

## II

### THE POLITICAL PHILOSOPHER

**I**N Wilmington, North Carolina, Dr. Joseph Wilson was preaching the gospel, faithfully performing his pastoral duties, but joking so incessantly on the street that some thought him "not spiritual," some who lacked John Ruskin's wisdom: "Why should we wear mourning for the guests of God?"

Said his young daughter-in-law: "I wish his critics could have seen him when Woodrow read to him his latest manuscript, could have witnessed his tears, his impulsive kiss, and heard him exclaim, 'Oh, Woodrow, I wish, with that genius of yours, you had become a preacher.'" Like Coleridge, according to Charles Lamb, Woodrow, though layman, did preach all his life.

When a boy, Woodrow joined the church, "on profession of faith." From then to the end no religious doubts distressed him. He had settled once for all a thing of importance, and never, Hamlet-wise, reopened closed issues. The unity and progress of his career was based, in part, on this early and final settlement of a basic principle. His inquiring mind inquired not into religion. He had the faith of a docile child.

A marked trait was his attitude toward sermons. Severely critical of secular discourses, he was placidly receptive of sermons. Few preachers had cause to be puffed up by Wilson's acceptance of their sermonic efforts, for Wilson liked all sermons that were sincerely rooted in the Bible. In Princeton he became a Presbyterian elder, prayed systematically. As his cabin mate on slow sailing nineteenth century

steamers I saw him nightly kneel and pray a long time, then climb into his upper berth, leaving me the lower; as a young man he was about the most considerate person I ever knew. His deference to the opinions of people younger than himself was indexed by such a phrase as "Don't you think so?" after a statement which a more dogmatic man would have made categorically.

Only in the matter of his personal religion was he a positivist, possibly making too little allowance for the "honest doubt" of inquiring young souls, quoting with approval Dr. Jowett's brutal rejoinder to the young Oxford student who was troubled about "finding God": "You will have to find him before evensong or leave the university." So much the political philosopher, Wilson was not at all the metaphysical philosopher.

To one person's questing he was deferential, his wife's. Like him, she was a child of the manse, "a professing Christian," in the old locution. But as she approached early middle life she sought an intellectual basis for her religion, read much in Kant, Caird, Hegel, other metaphysicians. A Princeton professor of philosophy said she understood Hegel better than most teachers of philosophy. I have heard her, with glowing cheeks and sparkling eyes, expound Hegel to him at length while he listened in attentive silence. But he himself needed no Hegel, read little or no metaphysics.

So much he said resembled Emerson in high idealism and chastened expression that I used to think, and tell him, it was a pity he did not read Emerson more, but Emerson's transcendentalism did not appeal to his practical mind.

All this is getting ahead of the story. The boy, still called "Tommie," had returned in poor health from Davidson College before the end of his freshman year. Davidson was an admirable college of the old curriculum, Greek, Latin, math-

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ematics, the only college I have known where the students at play bandied Latin phrases.

President Lingle of Davidson has published a brochure on Wilson's Davidson record, which shows that the boy stood high in Latin and Greek, moderately well in mathematics. He retained his Latin long enough to coach his young brother, but when I came to know him ten years later he had pretty well forgotten his classics and was nil in mathematics, seldom able to add twice a column of figures and get the same result.

His chief youthful interest was in British oratory; he acquired a key to his father's church and rang the rafters with memorized speeches. Rusticated a year in Wilmington, with not much youthful companionship, but secreting, from reading, more than he reckoned.

Arrived President McCosh from Princeton, Scotch, canny, a stout partisan of what he called "me college," and a house guest of Dr. Wilson's. "The boy will be coming to Princeton, I doubt not," he said, and Tommie tingled, for he craved wider horizons than Wilmington and Davidson. Result: he entered Princeton, a freshman, in 1875.

