks of the words of the poet or great prose writer which express better than he can in writing or speaking the idea he is trying to enforce." Lodge, who was inordinately fond of little tags of learning, ignored the fact that the great men he quoted so gladly were like Wilson; they did not use second-hand phrases.

The fight on the treaty was cleverly begun before Wilson returned. His inability to be on hand to scotch the opposition as it rose remains the most valid criticism of his decision to head the American Peace Commission. By the time he came home, the Senators had been in full cry for months, ready to take advantage of the country's sentiment whichever way that vague and unpredictable barometer turned. If the isolationist view seemed likely to prevail, they would throw Borah and Johnson and Reed into the forefront of the battle. If some spark of desire to strike a blow for world democracy remained alive, Lodge and Knox were ready to offer themselves as the men who, better than its authors, could make the great reform work. If, as was most probable, national sentiment failed to crystallize, they could use isolationist or perfectionist arguments interchangeably to appeal to the audience of the moment.

All through the months of negotiation in Paris, Wilson had been hearing of the ebb and flow of this opposition. It rose and fell with rumors from the conference. The messages from Tumulty had provided an admirable index of its strength, for the Irishman was exceptionally sensitive to political winds, and the slightest breeze set him to shaking. He was ever the good party man, and as such invaluable even when his partisanship ran to the extreme of protesting against suggestions he had heard that Hughes

or Taft would be named to a court to try the Kaiser. Why not a Democrat? Tumulty wanted to know, and he added that this would be a fine way for Chief Justice White to round out a distinguished career.

The report that Wilson was entering into secret treaties, probably based on the first proposals of the guarantee to France, sent Tumulty into transports of terror, assuaged by the President's reply that he had not and would not conclude any secret agreements. A few weeks later, when an extensive summary of the treaty was published, the Secretary climbed peaks of optimism from which, it seemed, opposition had become invisible. When Berlin published the treaty before the Allies released it, Tumulty's fears flooded back upon him. The text had come to America in translation from the German, and there was a flurry in the Senate. Lodge made a great to-do about "secret diplomacy," and there was talk of an investigation to determine how the document got to New York, the hint being that some of the financiers on the American delegation had conveyed the text to Wall Street. At this time the Senators were linking the plan for a Congressional declaration of peace to an even more plainly improper demand that the treaty be submitted to them in its then form. The first Wilson had called a disgrace. The second, he pointed out, was premature, the treaty being still in process of negotiation since "if our discussion with the Germans is to be more than a sham and a form it is necessary to consider at least some of the details of the treaty as subject to reconsideration." Even Senators seldom claimed any right or power to assist in negotiations, and minor changes actually were made during this period.

The real storm broke when on July 10, the day after

his return to Washington, Wilson submitted the treaty to the Senate. The Foreign Relations Committee promptly got to work on it. If they had measured it by the yardstick of the Fourteen Points, they would have found six realized, four lost and four, concerned with the Austrian and Turkish settlements, still in process of negotiation at Paris. A summary of the fate of the generally accepted bases of the peace would have looked like this:

I. Open covenants, openly arrived at, had been largely achieved. There had been no secret commitments, no hidden discussions. It was all in the record.

II. Freedom of the seas had been brought no nearer, had not even been defined.

III. The removal of economic barriers and equality of trade conditions were lost except as the League might be able to set up machinery to effect them.

IV. Guarantees for the reduction of armaments had been made as strong as the pledged word of nations.

V. Absolutely impartial adjustment of all colonial claims was effective to the extent of the mandate system, no more.

VI. The treatment of Russia, Wilson's acid test, had proved lack of good will or intelligent and unselfish sympathy.

VII. Evacuation and restoration of Belgium was amply provided for.

VIII. The same was true of France.

IX., X., XI. and XII. had to be settled in the Turkish and Austrian treaties.

XIII. An independent Polish state with access to the sea had been created.

XIV. A general association of nations to afford mutual

guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity had been formed.

Wilson, however, was called upon to defend his successes, not his failures. The opposition centered on those of the Fourteen Points that were most completely embodied in the treaty, and the Senators were to direct their main attack at the fourteenth, although their real target was that intangible fifteenth point, the character and personality of Wilson.

Among the ten Republicans who composed the majority of the Foreign Relations Committee, only one, Frank McCumber of North Dakota, favored the League regardless of politics. The other nine were Lodge, Borah, Brandegee, Fall, Knox, Harding, New, Johnson and Moses. Of the seven Democrats, one, Shields of Tennessee, was an opponent of the administration. Gilbert Hitchcock, minority leader, was a Nebraska publisher who was a bit out of his depth in foreign affairs, but no more so than any other member. He was weak in the sort of rough and tumble debate in which Johnson and Borah excelled. He lacked Lodge's slyness and Brandegee's belligerence. Williams of Mississippi was sharper, but he was getting old and tired. The others—Claude Swanson of Virginia, Atlee Pomerene of Ohio, Key Pittman of Nevada and Marcus Smith of Arizona—represented as much strength as the Democrats had in that Congress. Their combined talents were equal to those of their Republican opponents, but they were condemned to impotence by lack of numbers, failing the spark of genius that sometimes makes a minority effective.

Lodge had recognized at the start a basic difficulty on his side. The country, at least that part of it he called "the vocal classes," was thoroughly in favor of a League.

Since it was impossible in the face of this feeling to defeat the treaty outright, he explained to Borah, the discussion should proceed "by way of amendment and reservation" so that the treaty might be killed by indirection. The scholar's own analysis of the Republicans, whose majority of two was soon to be reduced to one by the unseating of Newberry, was that there were fifteen "irreconcilables" who would vote against the treaty under any circumstances. Meantime they would gladly support amendments, the more crippling the better. There were eight or ten who would support mild reservations, but were expected to accept the treaty in any form. The forty-seven Democrats included three diehard foes of ratification.

The first step, aside from public hearings that threw a good deal of heat but no light on the treaty, was to put in the amendments. The Committee actually approved forty-nine of them, directed toward keeping the British Empire from using its six votes, to restoring Shantung to China at once and to removing the United States from every single commission set up to implement the peace except for reparations, in which the country was to claim its share. For those Senators who did not like the idea of amendments, "reservations" were drafted to the same effect. Another batch, purely interpretive, was designed to make clear what was generally agreed to be the sense of the treaty. Wilson's own attitude toward this clarification had been expressed in a letter to Sir George Paish, who had wanted a provision specifically authorizing the League to amend treaty provisions found to be unworkable.

"If you could spend a few days with us here," he had written during the conference, "you would realize, as I think no one away from Paris can, how impossible it is

to get our nearest friends here to consent to explicit provisions such as you propose, even when they know that the thing must be done, if not by explicit at any rate by implicit authority."

But the Senators had not been to Paris. Their ignorance of the treaty-making process was perhaps a reason why Wilson should have taken a couple with him. They might have learned something. On his return he sought to overcome this difficulty by personal talks, and invited a score of Republicans who were reported to be amenable to reason to individual White House conferences. They were not encouraging, insisting that some sort of reservations were a prerequisite to approval by the Senate, if not needed for the protection of American interests.

