

# The New REPUBLIC

*A Journal of Opinion*

VOLUME XXXIX

NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, JULY 23, 1924

NUMBER 503

## Contents

The Week.....	219
Editorials	
The Sickness of American Politics.....	222
John W. Davis .....	224
Progressives and Monopoly .....	226
General Articles	
Now That It's Over..... John W. Owens	228
Christianity as a Way of Life..... Herbert Croly	230
A Green International..... Elizabeth Vincent	237
Puju .....	240
Some Like Them Hot..... Felix Ray	241
Bird and Bosom—Apocalyptic (verse).....	242
..... Léonie Adams	242
Vain Counsel (verse)..... Marian Storm	242
The Fratellini..... Stark Young	243
Four Poems .....	244
..... Louis Untermeyer,	
Babette Deutsch, Rolfe Humphries, George	
O'Neil .....	244
Correspondence .....	245
Reviews of Books	
The Protestant Barrès..... Ernest Boyd	247
Russia's Revolution..... Theodore Collier	248
The Best Kept Secret..... C. E. Ayres	249
A French View of Jane Austen.....	250
..... Robert Morss Lovett	250
As Gorky Told It .....	252
..... Lewis Mumford	252
Fiction Briefs .....	252

## The Week

IN its last issue, the New Republic characterized the Democratic Convention as an assembly which surrendered itself to brave and bitter combats only to put an end to them with tame and inglorious conclusions. The nomination of John W. Davis completely vindicated this description. It was an inglorious and insignificant ending of the bitter and significant contest between the Smith and the McAdoo factions. It was not the product of a mature and deliberate preference on the part of a majority of the Democratic delegates. It was not intended and will not tend to heal the wounds which in the heat of battle the two factions had dealt one another. It will not serve to pull the party together as an instrument of economic legislation and to give the disaffected agricultural states any sufficient assurance that their grievances will be fully considered. It was tantamount to an evasion of almost every issue and responsibility which circumstance and its own make-up had imposed on the party. In

effect it unloaded these responsibilities on a good and intelligent man whose attitude in respect to them had been inoffensive and non-committal.

THE default was the more conspicuous and unnecessary because the Democratic Convention found submitted to it for consideration a candidate whose nomination would have been as brave and significant an act as that of Davis was evasive and meaningless. Senator Thomas J. Walsh possessed all the qualifications which John Davis lacked. He was a Catholic who had supported McAdoo. His nomination would have defied the religious bigotry of the Klan while at the same time it would have been as little obnoxious as possible to McAdoo's following. Walsh had just performed a most sensational and prodigious service to his party and his country and was the leader whose candidacy would make the most of Republican corruption. There was no hedging about his devotion to popular liberties. During the period of the Red hysteria, when John Davis kept his mouth scrupulously shut, Walsh was one of the few prominent lawyers and political leaders who fought explicitly and courageously for law and order. Finally he hails from a part of the country which has good reason to be disaffected, and he would have spoken for his aggrieved neighbors honestly and clearly but not importunately and bitterly. He would have represented, as John Davis cannot, the traditional Democratic sympathy with a great popular grievance. By nominating him the Democrats would have vindicated themselves as a party which could turn an exceptionally bitter conflict to good account by attaining through it a really integrating decision.

IF Senator Walsh had been nominated, progressives would have had many reasons to hesitate between him and La Follette. No matter how much they might have believed in the ultimate desirability of breaking up the old parties, the Democrats would have earned the admiration and sympathy of all non-partisans by their ability to fight out their differences courageously in public and deliberately to select a candidate who tested so high both in the Democracy and in his progressivism. In the case of Davis no such misgivings can arise. The Democrats, when they yielded to the unexpected uproar

in favor of his nomination were sliding down from the heights of conviction on which they had waged such a perilous battle, and they were running away from the realities of American politics. A progressive for reasons which we elaborate elsewhere would have precisely no reason at all connected with his progressivism to vote for Davis. From the progressive point of view his high character and his eminent abilities are simply irrelevant. If he is elected President he will place his high character and abilities at the service of economic and social preconceptions which, if the progressives are right, can only result ultimately in damage to the American nation.