As a matter of fact, Princeton was rather provincial in 1875, not the impressive Gothic towers, archways, arcades of today. One noble old colonial building, Nassau Hall (still Princeton's pride), a fairly new polygonal library building, and for the rest a few old dormitories and professorial houses, most of them now torn down or luckily burned. But much Revolutionary history clustered there. The battle of Princeton, a turning point of the war, had been fought nearby. Congress had sat in Nassau Hall. General Washington had sat by President Witherspoon at a commencement. The village itself was small, but interesting; the great thoroughfare, Nassau Street, forked into two roads, Mercer leading

to the battlefield, Stockton leading to Trenton, on both some stately mansions, some built by Southern planters in the delusion that because Princeton was in the north it must be a good summer retreat, instead of what it is, a blistering New Jersey oven.

But the autumns in Princeton are incomparable, and it was in early autumn that Tommie arrived. "Home-keeping youths have ever homely wits," and the converse being true Tommie found stimulation in the change of scene, the fresh contacts. Life-long friendships began to form, some with members of his own class, '79, still perhaps the most famous of Princeton classes, some with members of elder classes. There were Charles Talcott, Hiram Woods, Cleveland Dodge, Cyrus McCormick, Bob Bridges, too many to catalogue, some destined to fame and fortune in business, politics, letters.

With many Wilson retained life-long devotion, contradicting the impression that he could not keep friends.

In his last broken years, he was never so jovial as when one of the old comrades would visit him in Washington for a week end: "Cleve" Dodge, the New York financier, or Cyrus McCormick of the International Harvester concern, or Bob Bridges of *Scribner's Magazine*, or Mr. Davis, eminent practitioner of Philadelphia.

Wilson did not get much from the Princeton class rooms, but untold intellectual wealth from Whig Hall, the oldest debating society, I believe, in the United States, one of its founders being James Madison, far back in the eighteenth century. Here Wilson debated, orated, became expert in parliamentary usage, a recognized leader; and a young man of stout convictions, for when selected as one of a team to debate the tariff with the rival society, Clio, he withdrew when he found that he would have to advocate protection;

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he could not even academically defend that which he conscientiously and hotly disapproved; he had become no mean student of the tariff, the first major problem he was to grapple when he became President of the United States.

Like all Wilsons and Woodrows, Woodrow Wilson was a partisan. Not sufficiently robust to play football, he was a raucous "rooter," as an undergraduate and eleven years after graduation when he returned to Princeton as a member of the faculty and helped coach the team.

At Wesleyan University, in the interim, he was a militant coach, attending practice games, rallies, songfests, and administering stinging rebukes to the Wesleyan players, whose determination it was to score on Yale in 1889, for, amusing as it now appears, Wesleyan was one of the "big five" in those remote days before football had become a contagion. "Score on Yale!" shouted young Professor Wilson; "you can beat Yale if you will go to it," and that notwithstanding the mighty Alonzo Stagg on the Yale team.

Partisanship is loyalty, and was one of Wilson's endearing qualities. When he was a crumpled, listless old man, after the presidency, he was always alert on the afternoon of the Princeton-Yale game, impatient to hear the score. As the issue of the conflict in Europe became apparent he deprecated the boast that "America won the war," but would remark in private: "Our boys turned the war at Château-Thierry."

Returning to Princeton days, he learned most in the college library from studying the careers and writings of British statesmen, Burke, Chatham, John Bright, Cobden, Gladstone, others including Bagehot, banker by vocation, statesman by avocation.

As he studied them the first item of his political philosophy emerged, that high government depends on high leadership, and that in the 1870's the United States was deteriorating

for lack of strong personal leadership, that it was governed by committees, that the power of appointment in the hands of the Speaker of the House had demoted the President to a subsidiary position.

This was the germ of the most original book he ever wrote, his first, *Congressional Government*, an argument for responsible cabinet government.

It was while reading and digesting political principles that he wrote to his father a letter, which made the father prouder than anything in his life: "Father, I have made a discovery, I have discovered that I have a mind."

And an astonishing mind it was, especially for one who had not learned the alphabet until he was nine years old.

