

# Walsh

UNTIL lately we have been compelled to take the lawyers' word for Senator Thomas J. Walsh of Montana. They held him to be an extraordinarily able lawyer, particularly in the constitutional field. Obviously a great constitutional lawyer must be taken on faith by laymen. For when we leave simple understandings of simple words, and enter the realm of constitutional interpretations, constructions and implications, past and present, the expounding lawyer may be brilliant or he may be silly—and in different periods the same man and the same theory have earned first one description and then the other.

Besides, there was Senator Walsh's English style. It did—and does—resemble a palm tree, a stem with perfectly formed leaves branching in all directions. Each of Senator Walsh's sentences is like that, a beautiful mass of perfectly formed clauses spreading in a circle to cover possible questions from any point. These sentences are a triumph of literary and legal construction, as the palm tree is a triumph of nature. But did you ever have any luck seeing the palm tree while trying to examine and note each of its leaves?

However, we common people have a better knowledge of the Senator now—knowledge that we ourselves have gained first-hand, without the aid of Senator Walsh's admiring fellow lawyers. There are two items in our lately gained first-hand knowledge, and the principal item is not what the reader will suppose; it is the everyday knowledge of a man that comes from looking at his face. For many years we could only guess what the Senator's face was like. He had a heavy forelock which he allowed to wander down over his forehead. He had an amazingly aggressive set of eyebrows which jungled his eyes. And he had a black mustache of incredibly voluminous droop—a sort of mother-hubard of the mouth. The total result of all these hirsute achievements was mystery. No one knew the physiognomy of Walsh.

Well, time has tempered the weight of that forelock, and civilization has mastered that wondrous mustache, so that in seeking to know Walsh by the face of him, we have only to overcome the jungle of eyebrows, the last of the old barricades. Consequence: We behold the most evenly proportioned, the best balanced face, with the possible exception of Borah's, in the Senate. It is the face of a man whose intellect is organized to run with machine-like accuracy, precision and fidelity. Feed into that mind so much raw material of information, and the material will be shredded, refined, reassembled, fabricated, and, in due course, and without wastage, turned out as cleanly finished goods, ready for use, as conclusions, decisions of policies.

I say Walsh has a face that tells of that kind of

intellect, for these reasons: Every curve of the head and face is a curve of power, and every curve matches and weighs evenly against the next curve. The full, large, handsomely modelled skull is fronted with a forehead that requires the same adjectives. There is a drop to capacious eyesockets, filled with unusually large, bright, steely blue eyes, the eyes of a coldly intellectual Irishman. There is a drop to a bold, steady, courageous nose. There is a drop to a wide, firm, rather thin-lipped mouth. And there is a final drop, to be made in these days without effort (the mustache having been conquered) to a big, squarish, affirmative chin.

Having told what this lately uncovered and discovered face of Walsh tells, by way of recounting the principal item in the laymen's and common people's new first-hand knowledge of the Senator, it is scarcely necessary to discuss the second item. That is the Fall investigation—commonly put forward as the sole source of the laymen's understanding of Walsh. The fact is that the Fall investigation is simply illustration and proof, graphic evidence, of the story to be read in Walsh's face. In that investigation, Walsh started with a mass of unrelated information, which the laymen could easily picture being put together to prove guilt in Fall and Sinclair, and perhaps in others, but which the trained legal mind, accustomed to the difficulty of getting satisfactory finished goods, regarded as almost hopeless. Walsh pressed a button and started his smooth, beautifully coördinated, impersonal engine of a mind running. The administration, which should have helped him, assuming any ground at all for suspicion of Fall's actions, was openly indifferent and secretly hostile. Out of its abundance of resources for such a case, Walsh received nothing. Powerful sections of the press were likewise openly indifferent and secretly hostile. In the Senate the Democrats were dubious while the Republican regulars mocked. But the impersonal Walsh engine of intellect ran on and on and on; and one day, after months of operation, a lever was pulled, a lot of threads were brought together, and there before everyone's eyes was a net. A couple of yanks on the net, and Fall and his associates were sprawling and splashing on the bank. And, unaided as Walsh was, his mental engine moved so smoothly that not one in 100,000 knows how the astonishing thing really was done.

Never a brilliant thought; never a thought profound taken in itself; never a thought really original; never a thought even novel; simply a splendidly organized and directed mind (turned over to law and government) that operates like a 1925 model piece of machinery. When specification A goes in here, specification B comes out for the market.