AS we go to press the new London conference of the Allied powers is on the point of meeting. While prophecy at such a moment has obvious dangers, it is fair to say that the outlook for the Dawes Plan and for peace in Europe is of the darkest. The events of the past few weeks have shown that Herriot is bound hand and foot. His government cannot survive without the assistance of the Nationalists who were behind Poincaré, and they will not permit any genuine policy of conciliation. At the first whisper of a suggestion from London that the Dawes Plan goes outside the scope of the Treaty of Versailles and that it may be necessary to modify the powers of the Reparations Commission, the whip was cracked over Herriot's head with telling effect. MacDonald had to make a hasty trip to Paris in order to avert a real crisis. He promised so much, indeed, that he has got himself into serious trouble at home.

AS usual, from London and Berlin come appeals that America should step in at this juncture and exert strong pressure in order to compel putting the Dawes Plan into effect completely and at once. Only the United States, it is argued, has the prestige which can force the nations to compromise and abandon their political objectives for the sake of economic results. We hardly need tell our readers that such appeals are breath into the wind. The present administration went quite as far as it is likely to go when it selected Messrs. Dawes, Young and Robinson as its "unofficial" representatives on the experts' commission. If the European powers, after the plan has been completed and after they have all accepted it in principle, are unable to reconcile their differences and put it into operation, that fact will seem to Washington better justification for staying out than for going in.

THE twentieth amendment to the Constitution, if it is ratified in time by the required number of states, will be that giving Congress the power to regulate the labor of children under eighteen years of age. Already there is one entry on the roll of honor and one on that of dishonor. To Arkansas

belongs the eternal credit of having been the first state in the Union to ratify. To Georgia goes the ignominy of being first to reject. This was not done, of course, on the ground that the latter state wishes to continue to exploit the labor of her children. Those who advocated child labor never are interested in the thing itself. This time it was the sacred doctrine of states' rights which was imperiled. Hoke Smith and his cohorts observed that Georgia "don't drink out of the same bottle" with Washington and having thus in effect seceded from the Union, voted down the amendment overwhelmingly.

THERE might be a ghost of an excuse for this position on the part of a state which really did protect its children; but Georgia notoriously does nothing of the kind. According to the last census she has nearly 89,000 child laborers between the ages of ten and fifteen, which is about twenty percent of all her children of those ages, and as black a record as is to be found anywhere in America. The state graciously forbids children to work longer than ten hours a day—in the textile mills. Elsewhere, working hours are from sunrise to sunset. It is no wonder, perhaps, that Georgia has 35,000 illiterate children nor that 108,000 between the ages of seven and thirteen were not in school at the time the last census was taken. Georgia, in short, illustrates admirably the sort of local condition which justifies, if any justification were needed, the twentieth amendment. She will neither take care of her own children nor consent to the nation's taking care of them. Only the force of national legislation will ever compel Georgia to give the next generation a fair chance.

THE withdrawal in favor of La Follette of Duncan McDonald and William Bouck, candidates of the Farmer Labor party nominated at the St. Paul convention, brings the Communist or Workers' party before the people on a straight issue, with its candidates William Z. Foster and Ben Gitlow. No mistake could be greater than for the constituted authorities by suppression, intimidation, violence or fraud to defeat the will of this body of voters to stand up and be counted. The Communists have an undoubted right to discuss changes in government by constitutional means, and it is highly expedient to allow them to do so. To drive the Communist agitation underground will be to increase its power not only as an actual force but as a psychological bogey. Under party discipline the full number of Communist votes will be cast and counted for the Communist candidates, provided the government keeps its hands off. It will then be possible to know exactly the dimensions of the Red Menace of Calvin Coolidge's dreams.

THE Democratic Convention abounded in comedy, of which the appearance of various leaders in

incongruous rôles furnished a good share. Among other stirring memories we recall A. Mitchell Palmer violently leading the applause for the free speech plank, Newton D. Baker dropping tears over the rostrum for the boys who fell in France, and above all Don Chafin, the gunman sheriff of Logan County, West Virginia, actively promoting the candidacy of John W. Davis.

