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THE STORY OF A STYLE

THE STORY OF A STYLE

BY

WILLIAM BAYARD HALE

Author of

WOODROW WILSON: *The Story of His Life*



ἐκ γὰρ τῶν λόγων σου δικαιώθησῃ
καὶ ἐκ τῶν λόγων σου καταδικασθήσῃ

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FOREWORD

This book was written before President Wilson fell sick.

Originally a chapter of a volume, not yet published, on a related subject, it was in this form finished in the year 1918, and laid aside while the rest of the work went on. In May, 1919, the author read this chapter in a circle of friends, who advised that it be expanded into a separate book and fortified with copious quotations. The advice was followed, and the expanded text was ready on September first.

Except as to the chapter printed at the end. The President was then about to start on his speaking tour, and it seemed only right to postpone the book in order to avail of any additional insight that might be gained from Mr. Wilson's latest utterances. The comments on the September speeches were written from day to day during the tour. It is the fact that the book was complete on September 26th, 1919.

The circumstances that developed after the abandonment of the President's tour rendered it impossible to put into immediate print a study like this. It has therefore been withheld until now when the President's physician reports his happy recovery of strength, and when, also, political developments have made impossible any suspicion that the book has

other than a purely literary and psychological purpose. Such slight revision as meanwhile has been given the text has been in the direction of restraint.

WM. BAYARD HALE.

362 Riverside Drive, New York,

July, 1920.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I PROPHEMIC SYMPTOMS	I
II ARISTOCRATIC AFFECTATIONS	24
III LEARNED ADDICTIONS	81
IV SYMBOLISM	126
V PHONETIC PHENOMENA	161
VI DOUBT AND THE FLIGHT FROM THE FACT .	188
VII A TYPICAL MANUSCRIPT	229
VIII CONCERNING POPULAR REPUTE	242
IX THE STORY OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SPEECHES	257

THE STORY OF A STYLE

I

PROPHETIC SYMPTOMS

A PLEASANT adventure is before us. We are bent upon an excursion among the words of a famous writer. They are words that have been universally acclaimed of a singular excellence — our expedition is into a region of vast and happy renown. Yet, strangely enough, this region has never been explored. In broad outline, its character is thought to be known; a few tall landmarks have even become familiar. But it remains a fabled land, avowed to be delectable beyond the ordinary in scenery and atmosphere, its native charm enhanced by noble thoughts and haunted by grace and beauty. Yet, beckoned by its putative marvels, allured by its promises of verbal riches, we (you and I, my comrades in this slight enterprise) shall be the first to explore it.

Happen we may meet with surprises.

THE STORY OF A STYLE

Mr. Woodrow Wilson is a man of words.

It is an interesting fact that it should be desirable, if not necessary, to explain that this statement is uttered in a sense not in the slightest degree derogatory. Why should the first instinct be to hold it against one that it should be said of him that he is a man of words? — as if the implication were: “of words — not of deeds.” The testimony of this fact is that a common suspicion lies against too constant exercise of speech, as if speech might exhaust itself without passing into action; as if, indeed, it were the antithesis of action. It need not do so, it need not be such; the master of thought and expression is a director of action. His acts are not those alone which he in person performs; they include also the vast array of deeds done by the multitudes whom he has inspired.

At this juncture, certainly, in this little book, no other suggestion is intended than the simple, factual, colorless one that Mr. Wilson deals in words, spends his time, his life, with words; is what he is, and does what he does, by the instrumentality of words. What he has accomplished — and his has been a wonderful record of accomplishment — has been accomplished through statement, argument, appeal. His scepter is his — pen; his sword is his — tongue; his realm is that of — Words.

Therefore it ought to be, it infallibly will be, in his *language* that Mr. Wilson's real self will be re-

PROPHETIC SYMPTOMS

vealed. If his character is to be studied, if an assessment of the quality and scope of his mentality is to be reached, if search is to be made for the secret of the hiding of his power, the investigator must go to Mr. Wilson's writings and the records of his speeches. Thither are we bound, primarily for the pleasure of travel and quest, yet not without hope of bringing back a report of value to those more serious people, the psychologists and the historians.