The supposed dangers were being elaborated in speeches and articles that today are remarkable for their irrelevance. The spectacle of the League as a super-state ordering young Americans by the hundreds of thousands into obscure wars in remote, unhealthy places for the most shameful reasons is not one a generation familiar with the work of the Geneva organization can take seriously. Yet the guarantee of independence and territorial integrity meant just that, Senators proclaimed. Under their interpretation the League could not have kept a single member out of war on Japan in defense of China, on Italy in defense of Ethiopia, on Germany in defense of Poland and Austria and Czechoslovakia, on Russia in defense of Finland and the Baltic states. Apparently it did not seem possible to them that a League as strong as that might be able to prevent such acts of aggression. For it was not as a pacifist that Lodge assailed the Covenant. He was as belligerent as he had been when he denounced Wilson in 1915. As late as mid-August, 1919, he cried:

"Whenever the preservation of freedom and civilization and the overthrow of a menacing world conqueror summon us, we shall respond fully and nobly, as we did in 1917. He who doubts that we could do so has little faith in America."

The Senator, however, could win his partisan ends only by working hand in glove with isolationist bitter-enders. He never hesitated; partisan ends came first.

In the committee hearings, Lansing had been the chief witness. His memoranda in Paris were full of bitter complaints and he had never ceased to hold that a legal contract against war—embodied with great futility in the Briand-Kellogg pacts years later—was the only possible solution. He had preserved a correct demeanor at the hearing, but he had not been the warmest of possible advocates. There was really only one such pleader, Wilson himself. Since as President he could not go before the committee, he decided to have the committee before him.

The entire membership with the exception of Shields appeared at his invitation at the White House on the morning of August 19. Washington had been in its usual summer state of oppressive heat. The tremendous burden of problems concerning railways, resumption of normal trade, communications, demobilization, liquidation of war contracts, prices and the national debt, labor and unemployment were making the weather no easier to bear. As in Paris, Wilson was fresh enough every morning and almost exhausted every evening. This day, Lodge noticed, the Committee succeeded in making him "very much fatigued" by midday. For three hours he submitted to cross examination and even when the questions went round and round over the same quibbles he kept his temper and even good humor.

He began by explaining his objection to amendments or reservations as part of the resolution of ratification. They would have to be accepted by every single one of the other signers, including Germany. Furthermore, all the others would then feel free to offer their own amendments and reservations designed to get what they had failed to win in Paris. The idea of going through all that at long range was appalling. Probably it would have been simpler to scrap the treaty and begin over in a new conference. Either way the result must have been chaos in Central Europe, probably a new revolution in Germany and open, bitter dissension among the Allies.

"There can be no reasonable objection to such interpretations accompanying the act of ratification," he said, "provided that they do not form part of the formal ratification itself. Most of the interpretations which have been suggested to me embody what seems to me the plain meaning of the instrument itself."

He explained how the original draft had been changed to meet objections made on his flying visit to Washington—withdrawal, the Monroe Doctrine, interference in domestic issues. Article X, "the very backbone of the whole covenant," was not, he reiterated, one that could be used to force the United States to engage in punitive or other activities in which the government did not wholeheartedly concur, for the decisions of the Council would have to be unanimous. That statement made, he threw the door wide to questions, and they poured in. A good deal of time was spent in trying to explain to Harding the difference between a moral and a legal obligation.

"If there is nothing more than a moral obligation on the part of any member of the League, what avail Articles X and XI?" he inquired, adding that if that was all, "the

whole thing amounts to nothing but an expression of the League Council."

"There is a national good conscience in such a matter," the President replied.

More than an hour later, Harding was still arguing that this must mean putting our conscience in the keeping of Europe. Again and again, Wilson explained that each country would have to be its own judge, but that there was such a thing as public opinion, which would be informed through the Council proceedings and be able to make itself heard before war broke out instead of later. The Senator was unable to see it. His remarks lingered in the President's mind to such an extent that a few days later he told the Cabinet Harding had a disturbingly dull mind in which no explanation seemed to stick.

Brandegee was even more persistent, and more acute. However, he devoted most of his time to attempting to trip the witness. He finally extorted from Wilson the admission that words often bear more than one interpretation. He also argued at some length that legally a treaty was not necessary to a peace. Lodge's share in the discussion was directed to clarifying the origin of various covenant drafts, information already widely published. The most important point drawn, he thought, was Wilson's statement that he himself was as much the author of Article X as anybody else.

Borah brought up the secret treaties, and elicited the only replies that were not perfectly frank. Wilson said quite truthfully that the agreement under which Japan claimed Shantung was revealed to him only after he reached Paris. Asked about the European arrangements, he declared:

"Yes, the whole series of understandings were disclosed to me for the first time then."

Of "the whole series" this was true, but Balfour had sent him most of them. Even more misleading was his reply to Johnson, who asked if he had meant his Fourteen Points to supplant the secret treaties.

"Since I knew nothing of them, necessarily not," he asserted.

The questioners reverted to Shantung, the meaning of Article X and the mandate system. The session broke up in an invitation to lunch—accepted by all save Fall, who left early—without having touched on almost any of the real flaws in the treaty except Shantung. But the Republican minority knew they could work up no rage in the country over impossible economic clauses, the rights of minorities in Central Europe, the failure to provide against the rise of a spirit of revenge in Germany.

Meanwhile the Republican supporters of the League were proving weaker props than Tumulty or Wilson himself had expected. Taft and Root and Hughes were politely in favor of ratification but had no intention of splitting their party on the issue. They had not been in Paris; they could see neither the danger of delay nor the peril of opening the door to any changes a signatory might care to make. In August, 1918, Root had been likening the nationalistic stand his friends were now taking to the "Prussian theory of the State" and arguing for "a limitation of sovereignty, making every sovereign state subject to the superior right of a community of sovereign states to have the peace preserved." In August, 1919, he kept these beliefs to himself in the face of more vocal Republicans who were calling that attitude treason.

Taft's remarks about Senators were strictly private. He

was displaying the yielding spirit that had wrecked his own administration. He thought Article X or something like it an essential feature of any league, but as the fight developed he swung round to a compromise, any compromise for peace. Soon, in the same privacy that had shrouded his opinion of Senators, he was calling Wilson "that mulish enigma" because he was standing firm for things Taft himself believed in. Of course the former President was bitter, too, about Lodge. He thought both principals in the treaty fight were merely out "to exalt their personal prestige and the saving of their ugly faces above the welfare of the country and the world." Taft's really excellent gift for personal abuse was nullified by his regard for the proprieties, and his public attitude was of a jellyfish flaccidity.

Under the circumstances, Wilson reached the conclusion that his hope lay in an appeal to the country. He had always meant to make the swing around the circuit, but he had not been strong enough since his return. He still was not strong enough, but when he said he was willing to give his life for the cause, he was not speaking rhetorically. Grayson warned him that an arduous speaking tour might mean just that. Mrs. Wilson sought to dissuade him. But against them was his Jeffersonian faith in the instincts of the people. He believed as he believed in God that if he could present his case as one of justice and right, the country would force recalcitrant, politically sensitive Senators to give way. So he overruled his advisers, and the special train was ordered for a whirlwind coast to coast campaign.

Into the midst of his preparations came a letter from House, resting from peace conference labors in London, reporting that one of those periodic rumors of a break

between them had turned up in England, fluttering diplomatic dovecotes.

"Our annual falling out seems to have occurred," the Colonel wrote. "The Foreign Office received a cable the other day saying that we were no longer on good terms."

"Am deeply distressed by malicious story about break between us and thank you for the whole message about it," Wilson wired back. "The best way to treat it is with silent contempt."

