

# The South—and 1924

By GEORGE F. MILTON, JR.

The dominant political issues in the South are prohibition, the League of Nations, liberalism, farm aid, and Muscle Shoals. Mr. George F. Milton, Jr., tells how these issues will affect the fortunes of William G. McAdoo and Oscar W. Underwood

**W**HAT will the South do in the 1924 Democratic Convention? What will the South do in the election?

Usually, the latter question is a superfluous. But this year some close observers of political conditions 'neath the famous and elusive Mason and Dixon's Line are convinced that under certain contingencies, such as the nomination of a "wet" as Democratic candidate for President, several of the Southern States would be doubtful in the election.

Nor is the South's position in the Convention as weak as might on the surface appear. Although the States of this section lack in themselves enough convention votes to nominate a candidate, they do possess, by virtue of the two-thirds-majority rule in force, a strength amply adequate to veto the choice of any man obnoxious to them.

The sudden death of President Harding, with its consequent effect of changing the Republican Convention next year from a ratification rally into a free-for-all scramble for the nomination, has not affected thus far the status of the various Democratic aspirants in the South, nor has it eliminated the grave danger to the Democratic party in the South of a "wet" candidate.

Thus far of course there are two outstanding contenders for the Democratic nomination: William G. McAdoo and Oscar W. Underwood. Their partisans are already actively engaged in "lining up" delegates for the Convention. But before going into a consideration of the political assets and liabilities of these aspirants it may be well to look into the qualifications which a large, and likely dominant, part of Southern Democracy is applying as a touchstone to the would-be standard-bearers.

In brief, the South wants the next candidate to be "right" on these matters:

1. Prohibition. Economically and politically, the South is dry, and intends to remain so. It would be more likely to split with the Democratic party on prohibition than on any other single issue. If a "wet" were selected as Presidential candidate to pacify the damp demands of Tammany, the loss might be greater than the gain. Tennessee's back-

sliding in 1920, when the electoral vote of the Volunteer State appeared in the Harding column, should be remembered. Kentucky is not too firmly Democratic for a misstep not to alienate her. Republicans in Virginia carry the Ninth Congressional District regularly, and could perhaps put up a stiff scrap throughout the State if the Democratic platform were wet. In Texas a "wet" for President, plus the Ku Klux Klan, might cause considerable trouble. The South won't be satisfied with a "wet" candidate, or even a "moist" one. A very appealing thing about President Harding's record to the South was his firm stand for thoroughgoing Volstead Act enforcement. President Coolidge's pronounced dry views continue this appeal, and may be a pillar of strength to the next G. O. P. nominee below Mason-Dixon's line, if he has a "wet" opponent.

2. League of Nations. Southern Democratic sentiment, in the main, is well convinced that America should in some way co-operate with the rest of the world in the world's rehabilitation. The League of Nations, the World Court, and other essays at this end have the cordial approval of the greater part of the party membership. The foreign vote is light; the native-born were, and are still, fired with the Wilsonian vision of what could come to the world through international co-operation. They still believe it possible, and will not take over-kindly to a candidate who emphasized his determination to balk them in this hope.

3. Liberalism of Spirit. There is a general feeling of unrest, of uneasiness, and of dissatisfaction with the politicians who have been prominent and influential in the past three or four years. There is a tendency to consider them the servants of the interests, rather than of the public; to think that certain powerful corporations have their attentive ear. This isn't voiced or understood by the lesser machine politicians, but by the lowly voters, and the ward heelers and errand runners are as ready as ever with their "me too" to Old Guard pronouncements. Often there are none so blind to popular feeling as the lesser politicians, who should be practical psychologists *par excellence*. The farmer, laboring man,

man on the street, in the South want a candidate whom they think can't be bought or influenced; a man who isn't a Wall Street lawyer or friend; who will do what he can to keep the high surtaxes high; who will batter down the tariff wall, promote better markets for farm products, stop sugar and gasoline gouges, lower railway rates, and reduce taxes. It's a big order, but that's what the masses are talking about.

4. Aid for the Farmer. On the whole, the South has been the least unprosperous part of the country, agriculturally, for the past two years—largely because the ravages of the boll weevil, a real menace to the section's weal, have not been aided by a total closing of the world market for cotton. The Southern farmer does want the "spread" between producer's price and consumer's price narrowed. He doesn't like the middleman to get such a large part of it. He doesn't know exactly what's the matter, but he wants something done about it. He is beginning to suspect that the rebuilding of markets is what is needed, instead of tariffs, loans, free seeds, or political panaceas.

