

THE PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN: ITS PROBLEMS AND PERSONALITIES

Under this heading each week until election we expect to print an article or articles, not necessarily expressing The Outlook's opinions, but presenting some phase of the political contest, some light upon it, some point of view concerning it, which will be of interest to the voter, and will have some bearing upon the decision which he or she must make before the ballots are cast on November 2.—THE EDITORS.

THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION FROM THE EUROPEAN STANDPOINT

BY P. W. WILSON

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AMONG Europeans no Presidential election has ever aroused as much interest as this pending contest. One reason is the mere development of communications—the telegraph, the movies, and press correspondence, which consists no longer of yacht races and the most entertaining murders. Another reason is the return to Europe of innumerable officials, lecturers, and other visitors who have discovered the United States for themselves and found that Dickens and Mark Twain are out of date. Then there is the instinctive sense that this Republic, having fought with and against certain European countries, can never again resume an isolation which had become, in any case, unreal. Every nation in the Old World has some kind of a vote in the New, and if Europe be in confusion the United States must suffer the echoes of controversy. Speeches will be made in Boston about Fiume and in New York about Palestine. There are arguments over Ireland, over Persia, over India, over the German indemnity, over the Anglo-Japanese alliance. And even prohibition presents aspects of human interest for the world more moist.

The United States is so big in resources that she cannot avoid contacts with the rest of mankind. There is oil. There is shipping. There are the war loans. There are the Panama tolls mentioned in the Republican platform. There are Japanese immigration and the control of the Caribbean. There is Mexico. And, finally, there is the comprehensive question as to whether President Wilson was right or wrong when he claimed that on the League of Nations he had behind him his own country's public opinion. Will it be ratification by the Democrats or will Senator Harding win on the slogan of keeping the country out of twenty-one wars? One thing seems evident at the outset. Peace is still the winning cry in the United States. Neither party is standing on compulsory service, however defined. General Wood did not obtain the nomination and Secretary Baker's new Army did not appear on the Democratic bill of fare.

At the nominations Europe is naturally surprised. No name that counted on the other side had a chance. The

prophets must have no honor outside their own States. At two fell swoops Hoover, Taft, Hughes, Wood, Pershing, Gerard, Davis, McAdoo, Mitchell Palmer, and others were obliterated. Even Root and House were absent from the scene, which means behind the scenes, and a new governing class is improvised in Ohio. It has its inconveniences. Amusing quotations can be unearthed from the files of newspapers which never expected to be owned by Presidential candidates. Senator Harding thought that Ireland should be independent and Governor Cox had an editor who hoped that voting for Woodrow Wilson would win the war for Germany. But the main question is why the American people have scrapped the older generation. To an outsider it seems to be because of a curious, half-realized instinct by no means devoid of shrewdness. The Presidency is described by European diplomats in their reports home as the greatest and most concentrated autocracy on earth. Such powers are tolerated only because the position hardly ever runs in a family, is temporary, and is usually conferred on what Senator Harding has called the normal man. Just as Wolsey was the absolute creation of Henry VIII, so the time had come after the reign of Roosevelt and of Woodrow Wilson to assert the principle that the next President, at any rate, must owe everything to the people from whom manifestly he must spring. Not this time must conventions seek a man with a record in universities, or in starving countries, or in Wall Street, but a candidate who has a sister teaching in high school, a baby that only the candidate's wife is permitted to bathe, a perfect knowledge of cooking chops, milking cows, and making up a page proof on the stone.

Asquith would have inaugurated this régime in Britain if Asquith had not been to Balliol. We had thus to await Lloyd George, part of whose offense has been the introduction of the ordinary man into office—the Geddes family and many another outside the apostolical succession.

In one sense, therefore, Senator Harding and Governor Cox stand for the same tendency. The latter put it in the sentence that government should consider

the individual. Editorials have been written too much in terms of empires, philosophies, and economic generalities, and not enough in terms of the front porch and the picnic behind the barn. The real strength of Lenine is the knowledge that he still wears clothes which do not fit and when he is interviewed nurses a cat on his knee. It is the cottage ensconced in the Kremlin. Nations have tried government by the aristocrats of birth and of mind and of wealth, and now they are trying how it will feel to be governed by the man next door.

Both candidates came at first as a disappointment to many enthusiasts. Both have improved on acquaintance. They may be called machine-made. The technology of elections here is ruthless. But the machines had to be very careful to select one hundred per cent material. Neither candidate dared or wished to establish himself by means of a fund. Publicity and the rise of women to power have swept out automatically whatever Augean stables there may have been in prehistoric times for "dark horses." In elections money is needed. You cannot send a postal card to each elector once without spending millions. But I see no reason to think that the war chest in the United States is any more of an abuse than it is in the United Kingdom. At any rate, it is not visibly replenished by the sale of knighthoods and of peerages. In running General Wood Colonel Procter seems to the detached observer to have been as entirely disinterested as is Sir Thomas Lipton when he runs his Shamrocks, and in both of these expensive amusements there is an element of genuine sport. Like a yacht race or baseball, the Presidential election is "an event," with a large and, on the whole, an open field, in which the final decision is much influenced by ten men in the back parlor of a hotel, but only after many mills have ground many hopes to powder.