He was lunching with Sir William Wiseman about that time, and the Englishman was shocked at his appearance —"His face was drawn and of a gray color, and frequently twitching in a pitiful effort to control nerves which had broken down under the burden of the world's distress." They spoke of House, Sir William remarking upon how thoroughly the statesmen of Europe trusted the little man.

"And rightly, for he is trustworthy," Wilson commented warmly.

But his message about their supposed break was the last he ever sent his friend. He was never again to need the soft and insinuating address with which the Texan so deftly gathered information about men and events. He needed fighters now, and he had learned to his sorrow that House, for all his trustworthiness, tact and charm, was not that. Wilson himself, though sick and weary, was the mightiest gladiator among the champions of peace. He had one of the chief qualities for victory, a supreme confidence that he must win. So he told Wiseman that hot August day about the plans for his trip.

"I ask nothing better than to lay my case before the American people," he said.

XX

The Last Crusade

1

On the night of September 3 the presidential special, an unusually long one to accommodate more than one hundred reporters and photographers, pulled out of Washington, leaving the Senate to its talk. Tumulty had never seen his chief looking so weary, but Wilson had been alert enough to defeat a friendly little conspiracy entered into by his secretary, his physician and his wife. They had drawn up an itinerary that would have required only the normal endurance of an averagely healthy man. Wilson insisted on scheduling nearly one hundred speeches in less than four weeks, hardly any two in the same town, as though he were not a frail man of sixty-three imperfectly recovered from influenza.

His usual careful preparation of an outline, short-hand notes and a transcription on his own typewriter had not been possible before he left, but he would not go before the people on this crusade in extemporaneous eloquence. So the little rest he might have obtained as his train roared westward was sacrificed to writing the next day's speeches. He had with him a considerable package of documents to draw on, and received daily reports from Washington. Perhaps the most significant paper in his portfolio was a single sheet on which the War Department

had tabulated war costs to all the belligerents—$185,000,-000,000 in money and 7,500,000 lives in battle, not to mention civilian damage and casualties running into astronomical totals that no one could estimate. There was an added note that all the world's wars between 1793 and 1914 had been fought with a loss of 6,000,000 men.

Wilson's central theme, from his first address at Columbus the day after he left the capital until the end, was that the 7,500,000 must not be betrayed. They had fought for something, he insisted; they had meant to give their young lives for more than mere imperialist tactics and advantages, no matter on which side they served and no matter how they shrank from brash expression of any idealistic aim. Their aspirations were embodied as far as possible in the League Covenant, Wilson assured his audiences. The appeal was as effective as his war messages, and enormous crowds cheered for the League and Wilson as he passed, speaking in Indiana and St. Louis, swinging west and north through the Dakotas and Montana to Oregon. Chicago was omitted, Wilson declaring he would not visit a city that chose William Hale Thompson as Mayor a second time. Once could be regarded as an unfortunate error; twice was a sign of political depravity.

He was just a week on his way when the Senate Foreign Relations Committee made a move to recover the limelight. Two months from the day it began work, the Committee reported the treaty to the Senate, complete with the forty-nine amendments and assorted reservations. The majority report was written by Lodge in his best vein of ponderous flippancy, a literary style as light and airy as an elephant waltzing. The cry for speed, used by Senators in arguing that the League was delaying world peace, had

given way to an admirable patience. More than a quarter of the entire report is a justification of delay.

The argument that amendments could not be acted upon promptly by the other signatories was dismissed with the light reminder that the peace conference was still in session in Paris. Its members, Lodge supposed, would be "at least as usefully employed in that consideration as they now are in dividing and sharing southeastern Europe and Asia Minor, in handing the Greeks of Thrace over to our enemy, Bulgaria, and in trying to force upon the United States the control of Armenia, Anatolia and Constantinople through the medium of a large American army."

For unadulterated dishonesty of statement and purpose this was pretty high, even for Lodge. The conferees engaged in working out the technical points of Austrian and Turkish settlements were not, as the Senator well knew, of a rank to act upon basic changes such as his Committee proposed. Great Britain was represented by Eyre Crowe, not even a member of the Ministry but a permanent official of the Foreign Office who could have nothing to say about policy. Frank Polk, Under-Secretary of State, was the United States delegate. The other powers had spokesmen no more authoritative. Lodge's statement was obviously designed to appeal to jingoes who believed the United States had only to speak and all the other nations of the earth would bow in obsequious, unquestioning submission. Lodge knew better, but there is no sign of such intelligence in his share in the treaty debate, which he characterized as "one of the most remarkable, if not the most remarkable, which had ever occurred in the Senate of the United States."

The majority report set up some irrelevant arguments for the pleasure of knocking them down. It was not a

document difficult to refute in fact or reason, but it was a sturdy appeal to prejudice. The suggestion that American troops in numbers were to police the Near East was based on nothing more than Wilson's known desire to accept the mandate for Armenia. As for Anatolia and Constantinople, other powers were eager to get them and, far from being handed over to Bulgaria, the Greeks were preparing to assert control over some very non-Greek sections. Isolationists, the professional Irish, the faintly reviving German sympathizers rejoiced in the report; honest haters of war were swayed by the vague but ominous warning of peril to "our rights, our sovereignty, our safety, and our independence."

2

A few days later the testimony of a young, disillusioned attaché to the American delegation put the Foreign Relations Committee in the headlines again. William C. Bullitt had resigned in May in a pettishly expressed but thoroughly sincere belief that the peace conference was not achieving justice, particularly as regards Russia. If one ignored the treaty machinery for correcting faults, there was a good deal in what he said, but his opinions were not what interested the Committee. Members hit upon the startling disclosure that Wilson's Secretary of State was a critic of the League! Lansing's attitude was well known to his familiars and to his colleagues in Paris. His indiscretion consisted in talking to a man who would tell, and normally Lansing was the most discreet of mortals. The Bullitt testimony increased his embarrassment at being opposed to his chief. He hastened to telegraph his version of the conversation, milder than some of the newspaper stories but confirming the general tone of Bullitt's

remarks. That he should have expressed himself so to an "outsider" was certainly a breach of official good taste. But Wilson thought it was more, and according to Tumulty he was greatly angered, exclaiming:

"Were I in Washington I would at once demand his resignation. That kind of disloyalty must not be permitted to go unchallenged for a single minute."

Then, if Tumulty's memory was accurate, he accused Lansing of seeking to compromise Wilsonian principles in Paris. The charge was another indication that the strain of his trip had deprived the President of his wonted control. A year ago he might have felt as strongly, but he would not have burst out so recklessly. Nor would the incident have preyed upon his mind. Now his sense of proportion was dulled. He had only strength enough to concentrate on his speeches, using his last bits of endurance to force his voice to carry its message of peace and duty to vast audiences in tents and halls, a tremendous physical effort in those pre-loud-speaker days. He suffered from violent headaches which Grayson could not alleviate. And of course he got no waking minute of rest, for when he was not working on or delivering speeches, he was the helpless prey of local dignitaries who must press around a President to utter scarcely heard words of advice or ride in his train to give unheeded lectures on regional needs.

Wilson seemed to hold up well, despite headache and fatigue, as the train reached the coast, rolled south through Washington, Oregon and California, stopping for speeches all the way down to Los Angeles, and then turned east again. Crowds grew larger and more enthusiastic. The President's arguments, voluminously recorded in the newspapers all over the country, were overcoming doubts and

fears. The public reaction was so definite as to alarm the diehard foes of the treaty. Its supporters were rallying, resuming the offensive even in the interminable Senate debate, and Wilson was so cheered that he was making plans to invade New England and talk Lodge out of countenance in his own bailiwick.