His first printed articles were in the *Nassau Literary Magazine*, an undergraduate publication. The very first not on an Englishman but on Prince Bismarck, a startling performance for a youth of twenty-one. Close reading must have preceded this writing, for it is a survey of European political changes, beginning with 1848. With rare judgment the young writer penetrates the intellectual limitations and moral force of the Titan: "The triumphs of the English statesman are gained upon the floor of parliament; those of the Prussian statesman are won in the cabinet of his king." Wilson was a sophomore when he wrote this article, but there is nothing sophomoric in the writing, no verbal display, only the close reasoning of one with a genius for statesmanship. It is not strange that when in middle life he re-read this and other essays of the period, he felt envy of himself, could not see that in his maturity he wrote better than in his nonage. She who was closest to him reminded him that in later years he had found much more to write about.

Young Wilson loved to write of strong men, for instance

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the elder Pitt, Earl of Chatham. The young author has with care collected his material, arranged it as only an artist can. He has become a master of expression, and of something else, the imagination of a recreator of character. If John Galsworthy's dictum is sound, "a human being is the best plot there is," Woodrow Wilson could have been a distinguished dramatist, for having assembled his material, he has an intuitional perception of character.

That second quality was to stamp his practical judgments in his later career. He made his errors in appointments, but seldom in his major appointments. Patronage irked him. He was more than willing to permit Colonel House to select the minor appointees, not averse to allowing Mr. Bryan to find places for "deserving Democrats." But when he applied his own mind to a major appointment he seldom went astray, illustrated by the appointment of Newton Baker whom he knew and trusted, and who validated the President's judgment by becoming one of the ablest cabinet officers in the history of the country. After his election to the presidency, Wilson was minded to offer Mr. Brandeis a place in the cabinet. One day I discovered him with a thick packet of letters before him. Wearily he looked up and said: "All these are about Brandeis, all unfavorable, all false." He yielded to the storm, did not invite Mr. Brandeis into the cabinet, but later made him Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, and wrote to Senator Culberson: "I did not in making choice of Mr. Brandeis ask for or depend upon 'endorsements' . . . I have known him." All the country knows him now, and only those who are not jaundiced know the wisdom of Wilson's choice. Of course, I do not know how often the President visited public men on public matters. I know only that it was unusual. But I vividly recall a Sunday afternoon when, during the war and the demoralization of railway traffic, he

had said, substantially: "It is clear that the government will have to take over the railways. Troops and supplies, to say nothing of increased passenger traffic, are not moving under the old competitive system. I know only one man who can handle the tangled abortive situation, Mac (McAdoo), but unfortunately he is my son-in-law, and I can't reverse my position on nepotism." In vain, I argued with him that Mac had been an unusual secretary of the treasury, the engineer of liberty loans, an adviser on the new currency plan, and much else before he married the President's daughter, could stand on his own feet. Presently the President said: "I am going to call on Brandeis," living at a nearby apartment hotel, went at once, returned after a lengthened visit, and said: "I shall appoint Mac," an appointment which enraged the Tory railway operators, but the result was visible in less than a fortnight, troops speeding to the transports at Hoboken, the Pennsylvania station in New York a union depot; out in Chicago a petty rivalry between competing railways caused delays of many hours while freight was backed miles to a neutral territory, amended by McAdoo in a few minutes with some stalwart rail hands who spliced a switch between the roads and made one railway of two. No, McAdoo was not popular with railway magnates, but he got action, hastened troops and supplies to Europe. Mr. Brandeis knew the McAdoo metal, and in his wisdom persuaded the punctilious President that son-in-law-ship was a trifle in those harried times. President Wilson knew his man, when departing from custom he did not "summon" the Associate Justice to the White House, but went to see him.

While Wilson was an undergraduate he published to the world his first of so many essays, "Cabinet Government in the United States," which appeared in the *International Review* in August, 1879, a few weeks after the young



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author's graduation, having been accepted, such are the whims of fate, by Henry Cabot Lodge, sub-editor, later Wilson's most implacable enemy and chief engineer in the defeat of the plan to have the United States participate in the League of Nations. One of his most hostile critics, who had been his first formal biographer, commenting in a later vitriolic book, *The Story of a Style*, wrote, with compelled admiration: "Few boys would write like that."