Mr. Wilson has been writing for half a century. He learned the alphabet only when he was nine years old,¹ but before he was fifteen he was engaged upon a romance which, no doubt to the infinite loss of English literature, still exists only in the single copy of its original faded penciled pages. I am acquainted with the contents of this earliest Wilson manuscript, and am able to certify to the precocity in romance of its juvenile author.

In 1876, T. W. Wilson began contributing to a college paper. Some of his contributions were in verse. He early adopted a poetic style modeled after the limerick. One of his efforts as the conductor of a column called "Here and There" ran thus:

¹ *Woodrow Wilson, The Story of His Life*, p. 37.

THE STORY OF A STYLE

“ ‘ I will work out a rhyme
If I only have time,
Said the man of ‘ Here and There.’
So he tried for a while;
Result — a loose pile
Of his beautiful golden hair.’ ”

In 1879, an undergraduate twenty-two years old, Mr. Wilson accomplished the feat of securing publication in a magazine of the highest class. *Cabinet Government in the United States* by Thomas W. Wilson, in *The International Review*, of August, 1879, was a treatise in brief of which a publicist of elder years and far richer experience need not have been ashamed. It was an argument for the reconstruction of the American Congress and Cabinet to conform to the English Parliamentary plan; it impeached our national legislature as “ practically irresponsible,” especially denouncing the Congressional committee system, under which all the important work of Congress is done in secret session by a few members. Secrecy, argued this twenty-two-year-old statesman, in 1879, forty years before the Congress of Versailles, is the atmosphere in which all corruption and evil flourishes. “ Congress should legislate as if in the presence of the whole country, in open and free debate.”

At the outset it must be insisted upon, in all good faith, that this is an examination of Mr. Wilson’s

PROPHETIC SYMPTOMS

literary style, and that it interests itself in his political opinions not at all, and in his political declarations only as they throw light upon the operations of his faculty of expression. Not infrequently, comment may be directed towards what are apparently political inconsistencies. These all are doubtless capable of explanation and satisfactory resolution. As for their purport, they lie outside the province of this discussion. It concerns itself sedulously with expressional phenomena.

Thomas W. Wilson's first magazine article contained probably no passages more important than these:

"Nothing could be more obvious than the fact that the very life of free, popular institutions is dependent upon their breathing the bracing air of thorough, exhaustive and open discussion.

"We are thus again brought into the presence of the cardinal fact of this discussion — that *debate* is the essential function of a popular representative body. In the severe, distinct, and sharp enunciation of underlying principles, the unsparing examination and telling criticism of opposite positions, the careful painstaking unraveling of all the issues involved, which are incident to the free discussion of questions of public policy, we see the best, the only effective means of educating public opinion."

The immediate impression given by the first read-

THE STORY OF A STYLE

ing of an article in this style is that the author possesses the quality commonly and admiringly described as an unusual command of language. Few college boys, is the reflection, would write like that.

Since this is the writing of a college boy, and not of a President, we can examine it without prejudice. The selection was not made with a view to verbal examination, and, on that account, all the more deserves it.

A second reading can hardly fail to recognize a curious disproportion in the parts of speech employed. Here are 108 words, in three sentences. Only one word in the hundred is a pure verb. It is true we have the substantives "be," "is," "are," and the auxiliary "could," and the participle "brought"; but the sole statement of action is that "we see."

To keep this scanty company in countenance, there are, however, thirty adjectives. Shall we be mathematical and notice that one word in every three-and-three-fifths words is an adjective?

Here is an interesting list:

PURE VERBS	ADJECTIVES
<i>see</i>	<i>more</i>
	<i>very</i>
	<i>free</i>
	<i>popular</i>
	<i>dependent</i>

PROPHETIC SYMPTOMS

IMPURE VERBS

could be
is
are brought
is
are

ADJECTIVES

bracing
thorough
exhaustive
open
cardinal
this
essential
popular
representative
severe
distinct
sharp
underlying
unsparing
telling
opposite
careful
painstaking
incident
free
public
best
only
effective
public

Somewhat surprised by the result of the count,
and desiring to check it against an examination of the

THE STORY OF A STYLE

style of other masters of English prose, I take down a random volume of Macaulay; it happens to be Vol. V of his *History of England*, and it happens to open at pages 116–117. I count out 108 words at the top of page 117 and proceed to ascertain how many verbs and adjectives are among them. There are eleven verbs and two adjectives.

