

WASHINGTON SEES IT THROUGH

EDMUND DUFFY

THE skeptical citizen has a number of notions about the machinery of government at Washington. He doubts that the recent upheavals, investigations, and explosions have seriously disturbed the politicians. The excitement, he fancies, is largely journalistic. He pictures Cabinet officers, Senators, and Representatives as calm and methodical through it all: the Representative sending out his annual consignment of lettuce seed, the Senator urbanely directing visiting constituents to the Washington Monument, and the Cabinet officer sending his warmest greetings to the less nomadic voters back home. The skeptic doubts that governmental Washington is shaken from boundary to boundary by the tempest in a teapot. And, in point of fact, the skeptic is right.

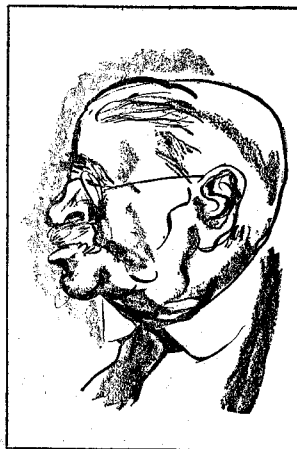
Washington has an even tenor. The main channel of its life goes on steadily, ceaselessly, unaffected by storms of even such tremendous fierceness as those that have passed through there this year. The numerous temples dedicated to Government remain unshaken. Their tenants remain amiable and calm. Senator Magnus Johnson found time, while posing, to tell the artist an anecdote of his youth in Minnesota. Senator Copeland admonished him to be careful of his diet. Senator Cummins for a moment regarded it as of paramount importance that his hair is not as long as it was depicted. There is any amount of conversation possible in Washington without reference to front-page topics.



*The Little Father of all the
Americans*



BASCOM SLEMP
*Emissary of the Old Guard
at headquarters*



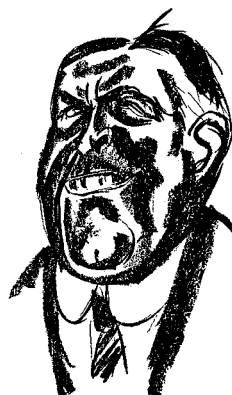
FRANK W. STEARNS
*The President's guide,
philosopher, and friend*



COPELAND



REED



UNDERWOOD

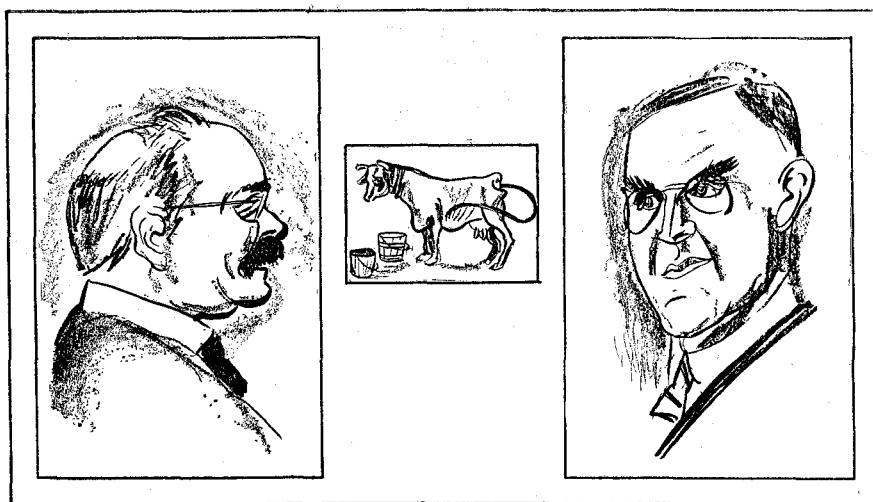
A Quartette of Democrats



EDWARDS



A savior of the nation, in the act of saving it, — a daily occurrence in the Senate



SENATOR MAGNUS JOHNSON, *illustrious dirt farmer*, and HENRY C. WALLACE, *Secretary of Agriculture*, with the cow that they milked and immortalized



Greeting the Boys from home



HENRY CABOT LODGE
*Inventor of a self-start-
ing World Court, that
wouldn't start*

THE CORN BELT RENAISSANCE

WEARE HOLBROOK

THANKS to the new school of novelists we are all pretty thoroughly versed in the secret yearnings and complexes of the average farmer's wife, to say nothing of the average hired girl. What will happen to these unbappy creatures when they begin to read the stories about themselves? And would the well-known farmers' problem be solved at last if the average farmer could be persuaded to read contemporary American fiction? A professional book-reviewer nowadays feels qualified to go out and run any farm in Iowa.

THERE is feverish literary activity in the region of the Mississippi Valley. Countless novels are being published, magazines founded, prizes awarded, in an attempt to establish a distinctive *genre*. And a stupendous monotony has been achieved.

Almost every unsuccessful newspaper reporter and small-time college instructor seems to be writing "elemental" stories about the strong,

silent, bovinely stupid women of the Great Open Spaces Where Men Are Morons, — women who yield stolidly to the mute, inglorious embraces of the hired-man, and then pitch hay by way of penance. Apparently the corn belt renaissance has reached such heights that the writers outnumber their subjects, for many of them are writing about the same hired-girl. Which indicates that the servant problem exists in literature as elsewhere.

The chief characteristic of the mass of fiction emanating from the central States is its solid sincerity. It is honest, it is earnest, — and it is rather tiresome. The reader feels impelled to cry, "How true!" and again, "How dull!"

Not a clod, not a drip of the old pump, not a single black-rimmed finger nail escapes the eye of the mid-western Maupassant. His ox-like characters move slowly through a scene as explicit as a Sears-Roebuck catalogue. All are equipped with genealogies covering at least three generations. The future dwindles into a noncommittal row of dots, but the past is appallingly definite, — a welter of geographical, historical, and biological data. As Aunt Clarissa says, "It's just like reading the 'Weekly Democrat,' only not so interesting."

Interesting it may not be, yet there is no jollier way to spend a long winter evening than to settle oneself in a big, over-stuffed chair by the fire, light a twenty-five-cent cigar, and read a