This early magazine article was prelude to *Congressional Government*, published in 1885, modeled to some extent on Bagehot's study of the British Constitution, reviewed by no less a personage than James Bryce, who said, in effect, that though it seemed extravagant praise, the young American jurist had almost equalled the classic Bagehot, the judgment of a cautious man on first reading. In later years, reading the two books, it seems that young Wilson really surpassed his "master" (as he called him) in clarity of arrangement.

*Congressional Government* argues for a cabinet directly responsible to the people, a position from which Wilson never retreated. He knew that Great Britain, called a monarchy, is in fact more democratic than the United States.

In *Congressional Government*, which has gone through nearly forty editions, Wilson boldly attacks the "checks and balances" theory of the constitution and argues for a closer affiliation between President and Congress in legislative programs. Presidential leadership, abdicated after the assassination of Lincoln and Johnson's trial on impeachment charges, was partly restored after the Spanish-American War, continued by the sheer force and will of Theodore Roosevelt. But it was Wilson, thoughtful student of government, who put it on a philosophical basis, and became in fact as well as name the head of the state.

His campaign for the governorship of New Jersey was, even as he himself said, the most significant of his three political campaigns, probably the most educational since the Lincoln-Douglas debates. In language so direct that all could understand, he spoke in every county in the state, each speech growing out of the preceding, the whole making a handbook of popular government under competent leadership. He had abandoned the Hamiltonianism of his earlier days when he had called himself a "Federalist."

New Jersey, "mother of trusts," had practically lost representative government, was perhaps the most difficult state in the Union in which to promulgate the Wilsonian ideas, but he was in his prime and joyously accepted the challenge, nearly every speech a triumph except the first, in Jersey City, where he was visibly embarrassed, lugged in irrelevant anecdotes, but winsomely won his audience by stepping to the front of the platform at the conclusion and saying with boyish naïveté, "I have now made my first political speech." After that the going was good.

He knew how to be genial, he knew how to hit hard. Scornfully he referred to the members of the legislature as "errand boys," obedient to a group of industrialists, many not even residents of New Jersey, who assembled in a room in the capitol and blocked out the session's program, most of it "big business" measures, little of it with a thought of the plain people of New Jersey. When Wilson entered office he cleaned out that nest. It was rumored that he had the door locked, and kept the key in his pocket, a mythical dramatic touch.

But he did change the face of government in New Jersey, to the dismay of the old-timers, including those who had engineered his campaign, the "bosses": former United States Senator James Smith, his factotum James Nugent, and "little

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Bob Davis," who, when asked if Wilson would make a good governor, answered: "How the hell should I know? He will make a good candidate."

Progressive revolt was boiling against Republican reaction from Oregon eastward. The old-line Democratic craftsmen of New Jersey did not know exactly what it was all about, but they smelled a Democratic victory, especially if they could head their ticket with the illustrious name of the man whose quarrel with the conservatives of Princeton University had made him a national figure. And their mouths drooled with hopeful expectation of patronage, while James Smith yearned to return to the United States Senate, which he had left in Grover Cleveland's administration tainted with political scandal, due to his connection with the sugar trust.

Wilson was frequently taxed with ingratitude toward the men who had put him in the governor's chair. But he had been quite candid with these men when they first approached him: "Why do you gentlemen want me for candidate?" "Because we believe you can be elected and we want a Democratic administration." "Precisely," said Wilson, "you want me to head the ticket because you are sure the people of New Jersey believe me a free man. Now, don't you see that if I stand for election I must be what I am thought to be, free of political alliances, free to serve nobody but the people of New Jersey to the best of my ability?" "Fine!" they applauded. That would be great campaign talk. But they trusted their own familiarity with the wiles of politics to control this novice, once they had him in office.

They did not know their man. Wilson's bold determination outwitted their old-time maneuverings in the dark.