JOHN W. OWENS.

# The Farmer-Labor-Communist Party

AT first sight the Farmer-Labor-Communist Convention at St. Paul looked like a revival of a well-known melodrama with the original cast. There was the Farmer-Labor hero, long politically childless, who is convinced by all the omens that he is at last to become the father of a little political party of his own; and there was the Communist villain ready to steal the child at birth, leaving the heart-broken father to rush out into the dark. The lines were familiar, and there were many of them, for the lack of action during the first acts threw the pay black upon rhetoric. The tirade was much employed. The supporting cast included the old favorites, but there was a new figure in the stellar rôle, William Mahoney of the Executive Committee of the Minnesota Farmer-Labor party which had called the convention.

Perhaps one reason why the play had a new and unfamiliar ending was that the critics of the press so confidently predicted the old catastrophe that the cast was ashamed to go through with it. Certainly the appearance of the St. Paul Daily News at noon on the second day, with its scare headlines predicting a split, was the cue for speeches of reconciliation. Mr. Mahoney promptly repudiated the threat to bolt with which he was credited, and Mr. Foster disclaimed for the Communists any threat of control. "We understand that to appeal to the country with any chance of success this cannot be a Communist movement," he said. "We do not expect a Communist party or a Communist platform to come out of this convention." The chief factors in imposing a new ending on the drama, however, were Mr. Mahoney's refusal to repeat the lines of excommunication of the Communists written by Mr. Gompers for John Fitzpatrick last year at Chicago, and Mr. Foster's sweet reasonableness in sacrificing form for substance. The convention ended with Communist and Farmer-Labor bending with equal pride and solicitude over the cradle of the infant. The melodrama has become a pastoral—if only the child lives.

The St. Paul convention was projected by the Farmer-Labor party of Minnesota which, with two United States senators to its credit, fairly takes priority among state third parties. It was called last autumn for May 30; but at a conference in March the date was shifted to June 17 to avoid embarrassing Senator La Follette's position at the Republican Convention. It had, like all third party movements, the initial object of uniting the various political fragments, bearing different names in different states, which represent the protest against the old parties. It was originally successful in obtaining a wide degree of coöperation, extending from the Committee of Forty-Eight to the Communists.

It had a rival in the Conference for Progressive Political Action, which under the leadership of President W. H. Johnston of the machinists and the heads of the railroad brotherhoods was scheduled to meet at Cleveland on July 4. The inclusion of the Communists became a ground of opposition to the St. Paul meeting, and under the attacks of the leaders of organized labor and later of Senator La Follette many groups withdrew from participation. Nevertheless, over five hundred delegates assembled on June 17, representing the Farmer-Labor parties of Minnesota, South Dakota, Montana and Washington, the Non-Partisan League of North Dakota, the Progressive party of Nebraska, the new Labor party of Illinois, the Federated Farmer-Labor party, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, the United Mine Workers, and many scattered groups among which one caught the names of the Red Eye Farmers' Club, the Ladies' Shelley Society and the Negro Tenants' Protective Association.

There were two rival programs before the gathering. That of the Minnesota Farmer-Labor representatives called for the postponement of the formation of a national party until after the present Presidential campaign, and meanwhile the encouragement of action by state parties. Other groups favored the formation of a national party out of hand. It was this question which was bitterly fought out in committee between Mahoney and Foster. Mahoney had to conserve the interests of the Minnesota Farmer-Labor party in the coming campaign, and avoid, so far as possible, offering any embarrassment to the prospective candidacy of Senator La Follette. He was for postponement of complete organization. On the other hand, Foster had to consolidate the position of the Communists within the party. He was naturally fearful that after the campaign was over Farmer-Labor would follow the advice of Gompers and La Follette and cast him and his followers out. He was for immediate and complete organization. Mahoney was in a strong position with regard to the Communists, whose chief aim was to remain in contact with the progressive movement and who would have been discredited by a bolt of the Minnesota Farmer-Labor party; he was in an exceedingly weak position with regard to his own supporters, owing to the repudiation of the convention by Senator La Follette. In the end, the committee on organization reported what was in form a compromise, providing for the appointment of a national committee to serve through the present campaign with power to replace or withdraw candidates, and to negotiate for combination with other progressive groups. Both in this committee and at the convention to be held