On September 25 he was in Denver for a morning speech after a poor night's sleep, and all the way to Pueblo for an afternoon open-air rally he suffered so from headache that he told his companions he was going to make this address short. As usual he pulled himself together as he approached the platform, and his manner was unusually carefree. He nodded cheerfully to the reporters who had come with him from the train.

"Aren't you fellows getting pretty sick of this?" he asked.

A few minutes later he was on his feet, and all desire to cut his remarks short left him. His audience was attentive, responsive, and he let himself go in one of the longest and, by the testimony of those who had heard all of them, his most moving address of the trip. He answered criticism, but he did more, for he closed with his favorite appeal to carry through to real victory the hopes of peace for which the United States had fought. He told of a visit he had made to an American war cemetery in France on the previous Decoration Day. He described the ranks of soldiers drawn up before him, the living in their straight lines, trim and alert; the dead in their equally straight lines under a forest of crosses. He paid tribute to the French people, not the politicians but the common folk who had acclaimed his ideals because they felt that their young men too "had died in the same cause—France was free and the world was free because America had

come!" And he concluded with the ringing peroration:

"I wish some men in public life who are now opposing the settlement for which these men died could visit such a spot as that. I wish the thought that comes out of those graves could penetrate their consciousness. I wish that they could feel the moral obligation that rests upon us not to go back on those boys but to see the thing through, to see it through to the end and make good their redemption of the world. For nothing less depends upon this decision, nothing less than the liberation and salvation of the world.

"Now that the mists of this great question have cleared away, I believe that men will see the truth, eye to eye and face to face. There is one thing that the American people always rise to and extend their hand to, and that is the truth of justice and of liberty and of peace. We have accepted that truth and we are going to be led by it, and it is going to lead us, and through us the world, out into pastures of quietness and peace such as the world never dreamed of before."

Even before they dreamed that it was Wilson's last, the reporters thought it was a great speech. But it was the end. The series of public addresses that had made him famous and carried him from triumph to triumph through an all too short era of domestic reform, through an anxious neutrality, through war and victory finished here in the clear mountain twilight in a plea for the only fruit that would make the victory worth winning, a peace in which liberty and progress might be secure.

That night as the train clicked off the miles toward Kansas the break came. Grayson had the cars stopped for half an hour while Wilson enjoyed a quiet country walk beside the tracks. For the last time he felt the earth be-

neath a free stride, and he was so refreshed that dinner was more than usually cheerful. They all went to bed early, but before midnight he was tapping on the door of Mrs. Wilson's compartment adjoining his. She found him sitting on the side of his bed, resting his head on the back of a chair. The pain inside his skull was intolerable, but Grayson could not relieve it. Yet at four in the morning, when they sent for Tumulty, Wilson insisted that he must not interrupt his program. He talked with difficulty and could not restrain the tears that trickled down his cheeks, tears of pain and disappointment, but he was sure he would be able to keep his morning engagement in Wichita. He believed it right up to the moment when the train was slowing down for the Kansas town. With infinite labor he had dressed and shaved, but not even the stimulus of his work, which had lifted him out of many another slough of weariness, could spur his flagging strength now. He gave in, and the correspondents, who had expected to write accounts of the President's forty-first speech of the tour, were scrambling for wires to flash the news of Wilson's breakdown.

A few hours later the Presidential special pulled out of Wichita. At the end of it in a closely curtained car the last hope of the League of Nations, the league that was to mean peace in our time and all time, was flickering out in despairing small talk as the members of the little group tried to hide from each other their sense of impending tragedy. The 1,700-mile run to Washington was made in forty-eight hours of dull misery, but even in the White House Wilson could get no rest, no relief from pain, until on the morning of October 2 his wife found him unconscious on the bathroom floor. The whole left side of his

body was paralyzed by a stroke, and as he struggled back to consciousness, he must have known that for this time at least the fight for the League must go on without him.

3

That day the Senate stopped talking long enough to vote on Fall's amendments to take the United States out of every treaty commission except that on reparations—the Senator's sense of money was keen. They were beaten, 30 to 58. Two weeks later, while Wilson was able to hear brief reports of what went on, the amendments to give Shantung to China, but without any provisions for forcing Japan to obey the Senate's dictum, were lost by 35 to 55. On October 27, Moses's clause referring to the British Empire's six votes went down by 32 to 49, but a subtler variation offered by Johnson was defeated by only 38 to 40.

Lodge had never expected to be able to carry amendments. The real fight, he recognized, would be over reservations, and despite the August conference at the White House, there never was a strong move to pass them as declarations apart from the ratification resolution. Lodge and his friends always professed to believe in the treaty with these safeguards. But in their days of greatest power they never attempted to pass it, and in 1919 their strategy was the only sure method of blocking any ratification. Defeat of unconditional ratification was easy, since the Republicans held more than the necessary third and could count on a few Democratic votes besides. (When that proposition came to a vote, it lost by 38 to 53.) The Republican tactics were devoted to obtaining with the aid of the irreconcilables such strong reservations that no Wilson supporter and no Allied nation could accept them.

Then, since the irreconcilables would not accept the treaty even with reservations, the necessary two-thirds for ratification would still be lacking.

This procedure was delayed only by the repetitious debate, carried to such lengths that after listening half a dozen times or more to the reading by one side of an early Wilson article in favor of isolation and by the other of an early Lodge speech in favor of a league, Vice President Marshall could stand it no longer. He had been toughened by nearly seven years of presiding over the Senate, but he left the chair every time somebody again began either one of those recollections.

How little effect the debate had in altering the almost wholly political nature of the contest could be seen in the voting, although both sides professed the highest nonpartisan ideals. Fifteen reservations were adopted between November 7 and 18 and two rejected, but only in the case of the two was there any appreciable split in party lines. The first of these renounced American interest in any former German colonies; the second reserved to the United States the right to say what questions affected its honor or vital interests, none of which were to be submitted to the League in any form.

Of the fifteen reservations adopted, not one gained the support of more than ten Democrats, not one was opposed by more than a single Republican. The votes on those that hamstrung the League and any real chance of peace were typical. The first and most widely discussed, but not the most important, was a reservation to Article X saying that this country assumed no obligation to preserve "the territorial integrity or political independence of any other country" except by joint resolution of Congress in each particular case as it arose.

"This is a rejection of the Covenant," Wilson had commented in one of his last Western speeches.

When the vote came on this question, supposedly divorced from politics, every Republican Senator was recorded in its favor by vote or pair and only five Democrats joined them. The score was the same on a statement that the United States would refuse to be bound by any economic sanctions against a treaty breaker, thus depriving the League of its teeth before they had been cut. The other vital reservation, which stimulated less debate but struck more surely at the only practical condition under which war could be outlawed, had the support of the entire Republican membership and seven Democrats. It provided that even if the United States ever should agree to any limitation of armaments "it reserves the right to increase such armaments without the consent of the council whenever the United States is threatened with invasion or engaged in war." Since this country would be the sole judge of what constituted a threat, this reservation served notice that the United States could never be bound by an arms limitation treaty, no matter how overwhelmingly its government and people might support the plan. It meant that such limitation, upon which alone successful international co-operation could be based, was an impossibility everywhere, since no other power would dare consent to disarm while the United States reserved the right to build up its forces as it pleased. A reservation that would never have been accepted by Japan, whose willingness to wreck the treaty was as thoroughgoing as that of any Senator, refused to recognize the Shantung settlement. But again no provision for compelling Japan's respect was appended.