I heard many of Wilson's speeches. One of the most memorable was in the Taylor Opera House in Trenton. He had been nominated, by the bosses; the new-idea liberals,

like young Joe Tumulty, were cordially opposed to him, but practically all were won over by his speech of acceptance of the nomination, after they had seen the erect, clear-cut figure, with the countenance mingled of culture and clear understanding of men. I was in the wings of the stage when he entered, hurried in an automobile from Princeton: "God! look at that jaw!" I overheard from another onlooker, who had never seen him before. He was something new in politics. James Smith was modestly sitting in the body of the house controlling silent puppets by invisible wires adroitly played until the house cried aloud for him, when he rose from his seat, as if reluctantly, and in low rich tones said he would like to endorse the nomination: "I have not known Dr. Wilson. It is not to be assumed that such as I should be acquainted with such as he, but it is clear from all I have heard that he will make a superlative governor." It was master politics—of the old puss-in-the-corner kind.

Outspoken, revered, progressive Judge Westcott had spoken gallantly against the nomination. "We want in our governorship no underground associations with Wall Street." A few of us snickered under breath, for we knew Judge Westcott was referring not only to George Harvey but also to Moses Taylor Pyne, New York financier, trustee of Princeton, one-time devotee of Woodrow Wilson, now his implacable foe. So little did even informed people of New Jersey know of the inside situation at Princeton. But when Wilson had been swiftly driven from Princeton, had accepted the nomination in a voice as clear as the honesty of his purpose, few in the hall were not his hearty supporters. Tumulty, who knew all the state politicians, relates how amid the tumult of applause and adjournment, John Crandall of Atlantic City, who had been as bitterly opposed as Judge Westcott and Tumulty to the nomination of Wilson, waved his walking

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stick on high and shouted: "I am sixty-five years old, and still a damn fool!"

Well, it was in this same Taylor Opera House that I heard Candidate Wilson make one of those dynamic speeches for which he became famous. His Republican opponent was an amiable gentleman by name Vivian Lewis. Mr. Lewis had said that if elected he would be a "constitutional governor."

Said Mr. Wilson, in effect: "I am not sure what Mr. Lewis means by that phrase. If he means that he will sit in his office while the legislature enacts bills, and then complacently approve or veto, I must tell you that I shall *not* be a 'constitutional governor'. Do you not realize that the governor is the only state official who represents all the people of New Jersey? Members of the Assembly and of the Senate represent their constricted constituencies. If elected, it will be my business to lead legislation for all districts and counties alike, to go personally into any section which is being discriminated against and openly expose favoritism, which is injustice." Then, pointing at the audience his long index finger, straight as a rifle and almost as deadly, he said: "If you don't want that sort of governor, don't elect me."

When the returns were in, it was clear that New Jersey wanted that sort of governor, for the normally Republican state of New Jersey had rolled up for this Democratic candidate the second largest majority in the history of the state, 49,056.

He was elected on a brief platform, only four planks. One of his first acts was to summon the Democratic legislators and say to them, in substance, that they were bound by the platform, which the people had approved, that if any one of them broke away from the team he would go into the member's district and expose him.

Then he sent for the Republicans and said to them (in

effect—all quotations of his language are approximate except such as are taken from published reports, but there was something about his talk which causes one to believe that the reports of them are virtually accurate; one forgets what ordinary people say, does not forget what Woodrow Wilson said): "Gentlemen, you are not bound by the Democratic platform, but if any one of you opposes legislation based on that platform I shall have to trouble him to accompany me into his district and in joint debate show his constituency why the proposed legislation is unbeneficial"; a formidable challenge, for a disputation with Woodrow Wilson, then in his splendid prime, was no joke. People could resist him under cover, could defy him openly if they had the courage and hardihood of Grover Cleveland, who had declined as a Princeton trustee to follow Wilson in his full Princeton program, but Mr. Cleveland had concluded a colloquy with the words: "Of course, nobody can argue with you."

In an almost incredibly short time the Democratic platform was enacted into law.

