

policy has been equivocal and morally weak. It has offered the world no standard of values and no splendid indignation. American citizens lie murdered at the bottom of the Atlantic, and Count von Bernstorff is still the accredited representative at Washington of the government that sent them to their death. That is not a pleasant thought for Americans. Nor is it a thought which is balanced by the new note which comes as I write, protesting against the alleged interference with the American mail-bag. I grow tired of that mail-bag.

For the personal character and political aims of Mr. Wilson I have the profoundest admiration. I understand the difficult course he has had to steer. I realise how wise and statesmanlike his action has been, compared with the amiable but mindless pacifism of Mr. Bryan. I am sure that he has far-reaching purposes in connection with the part, the disinterested part, which America will play in the settlement of the world when the great tragedy that overshadows our lives and drains our blood is over. There is no one whom I would more willingly see exercising his influence in that struggle of the peacemakers than the President of the United States. But I think he would have come to that task with more authority if there had been in him more of the passion of indignation and less of the determination to see that no matter whether blood was in one scale or cotton in the other, the balance was always true. For we do not admit that this is a case of Tweedledum and Tweedledee. We know it is not. America knows it is not.

I have never held, and there are few to-day who would hold, that we have any special claim on the consideration of the United States. I do not think we earned any such special consideration in the circumstances of the War of 1812 or during the Civil War. But the cause of liberty and humanity has very peculiar claims on the United States. And even we do not forget that in this war the Monroe Doctrine is shielded by the British navy. Take that navy away and give Germany the victory, and the Monroe Doctrine is as though it were written in water. Nor do we forget that much as we may differ in many things, the civilization that we are spending our blood and treasure to preserve in the world is the civilization that you wish to preserve. Let us get below the mail-bag issue to the underlying truth that possesses us in common—the truth that this world cannot live by the doctrine of might is right, and that in the struggle against that doctrine it is we who have our faces to the light and our enemy that would lead us back into darkness.

A. G. GARDINER.

London,
January 27th.

The Inside of a Convention

MODERN American politics has seldom offered a more complete example of the subversion of the ideals of Democratic government than has just been afforded by the New York State Republican Convention. The Convention, officially labelled as "unofficial," was of course nothing of the kind. In intent and in effect it tore into shreds the far-famed primary law, but the voting sheep who will go to the polls in April will be no more blindly subservient to the will of the machine leaders than were the majority of the 832 delegates who gathered to the "unofficial" convention in Carnegie Hall.

From the outset there was but one question at issue, and about 800 of the delegates had as much to do with the settling of that question as the Rajah of Swat. The question was decided by a handful of men who gathered in a stuffy little room in the headquarters of the Republican State Committee, and another handful who held a secret conclave in the Republican Club. The question was simply this: was William Barnes, Jr. to maintain his grip on the party machinery in the state, or was control to pass to Governor Charles S. Whitman? This major issue involved several others of more or less importance, such as Mr. Barnes' determination to crush any incipient sentiment in favor of Theodore Roosevelt, and Governor Whitman's feverish efforts to prevent a complete blight descending on his Presidential aspirations; but the one big thing at stake was the personal fortunes of Mr. Barnes.

In the tobacco-laden atmosphere of the state committee rooms about twenty political reporters lounged on the morning of the decisive day. They occupied a strategic position between the little room where the fate of the delegates to the national convention was being decided, and that other room where a committee on resolutions was trying to decide whether Governor Whitman should be slain forthright or just politically mutilated. The majority of the twenty reporters were veterans of many political conventions and they shared no illusions. About noon a younger and less sophisticated member rushed in with the news that the convention had been called to order without waiting for the result of the deliberations in the two little rooms. The older men smiled. One of them said to the youthful enthusiast: "The convention was called to order last night in the Lotos Club and is concluding its sessions right here. As soon as this gang has decided how best to carry out Brother Barnes' orders we will all go up to Carnegie Hall and let the free and independent voter in on the secret."

