

# GIVING THE MIDDLE WEST THE ONCE OVER

BY FREDERICK M. DAVENPORT

MEMBER OF THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK  
PROFESSOR IN LAW AND POLITICAL SCIENCE AT HAMILTON COLLEGE

We have asked Senator Davenport, who is in the Middle West, to send us some letters of special correspondence from that section of the country, interesting at all times, but especially interesting in a year when politics is in motion. The

Middle West has always made its distinct contribution to change and progress in this country. Events in Indiana, Missouri, Nebraska, Iowa, North Dakota, and Wisconsin indicate that this year is no exception.—THE EDITORS.

**A**N editor sitting at a desk in the East knows about as much of what the country is thinking as a Congressman sitting in a swivel chair in the House building in Washington. Both rational political changes and irrational political convulsions are more apt to come out of the West than out of any other part of America. This section is full of political laboratories, has always been full of them. So has the Far West. This is the great experimental ground of political America, and it is altogether a good thing, I think, to have new schemes, progressive, reactionary, or radical, tried out in a small area while the country looks on.

During this summer the Middle West has been acting up again politically. First came Beveridge with a triumph over the sitting Senator New in Indiana. There were many of a very regular persuasion who hoped this would not happen again; but it did. Pinchot crossed the line in Pennsylvania. And ever since the crashes have come at intervals. Other new types of United States Senators have arisen over night. Brookhart in Iowa, with a far-reaching programme of economic reform; Frazier, of North Dakota, the Non-partisan Leaguer, only recently catapulted from the Governorship by process of the recall; another Roosevelt leader, Howell, of Nebraska; and last but not least, the erratic and invincible La Follette, of Wisconsin, who is by a great majority restored to his pristine political glory.

And all of them Republicans, coming through in the primaries of their own party. The Democratic party for the time being seems to have lost vitality, is simply marking time, waiting for something to turn up. But the Republican electorate in the Middle West is again on the rampage, looking for change or bound to know the reason why. It is likely to be the shifting of large bodies of quasi-Republicans to the other side which will make the party changes in the House and Senate and in the Governorships, if changes there be.

What is it all about? What has the Middle West in the back of its head? Why is Main Street stirred out of itself? Has it any distinct, conscious urge, or is it all an inchoate protest? I try simply to interpret things as I find them. I may agree with them, I may not, but I record.

The Administration at Washington is regarded out here as in the trough of the sea, where it must be conceded other Administrations have been when halfway over their course. It may come

through without shipwreck. But many persons in the Middle West are beginning to think that the captain must be much more particular about his pilots, at least in domestic waters. The tariff, the bonus, the strikes—she rolls in the trough of the sea. It is time now for genuine friends of both the Administration and the country to determine, if they can, what public opinion of America is trying to say, because public opinion in America has more force and guidance in it than public opinion in any other land. Many persons in the Middle West think that the greatest single criticism which can be made upon the present leadership of Washington is that it has not aroused and inspired the general public opinion of the country. They think it has not informed public opinion, nurtured it, and listened to it sufficiently.

I begin with Indiana. Indiana has a fringe of radicalism, a fringe of stolid reaction, but is in the main progressive. It is usually ready to move forward. There is a reason for the return of Beveridge. The truth of it seems to be that Beveridge fits into the present state of mind of Indiana. The people in that State have been figuring up their taxes. These aggregate sixty dollars a person, three hundred and sixty dollars to the family, as compared with something like four hundred and fifty dollars a family in Massachusetts and more than five hundred dollars in New York. The economic times have been out of joint for farmers and laborers. Something is felt to be wrong. Beveridge fits into the state of protest, as La Follette fits into it in Wisconsin and Pinchot in Pennsylvania.

Another factor favoring Beveridge is his constructive writing of the monumental work upon John Marshall. This may be a curious and amusing phenomenon in politics, but it is reassuring. In Indiana the Negro committeeman in the farthest town seems to know about this *magnum opus* of Beveridge, at least to the extent of believing that something terrible has happened! But the thoughtful people are proud of it—particularly in Indiana, where a piece of work of genuine literary merit counts for so much. This is a good sign, isn't it, that people should generally appreciate constructive work on the part of public servants? There is a returning pride in the ability of Beveridge in Indiana, and a belief that a mind like his will be useful in Washington where the supply of thinkers is certainly nothing like as great as the demand.