5. Muscle Shoals. The South wants Henry Ford's offer for the great unfinished hydroelectric plant accepted. It wishes it because Ford has fired the imagination of the people with his vision of an industrial city in the Tennessee River Valley seventy-five miles long. The aspirant for the nomination who does not make a definite and favorable statement as to his advocacy of the Ford proposal will not arouse a great deal of enthusiasm in the central South. The man on the street thinks that politicians have side-tracked this offer; that it has been a dirty piece of work.

As to Candidates. One might as well dismiss John W. Davis, of West Virginia and New York; the South doesn't know him, and isn't strong for a candidate to whom it will have to be introduced. A few of the Old Guard, inclined to the interests, tried to boom him in 1920, and didn't get very far with it. The name of E. T. Meredith, the former Secretary of Agriculture, doesn't rouse a ripple.

Then there is Governor Alfred E. Smith, of New York. A liberal; a poor

boy who has worked his way up; a candidate whose career is of the Lincoln-esque type, usually so appealing to the masses. But Smith is a wet. He has signed the Prohibition Enforcement Repeal Bill in New York State with a lengthy appeal aimed at "States' rights" support, which fell flat in the South. He eliminates himself. Prohibition and liberalism go hand in hand in the South, where here it was always the reactionaries, the hard-shells, the tools of the interests, who fought prohibition. Again, Al Smith is a Catholic. There is no use discounting the Ku Klux Klan in politics. The order of hooded knights has had a few defeats in recent elections, but it is representative of a considerable body of Southern belief which has imbued itself with the belief that the Catholic Church is seeking control of the American Government, that it is corrupting the schools, and so forth. However mistaken such ideas, they are widely and fervently held, and the nomination of a communicant of the Church of Rome would alienate thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands, of highly valuable votes.

Oscar Underwood, Alabama Senator, has announced his candidacy for the nomination. His support comes largely from the machine politicians, ultra-conservatives, and reactionaries, aided by what remains of the Southern "wets." Despite his declaration for enforcement of prohibition, there is considerable disquietude as to Senator Underwood's record and position on prohibition. His record of opposing ratification of the Eighteenth Amendment and of fighting a State Constitutional amendment providing prohibition for Alabama is well known. Despite his accidental geographical position, Underwood would not command the strong support of Southern "drys." His economic views are considered somewhat illiberal.

Underwood's ability, likability, and power of leadership are universally conceded. He is a forceful speaker and personally popular. But outside of the Old Guard, who wish to see a return of the "good old days," his candidacy has aroused no great enthusiasm; even in Alabama it does not seem spontaneous. The Senator has been a protagonist of the Ford offer, but not quite as active as north Alabamians have wished. His League of Nations views are orthodox enough, but not of the determined nature generally desired.

Control of Alabama political machinery gives Underwood a good chance at those delegates unless Ford still makes a fight or the McAdoo organizers alter their policy of not invading other candidates' native States except for second-choice instructions. Underwood has

**Women**  
are acting as executive heads  
of the Republican and Democratic parties.

**Women**  
are urging a policy of aloofness from partisanship and the doctrine that enrollment in one party is not necessarily a life sentence.

**Women**  
are fighting for a separate party of their own, working for women against men.

What part will these conflicting elements play in the coming elections and the future development of America? A forthcoming Outlook article gives the views of such women as Mrs. O. H. P. Belmont, National President of the National Woman's Party; Mrs. Maude Wood Park, President of the League of Women Voters; Mrs. Emily Newell Blair, Vice-Chairman of the Democratic Party; and Mrs. Harriet Taylor Upton, of the Republican National Committee.

always been strong with Old Guard Georgia politicians, but with the people, in a primary, McAdoo might lead him. He is weak in the Carolinas and in Tennessee, where, significantly enough, his adherents are largely the friends and followers of the irreconcilable Senator John K. Shields, a fact much commented upon in the State.

Underwood has a friend in Senator Robinson, of Arkansas, but McAdoo is generally stronger in that State. Underwood's real hope for delegates is in the "wet" East—New York, New Jersey, etc.—and not in the South. The attitude toward him was expressed the other day by a typical man on the street: "Oh, yes, Underwood's got ability, but he's been too wet to suit me."