Interested, I take down a volume of Ruskin (*Fors Clavigera*); one by Carlyle (*Sartor Resartus*); one by Stevenson (*Treasure Island*); I take down *King Richard II*, *Tom Sawyer*, *Knickerbocker's History of New York*, *The Gold Bug*, *Quentin Durward*, *David Copperfield*, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, *Richard Yea and Nay*, Bernard Shaw's *The Philanderer*; I go on and take down books by French, Polish, Belgian, Swiss and other writers: *La Chartreuse de Parme*, *Quo Vadis*, *L'Isolée*, *La Vie des Abeilles*, Rousseau's *Confessions*, Amiel's *Journal Intime*.

A count of the pure verbs (exclusive of substantives, auxiliaries, infinitives and participles) and adjectives among the first one hundred eight words on page 117 of each volume yields the results here tabulated:

	<i>Verbs</i>	<i>Adjectives</i>
Wilson	1	30
Ruskin	16	7

PROPHETIC SYMPTOMS

	<i>Verbs</i>	<i>Adjectives</i>
Carlyle	12	4
Macaulay	11	2
Stevenson	14	3
Irving	12	8
Poe	12	5
Shakespeare	14	9
Scott	11	8
Dickens	16	6
Hardy	14	1
Shaw	14	4
Clemens	13	3
Hewlett	13	3
Gibbon	9	8
Bazin	18	3
Sienkiewicz	11	1
Stendhal	15	2
Maeterlinck	10	None
Rousseau	14	6
Amiel	9	7

These twenty writers employed, on the average, among a hundred words, some thirteen pure verbs and four and a half adjectives. The writer of *Cabinet Government in the United States* found need for only one pure verb and five impure verbs, but, in the meanwhile, invoked the aid of thirty adjectives.

It is with a true instinct that language calls the part of speech which represents action, "the *verb*"

THE STORY OF A STYLE

— *the* word. The task of speech is to predicate, not to paint. The advance of thought is just so swift as the verbs carry it. Adjectives qualify, describe, limit. They are a brake, a drag, on the wheel — often necessary in order that advance may be kept in the right track — but not near so often necessary as they are commonly and lazily deemed to be. They are popular, because easy; they eke out effortless poverty of idea. The man who has something to tell has little need, little time, for them; he snaps out his tale in words of action. The thought that pants for deliverance bursts out in verbs. A very little study will show that the world's great story-tellers and thinkers have generally written in action-words, not quality-words; some by instinct, some on principle (as Stevenson, for one, confesses) eschewing mention of all but most necessary attributes. The artist in language suspects an approaching adjective as he would suspect a possible rogue at the door.

If now we proceed to scrutinize the array of adjectives in the quoted passage, several interesting circumstances invite our attention:

The qualities occur often intensified, in couplets, or in triplets:

more obvious
free, popular

thorough, exhaustive and
open

PROPHETIC SYMPTOMS

popular, representative
careful, painstaking

severe, distinct and sharp
best and only effective

This piling up of connected adjectives accentuates the question whether all are necessary. What is added to the thought by sticking in "careful" before "painstaking"? What kind of painstaking would not be careful? "Exhaustive and open discussion" would have been complete; why expend another breath to make it "*thorough*, exhaustive and open"? What additional idea is conveyed by the middle member of the phrase "severe, *distinct* and sharp"? "Tautology," says the first dictionary I open, "is repetition without addition of force or clearness, and is disguised by a change of wording."

While the instances just noticed are clear pleonasm, there are in the passage several other adjectives which fall under rather more than the general suspicion which lies against the race: "free, popular institutions," "popular, representative body," "free discussion," "public policy," "public opinion," as phrases in so brief an excerpt, seem somewhat overburdening. That the air should be "bracing" is doubtless well enough, though not necessary. Criticism need not have been "telling criticism," and examination need not have been "unsparing examination."