Apparently there was much inconvenience because the Conventions kept men of small means far from their homes and in high-priced hotels longer than they expected. Here, again, the great difficulty with democracy is its cost—how to obtain government without drawing upon a leisured class. Similar is the trouble over

"swinging the circle." Even with the magnavox and other devices the human voice can reach only a certain number of persons at any given moment. With each man, including the Prime Minister, contesting only one constituency, Britain escapes this strain on the throat, this terrific test of rhetorical endurance, under which President Wilson ultimately broke down. It is important in this connection to note that the press and the camera have universalized personality. We have George Bernard Shaw telling us that he sees the United States most comfortably in a picture palace three thousand miles distant from the country's nearest shore. The cleverly staged film showing Eugene Debs receiving his nomination in prison garb, with the Socialist candidate afterwards smiling benevolently through the bars, was better propaganda than any Socialist platform, and much better propaganda than most Socialist speeches. Like all Englishmen in America, I was a conversational Hooverite, but what won me to Harding was the portrait of his kindly old father and his mystical mother. When George Washington retired, after two periods of office, he said that he had been assailed in terms "such as could scarcely be applied to a Nero, to a notorious defaulter, or even to a common pickpocket." In the United States a politician, like a

pitcher, must expect advice from the fans. Newspapers are still affected by the eighteenth-century origin of the press, when "Letters of Junius" served for editorials. With us in England the law of libel, administered by lawyers who are jealous of journalists, restrains the ardent scribe, often too severely, and many things remain unsaid which ought to be thrashed out. Possibly more is sometimes said here in criticism of public men than is necessary for the protection of the public. Certainly there have been innumerable British statesmen of better birth than brains who in the United States would have been grilled to a frazzle. Some excellent material, however, seems in this country to be overlooked simply because there are men in every community whose abilities are the more reliable because they are seldom advertised.

To an onlooker the election seems to possess a definite Constitutional importance. The quarrel between the President and the Senate has paralyzed the executive functions of both parties and reduced the United States to a diplomatic deadlock. An attempt to bring the Legislature and the acting head of the Government into some kind of agreement has thus a clear justification. Unfortunately, the said agreement will depend on the continuance at the Capitol of a Repub-

lican Congress with the maintenance at the White House of a Republican President possessed of Senator Harding's tactful disposition. In other words, the reform will continue as long as elections assist it, but no longer. Neither of the political parties is yet formally prepared for the tremendous change that would be involved in an establishment of a parliamentary system as understood in Europe. One can imagine great geographical obstacles to such a reorganization, and, in any event, its operation must be postponed for years. If the Vice-President is to sit in the Cabinet in the future, one cannot quite see why other Cabinet Ministers should not be selected from Senators and Representatives in Congress. Would this innovation imply any change except in unwritten custom? A Minister with a seat in Congress could take part in debate and answer questions on the floor instead of submitting himself daily to a company of reporters who give to the public their own impression of the conference, always providing that the Minister is not quoted directly and precisely. From the foreign standpoint, it would be an advantage if there were in the United States officers of the Government whose authority enabled them to make definite agreements, likely to be ratified at a subsequent date by Congress.

THE OPEN-SHOP ISSUE

BY THEODORE M. AVÉ-LALLEMANT

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SIGNS and rumors are fast multiplying that the country will soon experience an "open-shop" fight between organized employers and organized workers. Thus the New York "Times" of June 24 quotes Mr. William Fellowes Morgan, Chairman of the Citizens' Transportation Committee of New York City, as having declared of the efforts of that Committee:

This is a movement for the open shop, so that you won't be dominated by any group or groups, but can go along consulting the law and the interests of your business for guidance. You may as well face the situation. It's coming. If there is to be a general strike, let's have it now and get it over with.

True, it's coming. It has been coming ever since the armistice.

When the conflict breaks out into open battle, the "public" will be called upon to throw the weight of its opinion in favor of one or the other of the parties to the issue. Public opinion should therefore be informing itself, while minds are still relatively calm, upon the real issue.

It is misleading—unless there be careful definition of the meaning of the term—to say that the issue is the "open shop," just as it was misleading to say, a few months back, that the issue then was "collective bargaining." In the question of industrial relations there is but one basic issue before the people of the coun-

try, and that is not revealed by the phrases "the open shop" and "collective bargaining" unless we probe more deeply into their meaning.

At the first Industrial Conference called by the President the issue was stated as "collective bargaining," and upon that issue the Conference failed to come to an agreement. It has been said that this failure was due to inability to agree upon means or instruments mutually acceptable by which "collective bargaining," accepted in principle, would be applied. That explanation is correct only in a very limited sense. The basic cause of that failure was rather that there was not a common understanding of the very principle of "collective bargaining" itself. Each of the two chief groups, organized labor and organized capital, had in mind its own definition, attributing to the principle whatever implications would, according to its own estimate, increase the advantage and power accruing to its followers by such interpretation. So the policy at issue and there to be agreed upon was stated in the terms ordinarily employed by trade-unionists—that is, in terms of "collective bargaining;" it was debated very largely in the terms of employers—that is to say, in terms of the so-called "open shop." Inevitably, therefore, the discussion veered to the choice of ways and means, while the principle itself remained ill

defined. The conflict over the question of the "open shop" that threatens now to erupt is no more than a continuation of this sparring for advantage that wrecked the first Industrial Conference.

We know pretty well what trade-unionists want when they demand "collective bargaining." We do not know so well what is wanted by employers when they demand the "open shop," and, since those who make this demand define "collective bargaining" wholly in terms of the former, we are unable to estimate what they would be prepared to concede of the demands of trade-unionists.

Of those who stand for the "open shop," Judge Elbert H. Gary is admittedly the leader. Now Judge Gary, in his address to the Iron and Steel Institute, referred to the events that had transpired at the Washington Conference in a statement that is worth quoting at length. Judge Gary said:

All through the Conference, whenever the question of collective bargaining was discussed, it was apparent that the union leaders would not support any resolution in favor of collective bargaining except on the basis that collective bargaining meant bargaining through labor unions.

The unions claim that collective bargaining through different forms of shop organization made up of the employees tends to limit the extension of unions by increasing their numbers. The non-union employees and their employers