McAdoo is the second candidate now before the public who demands consideration. He is Southern by birth, born at Milledgeville, Georgia, the old State capital; educated at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville; a young lawyer in Chattanooga. He has a host of personal friends and a few personal enemies in the South. His subsequent residence in New York and his present affiliations in California give him a Nation-wide hold geographically. McAdoo more nearly fits the qualifications the South requires

than Senator Underwood. He is a strong "dry;" Mr. Bryan, whose tepidity toward McAdoo at the San Francisco Convention in 1920 contributed to the latter's defeat there, is now thought to have been assured of McAdoo's soundness on prohibition. The great majority of Bryan men in the South are now fighting for McAdoo with ardor and determination.

On the League of Nations McAdoo's position is more conciliatory than that of Mr. Wilson; yet it is unswerving on the fundamental belief that America must co-operate in the rehabilitation of the world by membership in some type of world association or league. Nor does McAdoo see why "the League" isn't still a possibility. He is an internationalist in the finest sense. A liberal at heart, his theories of low tariffs, taxes distributed in proportion to ability to bear them, better markets for farm products, firmer control of monopolies and trusts by the Government, agree excellently with traditional Democratic theories.

The main ground for opposition to him is the fear that he will seek Government ownership of railways. Adherents of other aspirants are already making the welkin ring with denunciations of Government ownership—and of McAdoo. It is a position, by the way, which Mr. McAdoo has not, and will not, take. It can be stated with authority that he never has been and is not now committed to a policy of public ownership of railways. In recent discussions with his political advisers he has made it plain that he won't be caught in this pitfall. His attitude on it is that, while ultimately conditions might perhaps make such a step advisable, they have not yet arrived; that while war conditions made Government operation a necessary measure for the successful prosecution of the war, peace-time factors are different; that private ownership has not exhausted its capacity for operation, and must, under strict supervision, have another chance.

Throughout the South labor is extremely friendly to McAdoo; Negro labor remembers that during the war McAdoo put Negro railway engineers and firemen on the same pay status as the whites. The Southern farmer, whose crop prices were not limited (cotton, a non-food crop, being the main output), has no dislike for McAdoo.

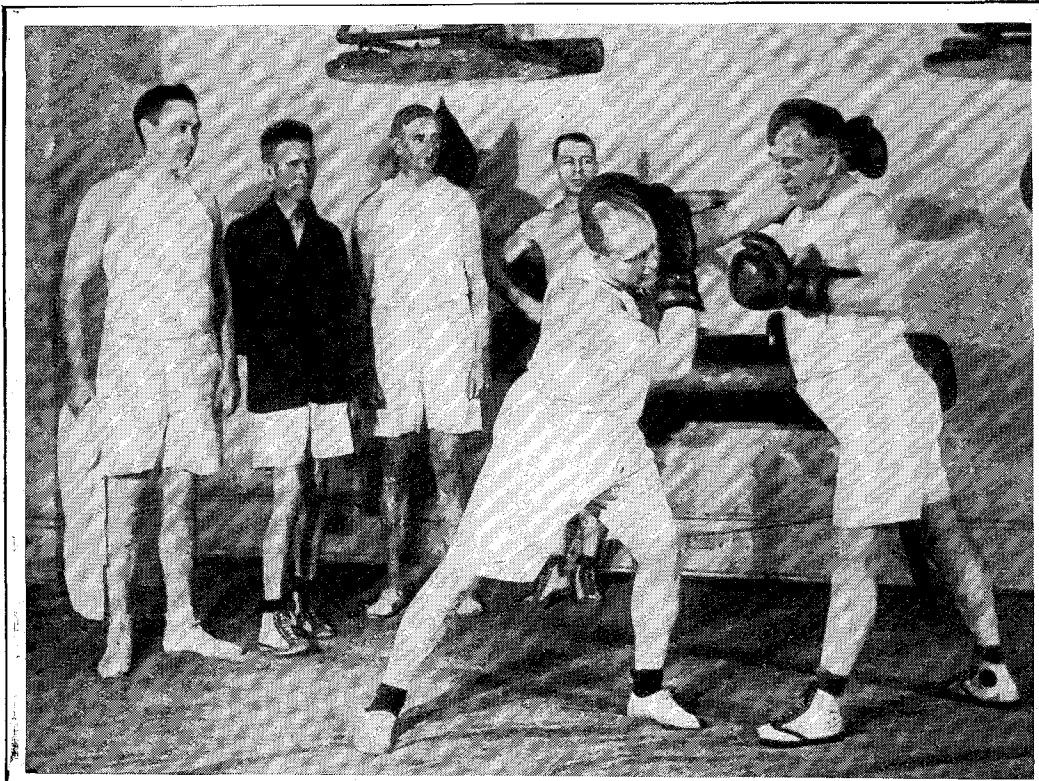
In a nutshell, Underwood's Southern strength is largely political; McAdoo's, personal, political, and economic. It is more likely to grow to a powerful organized force. At any rate, the bubbling of the South's political pot between now and June, 1924, will be well worth the watching.