The reporter knew what he was talking about. The majority of the delegates who sat by the hundred in Carnegie Hall imagining they were taking

part in the solemn deliberations of a great party in a great state were in fact mere rubber stamps, who in due time would and did endorse the decisions of the handful in the two little rooms without even a clear idea of what they were endorsing. Every newspaper office in New York knew a week before the convention opened just about what would be done. There was some difference of opinion as to the amount of strength Governor Whitman could muster and to what extent he was to be mangled by the Barnes machine, but there was never any doubt as to the purpose and meaning of the convention.

Mr. Barnes laid his plans with all the skill in practical politics for which he is noted. The first step, taken far in advance, was to have the representation to the convention based on senatorial districts instead of congressional districts. The greater the number of districts the smoother the operation of the machine. From each of the fifty-one senatorial districts one delegate was selected to sit on the committee on resolutions and one on the committee on national delegates. These two committees constituted the real convention and were in turn governed by sub-committees of seven. When the machine was thoroughly oiled Mr. Barnes moved into action. "I am in complete control of the situation," he announced with that indifference to the niceties of political hypocrisy which has always characterized him.

There was one slight hitch at the outset. Elihu Root, Mr. Barnes's stalking-horse to prevent any chance of an instructed delegation for either Hughes or Whitman, did an almost incredible thing. In his "keynote" speech he had had the horrific stupidity to introduce Roosevelt's name in a manner that could not be construed as other than complimentary. Fortunately this outrage was discovered in time, and the amenable Mr. Root carefully skipped the passage when he came to deliver his exordium. As far as the speech itself went, it certainly left the delegates and the audience in the galleries unmoved. It is true that one of the delegates, a German saloon-keeper from Brooklyn, objected strenuously if privately to the criticism of Germany's dealings with Belgium, but the majority remained listless before the wrongs of Belgium, the crimes of Germany and the Democrats, and refused to get excited even over the tariff. Every time-honored trick to arouse enthusiasm was tried and failed. Mr. Root emphasized the proper words, halted at the proper moments; the venerable delegate with the white beard rose, waved his arms and exercised his shrill falsetto promptly on his cue; the platform was quick to give leads to the pit; and all to no avail.

The answer to the apathy which was supplied by the press table was: "They don't want Root." The corollary, "Whom do they want?" was not so easy

to answer, but there was no question as to the one name that would have smashed that apathy to fragments. From the time when the first carload of delegates lined up at the Biltmore bar there was one name on every lip, a name mentioned with hate, fear, admiration, wonder, but never with indifference—Theodore Roosevelt. Barnes and his lieutenants were determined that that name should never be mentioned except in whispers, and they had their way; but they could not prevent the shadow of Roosevelt from lying heavy on the convention.

The net result of the convention to participants and impartial observers was disappointment. The popular interpretation of the platform adopted was that the Republican party condemned President Wilson for not going to war with Germany; yet everybody knew that the men who framed the platform had as much idea of declaring war on Germany as they had of declaring war on Timbuctoo. The truth is that the men who engineered the convention were about as much interested in national problems, from any point of view of statesmanship, as they were in the transit of Venus, and knew about as much of one as of the other. They were petty politicians, playing a petty game in a petty way, and they have merely emphasized the unanswered question, what have the Republicans as a party to offer as an alternative to the policies of Wilson?

ROBERT WARD.

A COMMUNICATION

The War As We See It

SIR: Protests against your "pro-Germanism" have already had this good effect, that they have made you speak out. May I add another protest, in the hope that it may provoke you to still greater clearness? I think greater clearness on your part is desirable. I have no objection to a German being a German, or a pro-German a pro-German. I read a violently Germanophile Spanish paper regularly and with pleasure. I know that honest men are passionate and that passion is blind. In a "clearing-house of opinion" I expect various principles, prejudices, and sympathies to find expression, and I am grateful that my own notions should be courteously admitted there, unshorn and unvarnished. My protest is directed exclusively against your editorial ambiguity. From the beginning the undercurrent of your writing has not been in keeping with your overt opinions. It has been impossible not to feel that if public opinion did not embarrass you you would be far more pro-German than you are. Many an article has begun with an insinuating friendliness towards the Allies that has had a pro-German sting in its tail. If you are really in favor of an inconclusive peace which requires some speedy check to German successes, why do you celebrate the last triumph of German diplomacy and the entry of Bulgaria into the war—somewhat sugaring the pill in another column? And why do you entitle this partisan