By this time Wilson was well enough to receive occasional visitors, dictate important messages and scribble a

few lines in a woefully shaky hand on little sheets of paper. Just before the final vote on ratification, he wrote Hitchcock in reply to a request for a word of guidance to Democratic Senators:

"I should hesitate to offer it in any detail but I assume that the Senators only desire it upon the all-important question of the final vote on the resolution containing the many reservations of Senator Lodge. On that I cannot hesitate, for in my opinion the resolution in that form does not provide for ratification, but rather for the nullification of the treaty."

Obviously he was correct. Indeed, the League was wrecked by the insistence of powerful nations upon making their own reservations as they went along and sabotaging every effort at practical, effective disarmament. But in Wilson's refusal to offer advice "in any detail" is a plain hint that he was still unopposed to genuinely interpretive declarations or even reservations that would not wreck every chance of letting the treaty work. That last was a big concession, for he was acutely aware of the difficulty of getting reservations, however mild, accepted by the Allies. The theory that the rest of the world would have adopted them gladly rests on no discernible foundation. Lloyd George and Clemenceau were often urged to make a declaration to that effect, Bliss asking whether the reservations did not represent "the attitude that will be taken by your own governments." The two statesmen never issued the desired assurances, and for the very good reason that they did not propose to permit the United States Senate to be the only power in the world to amend the treaty.

Republican unity did not survive long enough to give ratification a majority, much less the needed two-thirds.

The actual count on the treaty with reservations, 39 to 55 was almost the same, in fact, as that for unconditional ratification—38 to 53. Thirteen irreconcilable Republicans deserted Lodge, as no doubt he had planned, to join the Democrats who stood by Wilson. Five Democrats were with the minority.

Mrs. Wilson, who scarcely ever left her husband in these weeks, acting as a sort of super-secretary and guardian against intruders, brought him the news. He was quite silent for a moment, but the day by day voting on reservations had softened the blow.

"All the more reason I must get well," he said at last, "and try again to bring this country to a sense of its great opportunity and greater responsibility."

4

Though flat on his back, he was still in fighting mood. He was not made for the intricate business of bargaining one set of principles against another. Nor did he take kindly to advice that he should try. From House, himself sick, came a letter urging him to agree to submit the treaty with reservations to the Allies and thus place the responsibility for what might happen on the Senate for all men to see. The Colonel was thinking of his friend and his party, although he did say that failure to ratify in some form "would be a disaster not less to civilization than to you." Three days later House added that this was not only his own view. He had "checked it up with some of your friends in whom I felt you had confidence, for the matter is of such incalculable importance that I did not dare rely solely on my own judgment."

Neither letter ever received a reply, and the correspondence between the friends ended. Wilson was in no mood

for surrender and he emphatically did dare rely on his own judgment. The idea of placing his personal reputation above the real issue at stake was to him as unprincipled as to compromise. Just how far he would have gone in accepting reservations after he knew there was no hope of getting anything better is only matter for conjecture. He never got the chance. The Senate was unable to muster two-thirds for any form of ratification.

That result did not seem necessarily final as 1919 ran out in recrimination and excuse. Hitchcock thought he might be able to gain some of the avowed treaty supporters among the Republicans for mild reservations that would not upset the whole settlement, and Wilson was willing to submit to the delay of Allied consideration since that would be no greater waste of time than the alternative of fighting the issue out in the 1920 Presidential campaign.

All through the winter he remained in bed, and gradually the horribly twisted, sunken expression of his face smoothed and filled out. A slight power of movement returned to his left arm. The specialists talked hopefully of recovery. He was still secluded from all save a very few callers, and rumors of his condition were flying thick through Washington, where gossip about a Chief Executive seldom waits on illness. Most occupants of the White House had had their bitterer opponents whisper that the poor President's mind had failed, but in Wilson's case his seclusion and the extent of his illness made the stories more readily believed. They went so far that the Senate majority decided on a "smelling committee," as Wilson called it, to invade the sickroom and test the patient's mental ability. The ineffable Fall, having introduced the resolution, was the Republican chosen for the task, from which even Lodge had the good taste to shrink. Hitch-

cock was the unwilling Democrat. The gentleman from New Mexico, who affected the dress of a prosperous frontiersman until he exchanged it for prison garb, already had such a reputation in Washington that there are those alive who still believe he threw back the bedclothes to see if the sick man was shamming. Actually the conference was not nearly so dramatic.

"Well, Mr. President, we have all been praying for you," Fall remarked unctuously.

"Which way, Senator?" the patient asked, and Fall laughed appreciatively.

"If I could have got out of bed," Wilson said later, "I would have hit the man. Why did he want to put me in bad with the Almighty? He must have known that God would take the opposite view from him on any subject."

By Christmas Wilson was able to sit up for a few hours a day, and early in the new year he dealt with essential Cabinet changes. First was the resignation of Glass to accept a Senatorship. Houston was promoted to the Treasury, being replaced by Meredith of Iowa. Then in February the President demanded Lansing's resignation. He felt that the Secretary's accumulated disloyalty, as he regarded it, was past bearing with, and the dismissal was curt. Lansing had many friends, and they were pardonably angry, but he was more ostentatiously defended by Wilson's enemies. Bainbridge Colby, a former Progressive who was becoming gradually but firmly set in conservative ways, took his place. Lane, who resigned in March because of illness, was succeeded by John Barton Payne.

This last change came at the height of the new Senate fight over the treaty. A group of leaders on both sides had failed in private talks to reach agreement, and when Lodge reported the document out again, the reservations were

with it in almost their original form. The debate covered the old ground, but some Democrats were willing to surrender for the sake of peace and to prove to constituents that they were "reasonable." When the question was put on March 19, there was at last a majority for ratification, 49 to 35, far short of the necessary two-thirds. Whereupon the treaty was returned to the executive, and the issue moved into the Presidential campaign.

5

As a drama, this quadrennial play displayed all the faults of a performance of "Hamlet" without the Prince of Denmark. Wilson could not take his role. He had been having his only air and exercise in a wheel chair. When on April 13 he met his Cabinet for the first time after his illness, Houston was painfully shocked. The alert, eager man he had known was shrunk to a helpless figure unable to see clearly and speaking with difficulty. Houston thought he put up a brave show, but it was only that, and after an hour Mrs. Wilson came in and suggested that it was time to go. At later sessions Wilson seemed to be stronger, but he would take no part in the Democratic Convention, and it was obvious that he would be unable to be active in the campaign. He remained so silent that even those closest to him never knew whether he really favored the nomination of McAdoo or not, although his son-in-law was one of the leading contenders, handicapped rather than helped by the jeer of "Crown Prince."

The Republican Convention excited the invalid in the White House more, as it did most of the country. He refrained from comment while the managers of Wood and Governor Frank O. Lowden of Illinois killed their men's chances with money—$700,000 of the General's unprece-

dentedly huge fund came from Wilson's old Princeton antagonist, Procter. When the famous "smoke-filled room," where Colonel Harvey played a congenial role and won a rich reward, disgorged the obtuse Harding as the nominee on a platform even more flimsily noncommittal than such paper edifices generally are, the President struck his one powerful note of the campaign. He called Louis Seibold, chief political reporter of *The New York World,* to the White House and gave him a story that won the year's Pulitzer Prize. Besides being a vigorous blast against his foes as the "apotheosis of reaction," more fit to follow Bismarck than Lincoln, the account was a vindication of his refusal to resign because of disability. Seibold found him as mentally alert as ever he had been, as keen in his judgment, as firm in his convictions.