The list reveals a striking predilection not only for unnecessary qualifications in general, but for in-

THE STORY OF A STYLE

tensifications, superlatives and absolutes. Mr. Wilson writes of "the very life"—not the life—but the *very* life; he speaks not merely of the issues involved, but of "*all* the issues involved." The simple fact is not to be trusted to tell its own due story; it must be intensified so as to be as unmistakably absolute in the mind of the reader as it is in that of the writer. He speaks of "underlying principles," as if all principles were not underlying. He wishes to write of different positions, and he represents them as "*opposite* positions." He thinks of one of the functions of debate, and instantly it becomes "the *essential* function," and "the *cardinal* fact," and a fact of such majesty that we are somewhat solemnly "brought into the presence of" it.

Our author clearly is no Quaker, with a conscience opposed to superfluity. He has not early been taught to "speak within bounds"; the injunction, "Let your communications be Yea, yea, and Nay, nay," and the fear of the Day of Judgment when men shall render an account for every idle word, have never been impressed upon him; and whatever virtues his writing displays are not those of moderation and restraint.

I once read to Theodore Roosevelt some pages of the *Journal* of the Quaker, John Woolman, a classic illustration of the force of reserve, deliberate understatement and studied anti-climax. Frugal of word

PROPHETIC SYMPTOMS

and burdened with thought, unacquainted with the supererogatory, and a stranger to the superlative, gravely declining to glance at a graceful attribute, unresponsive (as to his countenance, whether or not in his heart) to the bright eye of a passing conceit, John Woolman, with his decent and undeviating reticence, his gentle austerity, is indeed a man apart, in the degree of his control of the verities of language. What I tried to prove to Mr. Roosevelt was the surprisingly moving quality of the style of this prophet of the plain people, in its utterances purposeful as a gray man-of-war pushing towards its goal, eloquent as a Chrysostom in its golden silences.

(John Woolman could never have written the above very pretty sentence — which, of course, flouts the virtue it lauds and exemplifies the vice it reprobates.)

The Apostle of the Strenuous Life proclaimed his instant admiration for the quietistic philosopher and stingy stylist. He soon afterward put *Woolman's Journal* high up in a list of "best books" which he prepared for the edification of youth. So far as I noticed, however, Theodore Roosevelt did not thenceforward take the Quaker's style for a paradigm.

Would, perhaps, Thomas Woodrow Wilson have profited if in youth he had fallen under its influence, or under some similar influence?

THE STORY OF A STYLE

What influence did affect him? He is accustomed to refer to himself as of Scottish ancestry, and to claim a kinship of spirit with the scrupulous and the taciturn. Which is only natural, seeing that the Wilsons were Irish and left him the Irish gift of imagination and loquacity. He told his biographer¹ that at college his favorite among writers had been Burke; he was accustomed to spend hours memorizing and declaiming that Celtic orator's fervid periods. Whether Mr. Wilson's class-mates recognized his talent for copious eloquence rather than for clear thought is here of no consequence, and it is sincerely hoped, in the interest of the unprejudiced unfolding of the argument, that the conscientious reader will not at this juncture turn to page 160 and read the quotation there.

It would be insincere, even at this early stage of the investigation, to pretend ignorance of the widely-noticed fact that Mr. Wilson is addicted to certain favorite locutions. Since a witty after-dinner speaker described the President as being on the Atlantic steaming at the rate of thirty May-I-knots an hour, attention has frequently been drawn to this peculiarity and to a few such others as the Wilsonian aptness at seeing "visions" and hearing "voices."

¹ *Woodrow Wilson: The Story of His Life*, pp. 67, 68.

PROPHETIC SYMPTOMS

The passage under examination contains at least three phrases which abound in practically every later production by this writer. The employment of the pedantic preface such as introduces two of the three sentences which we are examining, became a fixed habit, and these two particular prefaces ("Nothing could be more obvious than that —"; and "We are thus brought into presence of the fact that —") remained in continuous use, alternating with such variants as "I take the liberty of saying that," "I venture to believe that," "May we not take leave to believe that," "One is with whatever reluctance constrained to conclude that," and the like.

"Breathing the bracing air" marks the first of many occasions on which we shall find things of all descriptions and people of all degree breathing the bracing, or the invigorating, or the free, the clear, the calm, the refreshing and renewing, or some other variety, of air. To describe inanimate things as "breathing," is, we shall find, one of Mr. Wilson's favorite methods of personification — a habit the testimony of which we shall have to ask.