REPUBLICAN and Democratic campaign orators will find little material for their use in the statement made recently by William Dudley Foulke, President of the National Civil Service Reform League. The declarations of both platform on civil service reform he calls "grotesque perversions of truth." Mr. Foulke says that administration of the merit system "had been brought pretty low under Wilson" and was brought still lower under Harding, particularly in the selection of postmasters. He is especially indignant, and properly so, because of the Democratic pledge to give preference to ex-service men. "These words on their face," Mr. Foulke points out, "imply an absolute preference. Every ex-service man, however low, is to be preferred to every other competitor, however high. It is unnecessary to point out that this means the destruction of the merit system." It is, perhaps, also unnecessary to point out to Mr. Foulke that neither the Republican nor the Democratic party would have any other feeling than acute joy if the merit system were cast into outer darkness never to return. Neither party has any interest in good government as such. It is interested in getting jobs for party members and to this happy enterprise the merit system has in the past shown itself a stumbling-block of large dimensions.

SCANDAL in connection with the practise of deportation by the Department of Labor continues to break out in new quarters. It now appears that the Department is deporting men ostensibly to Russia on passports issued by a self-styled representative of the Ukrainian People's Republic in Washington. The State Department has not recognized this government or its representatives. Passports bearing its seal are not accepted for admission into the territory of the Ukrainian Soviet Republic, and visas are refused by the embassies of other countries through which deportees must pass. Nevertheless the Department of Labor procured such a passport for Michael Bilokomsky, whom on May 25 it set afloat on the Leviathan. Bilokomsky is now in Vienna, without means, financial or diplomatic, of proceeding elsewhere. The Department of Labor displays great solicitude in extending its deportation service to aliens convicted under whatever circumstances in state or federal courts. It may be suspected that Secretary Davis, like his predecessor is merely the tool of the Department of Justice. In any case its practise is mean, cruel and unworthy of a department of the American government.

INCIPIENT rebellion is the name applied by the Minister of Labor to the recent strike of postal workers of Canada. His language at all times during the strike was immoderate and exasperating, the language of a trader and bluffer. He insisted that the striking employes could not return to work until hell froze over, an event which was evidently consummated for his purposes in less than a fortnight, for the workers did return within that period. The strike involved two simple issues, namely, the right of government employes to strike and the denial of the right of the government to reduce their wages below \$90 per month. From the government's point of view the former issue was paramount since it offered the opportunity of destroying the unions which had gained in strength and solidarity following the Winnipeg strike of 1920. Of a total of 10,000 postal employes, an ostensible total of 8,000 ceased work on June 18. The government's threats and treachery within one of the unions reduced this number to 4,000 on the following day. At the end of ten days the number of striking postal workers was between three and four thousand and these were confined entirely to the four cities of Toronto, Montreal, Windsor and Moncton. Obviously the strike could not succeed on the basis of this numerical strength, but equally obvious was the fact that the mails of the entire Dominion could not move adequately if these important border cities could be held. Strike-breakers were found to be wholly incapable of bringing the semblance of order out of the chaos at the close of ten days. Negotiations were thrice broken off. Public opinion was clearly with the workers, but the government stood firm upon one demand, namely, that the workers might return but that the officials of the unions were to be ostracized.

HAPPILY, the striking employes refused to accept the government's conditions in spite of the fact that the union officials urged them to do so. While the strikers were in session at a mass meeting on Sunday afternoon, word was brought to them by their officials and by an intermediary to the effect that all employes might return to work as postal helpers. In the absence of a written agreement, witnesses informed the workers that the unconditional return was merely included to save the government's face and that their claims were to be investigated by a satisfactory commission, their old positions were to be regained, and a settlement of grievances was to be effected within two months. On the following morning after the mails were again moving, the government repudiated all of these promises and insisted that the unconditional return was unconditional in every respect. Whether certain union officials connived in this piece of bald chicanery or not, it remains as one of the most flagrant betrayals of confidence in the annals of trade unionism on this continent. And, irony was never so pertinent, for while all of this was transpiring,



the government minister responsible for the postal service was in Geneva attending the International Labor Conference, Premier Mackenzie King was receiving an honorary degree at Yale in token of his contributions to the solution of labor problems, and the postal service was under the direction of a former strike-breaker from Winnipeg!