And then Beveridge has his roots in the past in the State. He has been previously known as a great antagonist of child labor on the floor of the Senate of the United States and a protagonist of pure food laws and the regulation of packers. He fought his campaign in the recent primaries on very different issues which seem amazingly conservative—attacking the Adamson Law of 1916, with its kowtowing to labor, attacking the excess profits tax and the high income taxes as economically unsound, because there is little left, as he asserted, for investment in general industry, and, consequently, a return to "good times" is delayed. He attacked all kinds of blocs—farmers' blocs, capitalistic blocs, whisky blocs, prohibition blocs, anything that looked like a bloc. The progressive people of Indiana do not understand that this indicates any fundamental change in the philosophy of Beveridge since he wrote the Life of John Marshall and studied closely the great Federal conservatives of the post-revolutionary period. In his attitude toward labor, for example, they think that he is driving at the control of government by labor blocs and labor intimidations and unreasonable practices, just as earlier he drove at the reprehensible practices of capital blocs.

He is likely to be elected. It is not a cinch, but a probability. Republicans carried the State by 180,000 two years ago, I believe. There will be a terrible falling off. What beat New for Senator was the unrest. Beveridge will profit by it, and unrest will vote for him at the election just as it did at the primary, and there will be no organized opposition to him on the part of the regulars. There is belief that New is proving a bad loser, but that the regulars generally wish Beveridge elected and expect to help. The progressive element, led now by men like Edward C. Toner, the owner of the Anderson "Herald," are for Beveridge because his career has been sound from their standpoint. Toner was a candidate for Governor a short time ago and is a leading figure. The Beveridge forces seem to be taking nothing for granted, are looking for a big slump in the majority, but expect to see Beveridge the high man on the ticket and the rest of the ticket victorious with him by a moderate margin. If New had been nominated in the Senatorial primary, the whole ticket would probably have been beaten. It is to be hoped that the Republican regulars appreciate what an infusion of life into the politics of various States has come this year from the

recrudescence of the leadership of Roosevelt progressives. Without it, the Republican cause would seem hopeless in a number of important States. The return of Beveridge was at first an awful blow to the regulars of Indiana, but they have reason for bearing up under it.

Colorado and Michigan are two other States where the Republicans might welcome an infusion of the same sort of blood. Both these States seem to hang doubtfully for the Republicans. In Michigan Senator Townsend has made a gallant fight and has been favored by a number of his opponents in the primary who split a majority vote between them. But Townsend is a minority candidate, with stiff uphill work before him over the Newberry issue. The Middle West is against large expenditures of money at elections. The Middle West thinks that large expenditures are both unnecessary and dangerous. This may be Main Street morality, and it may make far more difficult some critical contests for the right which demand greater expenditures than Main Street is willing to stand for; but it is a phenomenon that is to be reckoned with in all parts of the country. In Colorado the Republicans are facing the general country-wide reaction, and something else. "Billy" Sweet, wealthy ex-bond broker and radi-

cal thinker, is running on the Democratic ticket for the Governorship. He was very critical of the street railway strike in the city of Denver two years ago, and was instrumental in having published a report of outside investigators upon the strike which bore heavily upon the good sense and good faith of the railway operators and managers. He represents quite exactly the political freedom of the West as it has manifested itself so frequently in a State like Colorado. He is also helped by the strong feeling on the part of the labor element in that State against what labor regards as the unconstitutional treatment of one William Z. Foster during the recent hectic strike crisis. Colorado authority has always been rough with labor radicals, and the riot and the bull-pen have been in that State confused with synonyms of progress. Foster seems to have been cornered in a hotel room in Denver and marked for deportation. When the prospective deportee inquired for authority under the law to be thus summarily dealt with, the strong arm representative of State authority is alleged to have replied that he hadn't looked for any law, meanwhile gently patting his gun in his hip pocket. Whereupon William Z. was spirited away into another State and left five miles from a town, with instruc-

tions to hobble in, following specific declarations as to what would happen to him if he should return to Colorado.