It may be argued that when phrases become habitual, they lose their significance. The truth is they grow doubly significant. If we find that a certain set of phrases has become habitual with a writer, we are shown that the mental attitude or habit which they reveal has come in a noticeable degree to dominate

THE STORY OF A STYLE

his intellect. If the mental habits are good ones, the thoughts noble ones, there is no reason why they should not dominate the mind; no reason why they should not be practiced and repeated throughout a life-time. Even so, the mind possessed of great and enduring thoughts will continually seek, and easily find, new, fresh and more adequate modes of expression for them. But if we were to discover the mental habits to be those of inaccuracy, exaggeration and indolence, and the idiom a mere patter of pedantic phrases, unaltered and unimproved at the end of forty years, we should confront a phenomenon requiring consideration.

The introductory phrase, "Nothing could be more obvious than," is instantly suspicious to the critical mind. Here we have the statement that there is nothing in the universe more axiomatic than the fact which is about to be adduced.

Now, there are numerous facts in the universe. "The world is so full of a number of things." Many of these things are fairly obvious to ordinary intellects; some entirely so. But if one of these facts is obvious, it would seem to be unnecessary to do more than simply to cite it, casually, albeit confidently. Unnecessary to state that it is obvious, because, if it be, the reader must already have recog-

PROPHETIC SYMPTOMS

nized its truth, as well as the indisputable character of its truth. And if it belongs among those very special things than which nothing could be *more* obvious, all the more is it unnecessary, all the more is it rather silly, to insist upon its axiomatic character. It can hardly seriously be alleged that *nothing* in the world is more obvious than that "the very life of free, popular institutions is dependent upon their breathing the bracing air of thorough, exhaustive and open discussion." To speak conservatively, there are many, probably many thousand, things more obvious than that. It is more obvious, merely for example, that twice two is four. But what should we be moved to think of an author who deemed it necessary to write: "Nothing could be more obvious than the fact that two times two is four"; and then go on to announce: "We are thus brought into the presence of the cardinal fact of this discussion — that it is the essential nature of twice two to be four"!

Upon the ears of any one at all acquainted with Mr. Wilson's later writings, the phrase, "nothing could be more obvious," must fall as peculiarly familiar. The young gentleman to whom already in 1879 a casual idea must seem not only obvious, but the most obvious thing in the world, never lost his early power of instinctively recognizing the axiomatic quality of his own thoughts; and he early began to

THE STORY OF A STYLE

indulge impatience with those who did not likewise instantly discern what to his mind was so plain. We shall find him constantly asserting of all sorts of things, even the most contradictory, that they are perfectly obvious. In August, 1879, it was the necessity of thorough, exhaustive, open discussion, unsparing examination and debate. In August, 1919, we find President Wilson telling the assembled senators of the Committee on Foreign Relations, in reply to the request for information concerning the writing of the Peace Treaty, that "nothing could be more obvious than that matters of this sort should not be given publicity."

It would be easy, of course, to convict this inconsistency on moral grounds. That is not the intention of this treatise; nor, indeed, would such a conviction be just, if the theory of this book is sound. At all events, we shall not so easily and cheaply dispose of the matter without a little deeper investigation.

It is possible that many things, and indeed almost all things, even contradictory things, do really present themselves to Mr. Wilson's mind as self-evident. It may be that the laborious way of reason and proof are not for him. Intuition suffices. His perception jumps at once to the truth, unconscious of the ordinary necessity of logical advance. It may be that when truth is thus attained by him, it seems utterly beyond conceivable dispute — any truth that is in his

PROPHETIC SYMPTOMS

mind, so long as it is in his mind. We are surely all acquainted with men who hold the beliefs they hold to be the most important and the most indisputable beliefs it is possible to hold — men who see everything big, and everything certain; to whose warm apprehension nothing appeals otherwise than as superlative and absolute. Everything stands on its tip-toes when Mr. Wilson approaches it. “We are now brought into the presence of the *cardinal* fact . . . the *essential* function.”