One of Governor Wilson's most painful early duties was an attempt to dissuade James Smith from running for the United States senatorship. In those days senators were still elected by state legislatures, but New Jersey had just passed a preferential primary law, apparently so negligible that Smith had not even filed for popular choice. A small vote had been cast for James Martine, a candidate *in perpetuo* for any office that seemed possible.

The Governor and Smith, as already said, an impressive man, met, Smith announcing his purpose to be a candidate before the legislature for senatorial choice, the Governor trying to dissuade him, telling him that by not running he had opportunity to be the biggest man in the state, adding that Martine had received the preferential primary vote.

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"That was a joke," said Smith, and the Governor retorted that the New Jersey electorate must be taught that the primary was no joke.

Came the showdown, Smith refusing to withdraw, Wilson announcing regretfully that he was compelled to fight Smith openly.

Then an example of Wilson's tenderness, too often concealed from the public by the barrage of his stern purpose. Said he, in private :

"Politics is a cruel thing. Smith came to Trenton today with bands and banners and cohorts, confident of election. He was overwhelmingly defeated by Martine, and when poor Smith went to the train to take him home, he was almost alone."

Smith's nephew Nugent was rebellious, created a scene in a public place by calling Wilson "an ingrate." But Smith was through, and silent; only murmuring that Wilson was "a wonderful man, a wonderful man!"

The young political philosopher of Princeton became a most practical political philosopher and do-er after 1910. He made his mistakes, but they were the mistakes of a thinker, not of an empiricist.

In 1900 he wrote a preface for a new edition of *Congressional Government*. The concluding paragraph runs thus:

"It may be . . . that the new leadership of the Executive, inasmuch as it is likely to last, will have a very far-reaching effect upon our whole method of government. It may give the heads of the executive departments a new influence upon the action of Congress. It may bring about, as a consequence, an integration which will substitute statesmanship for government by mass meeting. It may put this whole volume hopelessly out of date."

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The volume is not out of date, is still studied in the schools. New editions continue to appear. But the change advocated did come, in part, to pass when the author became President of the United States. He interknit the legislative-executive departments, even as he had been long saying they should be interwoven.

He did not secure responsible Cabinet Government through the participation on the floor of Congress of Cabinet officers, but he himself did lead and direct, often instigate Congressional action. And all who read of or remember his first two years in the Presidency know how constructive was that era until the European War diverted attention from domestic policies.

In those years he was leader, not dictator. He had ceased to worship at the shrine of Alexander Hamilton: "a great man but in my judgment not a great American," as he said in an article published in the *Fortnightly Review* of February, 1913—just before his own inauguration.

The last paragraph of his first inaugural address opened with the declaration: "This is not a day of triumph; it is a day of dedication."

A phrase of the present Mrs. Wilson's lingers with me: "Nobody can speak for Woodrow Wilson." Right. Nobody can. His record speaks for him; unfavorably, say some; others say favorably. "One thing is certain," as old Omar said, the Wilson record speaks positively. It was the fashion once to say that his utterances were "vague"; not so were they to those who wanted to understand; not so to those who did not want to understand.

In the first two years of Wilson's administration he was master-leader, but worked probably more harmoniously than ever again with others, more reasonably, more open to suggestion from those competent to suggest.



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He knew much about tariff, had studied it for nearly forty years. But he took counsel with Oscar Underwood and other informed legitimate advisers. He did not exchange views with those who craved personal profit from tariff schedules. He had been only two months in office when he prepared and issued a brief but stinging rebuke to the "insidious lobbyists" who were loading newspapers with paid advertisements meant to mislead Congressmen about public opinion on tariff legislation.

After Franklin Roosevelt had been in office about a year, newspapers were recalling Woodrow Wilson's denunciation of lobbyists, were saying that nothing since had created such a sensation in Washington until President Franklin Roosevelt issued his ultimatum that Democratic National Committeemen must cease practising law in Washington or resign from the Committee.