Of course he could not be again the vigorous stump speaker. As the Democrats wrangled through days in San Francisco to a choice, the barrage of pleas that Wilson endorse this man or that grew more intense, but he not only restrained himself, he restrained Tumulty, although the poor fellow lived for such political exercises. However, the Irishman was loyal and managed to be mum as the delegates fought their way to the nomination of Governor James M. Cox of Ohio and the handsome, talented Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Franklin D. Roosevelt.

The campaign, starting in the confusion of convention juggling by both parties, never did work itself into a clear-cut decision on the League. The Republicans succeeded not only in straddling the fence but in standing on both sides as well. Johnson and Borah went about crying that the unholy covenant must go. Hughes and Taft and Nicholas Murray Butler assured the country that the only way to get into the League was to elect Harding and

Calvin Coolidge. Those gentlemen characteristically said nothing at all, Harding with a voluble good nature, Coolidge with taciturn reserve. On the other side, Cox proved no ball of fire. A slow man, sincere and earnest but without any real message to take to the people, he inspired no wave of enthusiasm. By the time the campaign closed, Wilson was almost the only man in the country who thought he had a chance. The regular Tuesday Cabinet meetings had been resumed on October 19, but there was no arguing with the President as he expressed his faith in the common folk. Lane, hearing about it, wrote admiringly that "surely such faith, if only in oneself, is almost genius!"

"You need not worry," Wilson assured his ten official aides on election morning. "The American people will not turn Cox down and elect Harding. A great moral issue is involved. The people can and will see it. In the long run they do the right thing. They are on to the Republicans. I am receiving letters from people throughout the country which indicate that they are not going to be deceived."

But the people were not voting their moral sense that day. They were voting their weariness, their bewilderment, their greed for the tinsel of prosperity so irresponsibly promised them by Republican spellbinders. They were voting their disgust with war frauds and their reaction from war idealism. They were voting their material interests, those of them who were cynically aware of what those interests were. They were voting their fears and prejudices. They left their hopes and ideals for another day.

The result was the Harding landslide. Hughes or Butler might say optimistically that now we would have a

League of Nations. But Wilson knew very well that this was a false reading of the November returns. He accepted defeat at last; his own work was done unless he could gain strength to lead a new fight all over again, and at its next meeting his Cabinet found him quite calm. He frankly expressed the opinion that the cause of peace and reconstruction had received a serious setback, but when someone suggested that he could put his successor "in a hole" by leaving the Versailles Treaty on the Vice President's desk, he replied:

"But I do not wish to put Mr. Harding in a hole. The situation of the nation and of the world is too serious to make it thinkable that I or any other good citizen should desire to hamper the next President. I should like to help Mr. Harding, and I hope that every good citizen will try to help him."

He brightened at the prospect of laying down the cares of office. He brightened even more when hopeful stories appeared of the first meeting of the League Assembly on November 15—he had been asked to issue the call for it himself. His own share in the great experiment was recognized concretely by the Nobel Prize Committee, which awarded him the year's peace prize in December. But in these months of his defeat, Wilson was President in name only, waiting for his release while all eyes turned to his triumphant successor.

The winter passed slowly in the White House, with no entertaining, no brilliance, few visitors. On March 1 its master met his Cabinet for the last time. Houston, coming early, caught a glimpse of the frail, thin figure toiling painfully toward him. The Secretary turned hastily aside into a room where he could not see the pitiful spectacle, and waited until he was sure the President was safely

seated in the Cabinet room. There was no real business. Someone asked if Wilson meant to write the history of his administration. No, the country already knew every thought he had had in eight years. What then would he do?

"I am going to try to teach ex-Presidents how to behave."

A little later Colby rose to lead the ten in their traditional little speeches of leave-taking. Houston followed, but before he could finish he saw that Wilson's eyes were moist, his lips trembling.

"Gentlemen," he apologized in a quavering tone, "it is one of the handicaps of my physical condition that I cannot control myself as I have been accustomed to do. God bless you all."

Abashed, embarrassed, awkward, they filed by to shake his hand, murmur a simple phrase of farewell. Then they were gone, striding freely out into the raw March weather, but Woodrow Wilson sat on, slumped in his chair, cane at his side, useless arm dangling. The tears were wet upon his finely seamed, gray face under the thin white hair as he lingered, struggling for the mastery over his emotions which had once been so easy, a broken warrior, alone in the tragedy of failure.

XXI

The Wreckage

INAUGURATION DAY WAS MORE CHEERFUL. WILSON ALWAYS got himself in hand more easily to face his enemies than his friends, and on March 4 he was smiling and at ease as he greeted Harding in the White House for the traditional ride through cheering throngs to the Capitol. No one who saw them, however, failed to be impressed by the contrast. Wilson's sickroom pallor was accentuated by his companion's ruddy tan; the wasted figure of the President looked shrunken and beaten beside the vigorous movements and happy smile of his successsor as their car carried them to the scene of renunciation for the one and triumph for the other.

The smile faded only once from the invalid's haggard features. That was when, seated in the President's Room at the Capitol to sign last minute bills, the Congress committee to announce the session's end presented itself. Its spokesman was Henry Cabot Lodge, come to deliver in his cold, aloof manner the formal message that the two houses awaited the President's pleasure. There had been a small crowd of legislators swarming about with farewells for Wilson and greetings for Harding, who sat in the back of the room waiting for noon and his inauguration. They drew aside, silenced, as the Senator spoke his little piece and Wilson's face set rather grimly. Some, knowing the feelings that animated the antagonists, actually looked for

a scene of anger and recrimination. His intimates saw, indeed, that Wilson had to make an effort to steady himself, but he replied quite calmly:

"Senator Lodge, I have no further communication to make. I thank you. Good morning."

The committee withdrew. Harding and the others followed, for it was nearly time for him to step to the center of the stage. Only Mrs. Wilson, Tumulty and Grayson remained behind, and a few minutes later they were counting the twelve deep bell notes that announced to the world that the New Freedom was over. Normalcy began its reign as the little group left the building.

The Wilsons went to a house on S Street, bought for his retirement, and for the first time since a bubbling enthusiast for educational reform ran into Jack Hibben's house in Princeton to be congratulated on his election as president of the University, Woodrow Wilson could regard himself as no longer a public figure. His own plans were modest. He still dreamed sometimes of the great "Philosophy of Politics"—the reason for settling in Washington had been the availability of the Library of Congress. Perhaps it was for this work that a few weeks before leaving the White House he bought the collected writings of Hamilton, in the edition edited by Lodge, saying he wished to make early use of them. The only part he ever wrote was the dedication, an eloquent and touching tribute to his wife. As a matter of practical economy he formed a law partnership—shades of the young Atlanta attorney!—with his Secretary of State, but almost all the cases that came in were of a nature that seemed to him improper for a former President to handle, so the firm of Wilson & Colby was soon dissolved to give the junior partner a chance to make a living.