Speaking of free speech and free coming and going, this is perhaps as good a place as any to say that the Middle West is restive under the meticulous phraseology of oppression in the Daugherty injunction against the railway strikers. It seems to be the overdoing of a good thing that makes more trouble for progress than anything else. The Middle West is not as critical of the use of the injunction for labor disputes as Mr. Gompers, by any means; it is not that there is any great amount of love lost on railway labor; it is that it seems monstrous to the Middle West to deny by court injunction rights of the free speech of entreaty, one man to another, rights of social assemblage, one man at another's home, for the purpose of entreaty. The Middle West seems to think that the Daugherty-Wilkerson injunction went even farther than Congress itself would have the right to go. The Middle West seems to fear that some day in America, if we are not careful, a radical class may come to power that will have been taught by previous un-American example how to treat their foes. At that, the Middle West is a long way from a farmer-labor entente.

## KEEPING IT DARK

BY WILLIAM McANDREW

"THERE are a number of teachers on board, but they are keeping it dark."

This is a sentence from a letter written on a transatlantic steamer by a lady on July 6, 1922.

I'd like to write a history of the contempt for teachers. You would see the slave called "paidagogus" whipped like the others when his master pleased; the same name in the Middle Ages shortened to "pedant" and retaining the saturation of scorn it has brought down the centuries. You would see Shakespeare and Shensone and Goldsmith molding their contumely into verse; Scott and Dickens and the early novelists plying their muck-rakes to collect the ugly, despicable, mean ingredients of mankind and molding the mess into the creature called schoolmaster. You would see our own first literary genius, when searching for a vessel to contain, without suggesting the improbable, a mixture of cowardice, selfishness, pettiness, and conceit, select a receptacle, call it teacher, and name it Ichabod Crane.

I remember a teachers' convention in Elgin in 1887. Will Ray, a cheerful memory, was our principal. There was a group of us who felt that our clothes and personalities were rather like those of young business men and nice girls. Some one proposed a trip through the watch factory. We abandoned the educational meeting for this more interest-

ing adventure. Every girl and every man took off his little association ribbon and hid it safely away. Thirty-five years later, 1922, I attended a National Education meeting in Boston. I saw hundreds of nice girls and attractive-looking men, fully as stylish as any of our old Chicago party which went to Elgin, but they were wearing their association badges everywhere. I used to fold over my "Journal of Education" when reading it in the street car for fear some one would know I was in the business. It doesn't bother me a bit, now. When any ill-bred, new acquaintance asks, "What's your line?" I don't say "Books" any more, nor "Tanner," but "Teaching," without blinking an eye. That is not because I dislike dropping down in one's estimation any less than of old. It is because my business ranks higher in the world's eye than it did. We had an art exhibition here in 1898. We wanted all the children of our school to see it. They must be convoyed two blocks. Out of twenty-eight school-teachers two were plainly willing to take their children over. The others hated to be seen with classes on the street. Last fall, New York presented in a central armory an exposition called "America's Making." Opportunity was given the schools to visit it. So many teachers asked for tickets for their children that the management could only cut the privilege down to a fraction of the de-

mand. For fifteen days, mornings, afternoons, and Saturdays, sixty-two thousand children came in street cars and on foot, each twenty-five accompanied by a teacher, naturally, willingly, apparently with enthusiasm.

It seems only yesterday that a woman suffrage parade marched up Fifth Avenue. There were detachments of women lawyers, interesting; actresses, not so good to look at without footlights; business women, well worth while; nurses, fine. Then a multitude of women teachers, all in white, heads up, step firm and rhythmic (they had drilled themselves on armory floors all over town), faces intelligent, reliable, unafraid, and as of those who give and get affection. There had been approving clapping of hands as other detachments passed, but as this army of gentlewomen swung up the Avenue, the masses on the curbs instinctively, spontaneously, irresistibly, paid a tribute that grew to a roar of approval. You realized that the crowds welcomed these as their own, a fine piece of America itself, as distinctly as any body of military troops ever is. You felt that the man of the crowd was saluting the memory of his own favorite teacher of Litchfield or Johnstown or Carpenter's Corners. Even the reporters, case-hardened against enthusiasm, glorified this section of the parade to the limit.

We have arrived. Our comic-valentine