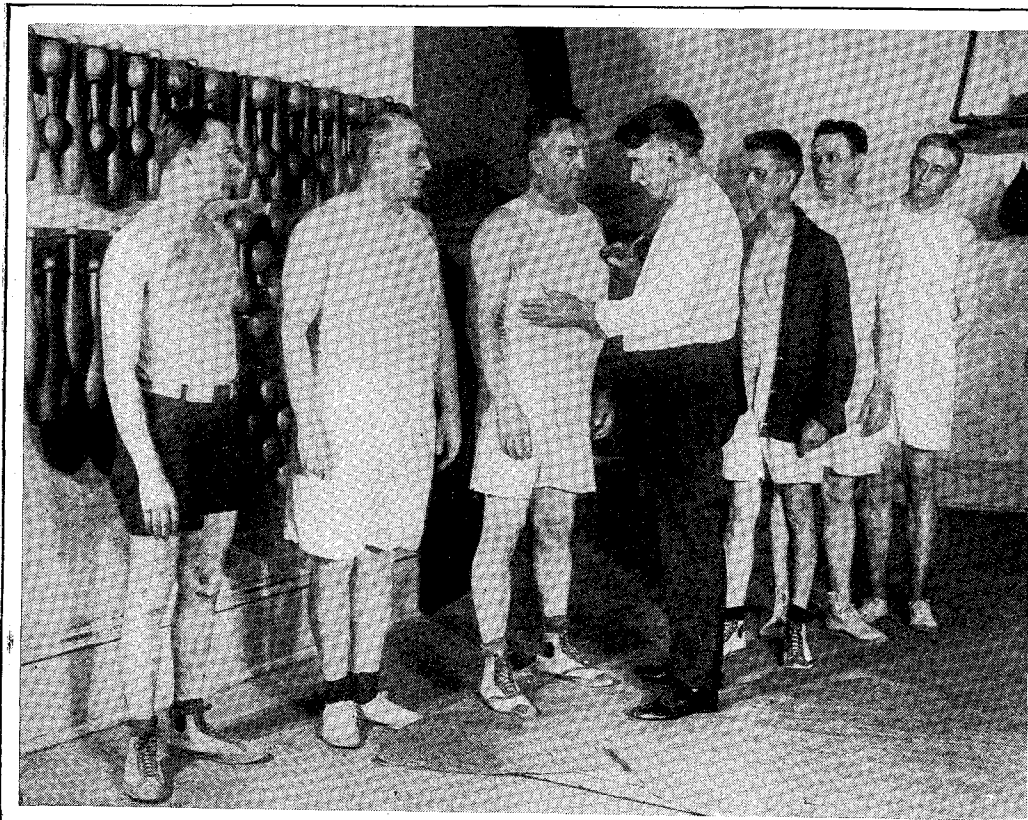
# Better Exercise than Log-Rolling

## A Friendly Bout in the House "Gym"

Congressmen need physical exercise after their strenuous mental work in framing the Nation's laws, and they get it in the House of Representatives' gymnasium. We see here Representatives Roy Fitzgerald, of Ohio, and O. J. Larson, of Minnesota, with the gloves on, while in the background as spectators are Congressmen Gordon Browning, of Tennessee; M. C. Allgood, of Alabama; Alfred Taylor, of West Virginia; and C. J. McLeod, of Michigan



Wide World Photos



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## Senator Copeland, of New York, examining Congressmen in the House "Gym"

Senator Copeland is a physician by profession and was formerly Health Commissioner of New York City, and is therefore well qualified to pass on the physical qualifications of these Congressional athletes, who are the same men that appear in the above picture