Life in S Street settled into a quiet routine. Wilson left his home only for a daily drive and a weekly visit to the theater. He read the papers, answered mail with the assistance of his brother-in-law, Randolph Bolling, now acting as his secretary, saw a good many visitors in his library and on rare occasions entertained more formally at dinner. On the whole it was a life of aloof observation, and the sympathetic, garrulous, indiscreet but lovable Lane, himself dying, wrote:

"I look at the paper and see 'Harding' at the top of every column. Then I think of W. W. looking at the paper and seeing the same headlines. Oh, what unhappiness! Not all the devices of Tumulty for keeping alive illusions of grandeur could offset those headlines. Ungrateful world! Ununderstanding world!"

But Wilson was not suffering from illusions. What he had was faith, and though he saw clearly how all he had fought and worked for was being beaten to earth in a scramble of greed, selfishness and hate, he was of too staunch Presbyterian stock to despair of mankind. His religion and his philosophy, his reading of history and his study of his fellow men combined to convince him that the good cause would rise again, after what struggles and disasters he could only guess. He had been out of office twenty months when he wrote to Cobb of *The World:*

"My present formula is: The world has been made safe for democracy but democracy has not yet made the world safe from irrational radicalism and revolution, and our task is to remove by rational and enlightened reform the soil in which such weeds grow. God send that we may have the intelligence and steadfastness to do it. If the United States does not serve the world in this matter, I know of no democracy that can."

Those twenty months had not been encouraging for believers in such an American mission. In the White House, Harding was happily giving jobs to old pals with a lack of discrimination unequaled since the Grant administration of unsavory memory. Fall in the Interior Department was giving the navy's oil in return for ridiculously inadequate bribes, considering the value of the leases he signed. Harry M. Daugherty was giving patronage and immunity and very bad advice from the Attorney General's office. A hitherto obscure Pittsburgh millionaire, Andrew W. Mellon, was giving the country a fiscal administration that won him the closest thing to a halo that the taxpayers in the upper income brackets could devise. The so-called Ohio Gang was giving a remarkable exhibition of small-town ward politics, looting and carousing, while the unequaled corruption of prohibition covered the whole with a smear of slime, cynical and contemptible.

Among the respectables in the new Cabinet were two from whom the League might have expected some support. Hughes as Secretary of State, Hoover as Secretary of Commerce were counted among those who believed in the principle. Hughes, who had told the country that Harding was the man to get it into the League safely and properly, accepted with equanimity the complete burial of the Versailles Treaty in his own department. No effort was made to get it ratified, with or without reservations. A sneaking sort of peace with Germany was signed, reserving a claim to a share in any profits that might be forthcoming and in effect denying that Americans had fought for anything. True, the Secretary won credit for a treaty of naval limitation that saved a lot of money but had no influence on genuine disarmament. As for Hoover, whose enlistment in Republican ranks had somewhat surprised a country that

for no particular reason had come to regard him as a liberal, he devoted himself to his Commerce Department with an assiduity that was to make him President. At the same time he worked himself gradually to the rather muddled conclusion that Wilson had "won some victories for sanity" but that it would be folly to follow them up.

In Europe there was little more to cheer about, only the infant League bravely but vainly struggling to direct the whirlwind. Clemenceau had preceded Wilson into private life, and the unbridled fury of Poincaré guided France along the path of blind, unprofitable revenge to a brief supremacy of arms on a turbulent Continent. She seemed to have forged her ring of satellites around a Germany groping under a democratic constitution through inflation and poverty toward a recovery that would be tainted with the Lorrainer's own implacable spirit. Bolshevism, stopped at the gates of Warsaw in a career of conquest, had turned back upon itself in Russia. Cut off from the world by a curtain of prejudice, indifference and censorship, it was fixing upon the country a strong dictatorship, whether of the proletariat or a more exclusive element was not yet apparent. Italy was in the hands of the gangsters. Lloyd George, by wily Parliamentary tactics, had preserved power longer than any of the World War leaders, but he too fell at last. The undiluted Tory government that succeeded him could hardly be called an improvement. The complicated Turkish settlement, partly upset by the collapse of Greek armies weary of fighting for unknown lands and unwanted privileges, was a far less alarming portent than the decision of a French-dominated Reparations Commission to saddle Germany with ridiculously impossible terms.

These things, one might say, should not have disturbed

the tranquillity of a home in S Street. But Wilson had tied his life and his health too closely to the fate of Europe not to be affected when Poincaré goaded his people into an invasion of the Ruhr to collect the uncollectable reparations or when one of the new states increased its arms budget. He saw Clemenceau and Lloyd George each once more when those colleagues in the great adventure visited America. He talked with them of the mess littler men were making of their settlement. To Lloyd George he talked too of the domestic political scene, of the recent death of Harding, just in time to escape some of the worst scandals of his regime. He recalled the story of Oscar Wilde appproaching a self-important ass to inquire superciliously:

"Are you supposed to be anyone in particular?"

"Coolidge," Wilson added, "is no one in particular."

The League of Nations was not mentioned, and soon Grayson signaled to Lloyd George that it was time to leave, for the invalid tired easily. It was not long after that, on the eve of the fifth anniversary of the armistice, that Wilson made his first and last radio address, reaching, the papers said, the largest audience ever heard by man. His strength was fading so rapidly that he spent weeks in preparing a simple message. Next day, when delegations of official personages and little groups of ordinary folk gathered outside the home of the man who five years before had been almost worshiped by millions, he forced himself to stand in the doorway, and for the last time Woodrow Wilson spoke to his public.

"I am not one of those that have the least anxiety about the triumph of the principles I have stood for," he said. "I have seen fools resist Providence before, and I have seen their destruction, as will come upon these again,

utter destruction and contempt. That we shall prevail is as sure as that God reigns."

"Surely," as Lane said, "such faith, even in oneself, is almost genius!"

But Wilson's genius went beyond his faith, great as that was. No other principles than his have won such enthusiasm from all those who hope for peace. No large or important body of opinion has supposed that international co-operation can be based on other principles, except the directly opposing sterile philosophy of the totalitarians leading to a peace of death based on crushing the aspirations, culture and liberties of men to a dead level of blind, degrading submission.

At the end of his life, it was a fashionable intellectual exercise to explain that Wilson's principles or ideals had failed, that the Versailles Treaty was a document of slavery and injustice. Actually, of course, Wilson's principles were never tried. To do that we must wait for the day when men believe they will find safety in a "partnership of democratic nations," and form a league based on it. That the one covenanted at Paris might have grown into such an organization was all that its chief architect ever claimed for it.

That the alternative led straight back to the disaster from which the world of 1918 longed so ardently to escape is plain enough today and needs no underlining. Wilson had seen in his youth that peace after a bitter war was achieved only through men in whom bitterness had died. That was what erased the horrors of Reconstruction in the South and paved the way for a real national unity. In the early 'twenties, only the comparative impartiality of the Americans, relatively unharmed by war, could have begun to eradicate European hatreds and

pave the way for international unity. Of course it might not have worked, of course war might have come anyway, but what was there to lose? To wait for perfection is to wait forever.

"In differences between nations which go beyond the limited range of arbitrable questions peace can only be maintained by putting behind it the force of united nations determined to uphold it and to prevent war . . . It might easily be said that this idea, which is not a new one, is impracticable; but it is better than the idea that war can be stopped by language, by speechmaking, by vain agreements, which no one would carry out when the stress came, by denunciations of war and laudations of peace, in which all men agree . . . It may seem Utopian at this moment to suggest a union of civilized nations in order to put a controlling force behind the maintenance of peace and international order . . . At all events, it is along this path that we must travel if we are to attain in any measure to the end we all desire of peace upon earth."