There was no genus that Wilson abhorred more than the would-be profiteer—he who had never taken a penny from any political source except as stipulated reward for services rendered. And his cabinet was equally innocent. In wartime there are so many sluices of graft. Republicans under poor Harding, himself probably scatheless, but surrounded by men scorched with grafting as no administration had been since Grant's, and then the War Department under good Harding contracted insomnia trying to find some smirch in the Wilson conduct of the war.

It is no secret now that Frederick Palmer began his minute researches into the records of the War Department under Secretary Newton D. Baker with anti-Bakerish bias, but the deeper he probed, the cleaner the record, and the result was two volumes about Baker, one of the really great Americans of modern times.

I was on a westbound steamer, just after the armistice,

when the wireless operator received and posted the news that William Gibbs McAdoo had, now that hostilities were over, resigned his seat as Secretary of the Treasury, giving financial straits as his reason. The decks buzzed with speculations, with conjectures covering every possible and impossible contingency. I told them (though of course none believed me) that I had personal knowledge that the sole reason for the resignation was that stated in the dispatch. I had heard much of McAdoo's dire situation (heard it from him and his family) before I sailed for the war zone. Here was a man who collected and disbursed billions of public funds, had hundreds of opportunities to collect from bankers for "small services" rendered, who, with a large and expensive family had literally "gone broke" that he might serve his country. His successors in the office, Glass and Houston, were equally clean-handed.

Burleson of the Postoffice Department received nothing but his salary. Bryan, rather eager to accumulate a competence, received nothing from the government, cautiously invested his savings in United States bonds, made himself, as Secretary of State, somewhat ridiculous by selling himself to Chautauqua producers, and by investing in Miami real estate, not shy there about perquisites, for he was no longer a public official, the Florida boom was at its height (no hurricanes yet) and promoters were glad to pay tidy sums to him of the silver tongue for a speech on the unparalleled glories of Miami, and its iridescent future. So the Presbyterian elder, the author of the unforgettable speeches about the Cross of God and the Prince of Peace uttered his most entrancing verbal harmonies about the future of Miami, after which Gilda Gray wriggled her most alluring sinuosities. But never a ha'penny of the government's funds found its way to W. J. B.'s pocket.

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When Franklin Lane, who might so easily have earned a bit on the side as custodian, and, if less honest, concessionaire of national parks, died, his will was published, and his widow found herself possessed of little more, perhaps less, than the relic of an honest grocery clerk.

Attorney-General Gregory got nothing but his salary from the United States government. Nor did W. B. Wilson, Secretary of Labor.

And so runs the record, and truly, of President Wilson and his cabinet, when billions of money were afloat for war expenditures, and contractors and war-munitionists were slobbering for favors. They may have received them too. I don't know about that. What I do know is that they received nothing from Wilson and Marshall and the Cabinet, know it because for two years Republican sleuths were seeking leaks and had to report that the record of the Wilson administration was clean as a hound's tooth.

Wilson was far less expert in fiscal matters than in tariff intricacies, wrote that his mind was "to let", but learned who did know about banking, Carter Glass, Houston, McAdoo, many others, and gradually there was framed the Federal Reserve Act and other measures intended to equalize credit. Wilson must have learned much about business in these procedures, for I sat in a smoking room where were several business men, including Barney Baruch, and heard them agree that Wilson knew more about business than most men of business.

For two years one great measure followed another, the Congress heeding his advice, the philosophical Wilson striking while the iron was hot. I heard him say once that it was the law of the herd, that when his step should slip they would run over his prostrate form like cattle in stampede over a fallen steer.

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This lecture is about Wilson the Philosopher in a somewhat Pickwickian sense. I wrote out careful digests of his early essays and speeches but concluded they would be wearisome in the reading—not Wilson's writings but my résumé. So I have taken the liberty to switch from a brief account of the young thinker to a longer account of some of the things the older thinker did.

What he did in maturity was singularly accordant with the political philosophy which he formed from his reading when he was a student in Princeton. As Mr. Ray Stannard Baker once said to me, Wilson's was one of the most unified lives on record. The gawky boy bent over books on statecraft in the Princeton library had formulated a political philosophy at the basis of which was the idea of integrating the executive and legislative branches of the government, and he practised that philosophy through all his public career.