THE American Library Association devoted a special session of its annual conference, just concluded, to the discussion of the relation of the library to adult education. The librarians seem to feel that they have thus far overlooked an important service. They have provided the general public with general reading, mostly recreational. They have provided special groups with special materials, mostly professional. But they have not as yet established themselves in everybody's mind as the people's university. To do so they will need more than books; they will need plans and an educational theory. As a first step to such a program a study is to be made of library experience in adult education here and abroad. Extensive action will presumably follow.

THE chief problem which the libraries face is the obvious one that confronts all educational institutions: what ought people to study? The colleges and universities are carried past this question somehow by the body of tradition upon which their courses of study very largely rest. They may be troubled and restless. Most of them are. But they have a status quo, and can carry on as going concerns. The libraries lack this comfort. Accordingly their greatest temptation is to reach out for it to the established schools. Their greatest danger is that of making their reading lists pale reflections of the syllabi of college courses. To do so would probably be fatal to their movement. By the same token, their chief opportunity is that of facing their problem squarely and working out experimentally an answer to it by which the colleges themselves may ultimately profit.

MOST American readers heard the name of Giacomo Matteotti for the first time when its bearer was already dead by assassination. The Federated Press Service gives the following facts concerning him. The son of a rich family he cast in his lot with the workers. He represented the more enlightened attitude of labor toward the war by spending most of the period in a Sicilian jail. After the war he became editor of *Giustizia*, the Socialist organ, and in 1919 was elected to the Chamber of Deputies. Here he rendered himself obnoxious by introducing a bill forbidding all persons interested in government contracts from holding office. As editor he remained at his post during the Fascist revolution, though his printing plant was attacked and edition after edition of his paper destroyed. He was returned to the Chamber by a

large majority at the last elections, and at once proceeded to expose the fraudulent election methods and corrupt administration of the Fascisti. His assassination, whether or not Mussolini was cognizant of the details of the plot, was the logical result of the dictatorship of violence. Matteotti is reported to have foretold his own death in the words: "For the last two years nobody among us has known, when he left his home in the morning, whether he would return in the evening."

BRIGADIER-GENERAL WEIGEL, commander of the second army corps, is reported to have taken advantage of the national holiday and the tolerance of the excursions committee of the Democratic Convention to remark in the course of a sabrerattling address: "During the war I saw boys in civilian clothes on the fourth of July and in battle in August. They were brave boys, but it was suicide." It would be interesting to know where General Weigel was standing when he saw this affecting sight. His argument was, of course, that our boys must wear uniforms all the time. But the effect of his harangue upon the Democratic delegates, must have been to cause them to wonder if the nation would really do as much better, if it were universally conscripted for war under a bureaucracy of brigadier-generals with such extraordinary eye-sight.

THE conference of the Little Entente held a few days ago at Prague had less importance than previous gatherings. The Little Entente, of course, is still tied to the coat-tails of France; and the uncertainty as to the political course of the latter country, which had resulted from the late election makes it impossible for the Little Entente to do more than mark time at present. Neither the Bessarabian question, all important to Roumania, nor the general problem of relations with Russia was brought up at the Prague meeting, which apparently confined itself to an agreement as to common policy toward Hungary. It will be some time yet before the Little Entente knows on which side its bread will prove to be buttered and can shape its plans accordingly.

## The Sickness of American Politics

AMERICAN politics is sick. It has temporarily ceased to be a practicable method of accomplishing needed public purposes. That surely is the outstanding lesson of the Republican, the La Follette and the Democratic Conventions. The sickness of American politics assumes a different symptom in the cases of the three different patients. The Republicans are suffering from the shock of a notorious and ignoble breakdown which was brought on by their own irresponsibility and bad faith, and they are occupied chiefly with concealing from themselves and others their chagrin and their moral