Thus spoke, of all people, Henry Cabot Lodge in 1917. He changed his mind later, but he was right the first time. What changed his mind, aside from jealousy and the chance of partisan advantage, what changed the minds of better men was the fact that there were obvious, serious flaws in the Versailles Treaty. They were not as bad as they were made to seem after all the generous and most of the sensible provisions had been ignored or violated. And in later years the follies in the Austrian and Turkish settlements, committed while the Senate defeat of the German treaty was leading the victors to ever increasing oppression in an effort to safeguard themselves, were added to the Versailles account.

The cry then was the horrible *sauve qui peut,* slogan

of despair. National safety first was the goal for all, big or little, and in scrambling for it the hard-headed cynics who scoffed at Wilsonian ideals proved that their very struggles unsettled the security for which they strove and made international safety impossible. Paradoxically they found, too, that the burden of victory is heavier than the burden of defeat. It was too heavy for the conquerors of 1918 to bear after they had followed the example of the United States in discarding the Versailles theory of co-operation in carrying the load.

None of the men who wrote that theory into the treaty thought very well of their handiwork, just as none of the men who drafted the Constitution of the United States liked that document. Both were accepted by their authors as the best obtainable under the circumstances. The great point about the Constitution of 1787—with its sanction of slavery, oligarchical Senate, carefully undemocratic method of electing a President, overemphasis on property and absence of a bill of rights—was that it was a start toward an orderly, peaceful union that could be made as progressive and democratic, or as reactionary and oppressive, as those who lived under it decided. The same was true of the Covenant; both depended upon the good will and good faith with which they were carried out. If in 1788 New York had rejected the Constitution, as she came very near to doing, and had insisted upon rigid isolation, the fate of the Federal Union could hardly have been brighter than that of the League of Nations.

As for the "peace worth guaranteeing," Wilson was as well pleased with it as anyone, and the best he could say was that it was not basically unjust, "much as I should have liked to have certain features altered." Bliss, among

the wisest of all the men in Paris, admitted only a few days before the treaty was signed:

"If I ever had any illusions, they are all dispelled."

Yet he was an ardent advocate of ratification. House and White and Lansing, Lloyd George, Balfour, Clemenceau and every man among the thousands of delegates, experts and specialists were well aware that the ideal of peace with justice had not been achieved. Hoover, who came in time to feel that the adjustment of Europe's boundaries on any system of permanent peace was impossible, left with Wilson a summary of what most of those who helped draw up the treaty thought of it. But even when his own political fortunes had left him the prey to profound discouragement, Hoover said of his World War chief:

"He hoped that, with time for hate and avarice to cool, the League of Nations could reconstruct [repair] the failures of the treaty. Americans will yet be proud of that American who fought a fight for righteousness although he partially lost."

Hoover, as usual, was conservative. Wilson knew before he died that he had wholly lost, except perhaps as his words and memory might help a later generation. The years after his death proved even more conclusively how completely he had lost. War flames in Europe, Asia and Africa because of it, and the world swings back to the mad nightmare in which it tossed so painfully when Wilson rose on a day in April to call a nation to arms because "the world must be made safe for democracy." The issues are clearer now; the peace for which he led the United States to battle is yet to be won; his ideals have yet to be put into practice.

Both his faith and the logic of a fine mind trained in

history convinced him that the world would come or be driven to those principles. And as he slowly weakened after his sixty-fifth birthday, the flood of messages and inquiries showed that to many thousands he was still, though helpless, the leader of that cause. By the end of January he was so ill that the ominous practice of issuing physicians' bulletins was adopted. All through the first two nights of February, 1924, groups of men and women came to stand in curiosity or sympathy outside the house. On the morning of the third, a bright clear Sunday, Woodrow Wilson passed quietly out of life while hundreds, gathered under the bare trees in S Street, knelt on the cold pavement to pray for the man who had fought for peace.

Acknowledgments

Mrs. Woodrow Wilson's permission to consult the Wilson Papers and to quote from hitherto unpublished letters of her husband have made this book possible, especially as it included the assistance of Miss Katharine E. Brand, custodian of the Collection, whose thorough familiarity with the eleven hundred boxes of Papers greatly simplified the task of research. I am grateful, too, to the Manuscripts Division of the Library of Congress, where the Papers are housed, for the use of their facilities, and to the staff of the New York Society Library.

My indebtedness to Ray Stannard Baker's official "Life and Letters" and "Woodrow Wilson and World Settlement" will be apparent to all who have read those eleven volumes. "The Public Papers of Woodrow Wilson," edited by Mr. Baker and William E. Dodd, and Professor Dodd's own works have also been much used. Most of Wilson's earlier biographers—William Allen White, John K. Winkler, David Lawrence, Mrs. E. G. Reid, James Kerney—have offered suggestive points. "The Intimate Papers of Colonel House" tell not only much of the story of war and peace but also what George Sylvester Viereck was pleased to call "The Strangest Friendship in History." Tumulty's "Woodrow Wilson as I Know Him," and such personal memoirs as those of Mrs. Wilson and Eleanor Wilson McAdoo shed great light on life and work in the White House, as do the recollections of Ike Hoover and Mrs. Elizabeth Jaffray.

Memoirs, letters and biographies for the period are unusually exhaustive. From them we get the stories of the men with whom Wilson worked or fought—Bryan, Lansing, McAdoo, Houston, Josephus Daniels, Newton D. Baker, Redfield and Lane in the Cabinet; Lloyd George, Clemenceau, Balfour, Earl Grey, Venizelos, Bethmann-Hollweg and Brockdorff-Rantzau among the statesmen; Pershing, Bliss, Foch, William S. Sims, Leonard Wood, Hindenburg, Ludendorff and von Tirpitz among the soldiers and sailors; Gerard, Page, van Dyke, Whitlock, Herrick, Spring-Rice and Bernstorff among the diplomats; Taft, Theodore Roosevelt, Lodge, Hoover, Bernard M. Baruch, Thomas R. Marshall, Henry White, William F. McCombs, Champ Clark, Frank I. Cobb, Henry Morgenthau, Samuel Gompers and Elihu Root among other notable Americans.

The literature of the peace conference is almost inexhaustible. For it, as well as for the period of neutrality and war preceding it, the State Department's "Foreign Relations" series presents the most complete account. H. M. V. Temperley's "History of the Peace Conference of Paris" is a scholarly and authoritative work. Consideration also has been given to the writings of a great many of the participants and observers, such as various members of the Inquiry, Professor Shotwell and Professor Seymour particularly. Also critical, narrative or analytical offerings by John Maynard Keynes, George Creel, A. J. Toynbee, André Tardieu, Léon Bourgeois, E. J. Dillon, Winston Churchill, Lord Riddell, Dr. Benes, etc.

In the conduct of the war and peace, certain Congressional documents are interesting. Among them may be cited the Hearings on the treaty conducted by the Foreign Relations Committee, the volumes of the Congressional

Record recording the Senate debate and the investigations of various phases of the war effort, particularly the Hughes aircraft report and the munitions and profiteering inquiries after the war. Newspapers, chiefly the New York *World, Times* and *Tribune,* and magazine articles from many sources have been drawn upon.

The material thus comes from many and varied sources; its presentation here is designed to help interpret for today the lesson we failed to learn yesterday.

D. L.

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