This is doing no violence to the Constitution of the United States, which says explicitly:

“He [the President] shall from time to time give to the Congress information of the state of the Union, and recommend to their consideration such measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient; he may, on extraordinary occasions, convene both Houses, or either of them, and in case of disagreement between them with respect to the time of adjournment, he may adjourn them to such time as he shall think proper.”

Certainly the makers of the Constitution “tied in” the President and the Congress.

True, the Constitution says nothing about responsible members of the cabinet appearing on the floor of Congress to participate in debate. Tory Wilson got that from British usage, and thought it feasible, for there is a limit to the physical endurance of a President.

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Neither does it say anything about government by bureaucrats with no responsibility to the people. That is more like Russian Soviet government.

The classic idea of "checks and balances" was rather a result of the introduction of slavery and the determination of the South to preserve State autonomy.

Wilson, even though he had called himself a Federalist, believed in that, at least in his young middle life. He and I were discussing the hue and cry which had gone up when President Cleveland ordered Federal troops to go to Illinois to put down strikes in spite of Governor Altgelt's protest, and were contrasting it with later acceptance by the states of extension of Federal interference in state matters, and he said quite emphatically that it was a dangerous tendency.

Of course, other strong Presidents have been personal leaders of national government. But at least not since Lincoln has any except Wilson founded executive behavior on so firm a philosophical foundation.

Certainly President Cleveland, one of our strongest Presidents, did not. Walking away from an address by former President Cleveland, a lecture on "checks and balances," I remarked to Professor Wilson that Mr. Cleveland had acquitted himself well for a man who, I chanced to know, had been so stage-frighted before the ordeal that after he had got into full evening dress he took off his shoes and stockings and had a hot mustard foot-bath.

"Yes," said Professor Wilson, "he did well, but all he said is outdated. He spoke in terms of the 'literary theory' of the Constitution, not seeming to realize that when he was President he acted precisely contrary to that theory."

The most learned men who have thus far occupied the presidential chair were Thomas Jefferson and Woodrow Wilson. Jefferson's learning was of wider range, more ver-

satire, more abstract; Wilson's was profounder within its limits. Both genuinely, sincerely believed in the sovereignty of the people. Wilson, notwithstanding his admiration of Alexander Hamilton, had come to the conviction when he was an undergraduate of Princeton. The conviction became a passion when he was Governor of New Jersey, and President of the United States, almost an obsession when he was struggling against overwhelming odds to establish the League of Nations, to set free nationalities as well as individuals. That is why, when his own money-mad, fickle country is almost forgetting him, he is adored in smaller states of Europe, Czecho-Slovakia and Poland, for instance. He secured for them what they had been unable to win by eras of fighting and loss of much of their best blood.

I have a notion that a hundred years hence sound historians will find the greatest Wilson in his first two years as President, when he was dominant yet approachable, when he was not worn down by the strain of war, when that egoism mingled with simplicity (almost inevitable in very great men) had not sapped a little of his natural sweetness, when he was free to put his life-long philosophy into magnificent activities, when he could work without irritation, when he could meet opposition patiently, when step by step he was getting on the statute books the most constructive legislation in the history of the United States, when the resiliency of a boy had not forsaken him until that dreadful but unavoidable war distracted his attention and energies into alien paths, however beneficent.

Wilson in 1913-1915 had a formulated philosophy, each part related to the whole; lofty as was his language he could always make us see the meaning of it, for every item was part and parcel of a master's strategy.

Gilbert Chesterton once wrote that everybody must have

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a philosophy, even a landlady making terms with a day-boarder. The coherence of Wilson's activities in 1913–1915 was the result of a carefully thought-out plan conceived before he dreamed of holding political office.

They called him “the schoolmaster in politics.” Laughingly, he accepted the designation.

He did not say this, but what the phrase really meant, in practice, was that he was the philosopher in politics.