But if the meaning of these phrases be disregarded, and they be taken less seriously as mere ornamental prefaces, there is born the question — entirely colorless as to the article of disparagement or praise — why does the author resort to time-consuming locutions introductory to the projection of new ideas? The answer may be that he resorts to them either

because his own cerebration is sluggish; or, though active, is repressed by internal conflict; or

because he understands that allowance must be made for the incapacity of the people for following any rapid advance of thought; or

because of more subtle recommendations, connected with the necessity which lies upon an oracle of leisure class culture to put into evidence his familiarity with studied phrases, economically wasteful, and

THE STORY OF A STYLE

therefore distinguished, testifying to the fact that the author has spent years in ornamental, non-productive studies, and has acquired the honorable habit of squandering his own time, and requiring that readers squander theirs, in the penning and the perusal of circumlocutions conceived as embroidering plain statements with the galloon of an antique grace.

The explanation may find itself in any of these considerations, or in some combination of any two or of all of them, each in its own proportion.

For the present let us content ourselves with a practical summary of our investigation of an example of Mr. Wilson's early writing.

It is possible to strike out one-third of the words marshaled by the young gentleman's facile pen, toss another dozen out of the window, for good measure, and still leave the sense not only complete, but — who will deny? — more vigorously expressed. Thus:

“The life of popular institutions depends upon their breathing the air of thorough open discussion. The cardinal point of this article is: debate is a prime function of a representative body. In the distinct enunciation of principles, the unsparing examination of opposed positions, the careful unraveling of the issues involved, we see an effective means of educating public opinion.”

PROPHETIC SYMPTOMS

This paragraph contains fifty-nine words; Mr. Wilson's original contains one hundred eight. Is any thought, or *nuance*, missing?

The author of this book is not the critic who died before completing his commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians, having been detained thirteen years in writing five volumes on the *iota subscript* in the first verse of the first chapter. We shall get on. But it did seem desirable to expend a little pains inspecting a sample of Mr. Wilson's earliest published writing — especially because in several particulars it furnishes a key to, and an explanation of, characteristics which mark all his work, down to this day.

Mr. Wilson's first book, *Congressional Government*, was published in 1885; it was an expansion of his *International Review* essay and remains his most important contribution to political thought. Four years later it was followed by a school text-book, *The State*. Then there were some three or four volumes of essays, chiefly dealing with figures in British political history, partly written while in college.

Then there came in 1896, a really important book, *George Washington*, into which the author threw the whole of his talents, his opinions and his enthusiasm.

THE STORY OF A STYLE

It was followed by *A History of the American People*, a pretentiously advertised work which was executed under difficult conditions and for which it would not be just to hold the anxious author to close account. Then was issued a volume of lectures, demanding slight attention, *Constitutional Government in the United States*. The bibliography given in *Who's Who* includes, as of importance, the 1913 Princeton Baccalaureate Address, *Free Life*; and the volume *The New Freedom*. It is impossible to adduce *The New Freedom* into this examination, because in his preface to this, his most famous work, Mr. Wilson generously ascribes the authorship to another.

Aside from *The New Freedom*, the book which asserts itself as Mr. Wilson's most important production prior to that of his state papers is *George Washington*. That, first, and then them, we shall have to examine.

It has been Mr. Wilson's fortune, good or bad, to escape criticism; first, because before his entrance upon a political career his writings had no very wide circulation; and, second, because he, nevertheless, entered the White House as the first reputed scholar who had occupied the Presidential chair; and was in the popular imagination endowed with all those delightful qualities of the habitant of the college cloister which the ordinary citizen feels it far beyond his

PROPHETIC SYMPTOMS

abilities to challenge or for a moment to doubt. It has become an article of faith *Quicumque vult salvus esse* that Mr. Wilson is a master of English style. Which faith, except every one do keep it whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly. Nevertheless —

II

ARISTOCRATIC AFFECTATIONS

WE approach, therefore, Mr. Wilson's first fully typical book,— *George Washington*. It has no other title. It does not, on its title-page, claim to be a biography. It refrains from designating itself "An Essay"; it is not even "An Interpretation." It is still less a "Foot-Note to History." It is just *George Washington — by Woodrow Wilson*. Yet a biography it is, beginning with a sketch of the hero's ancestors and conveying him from cradle to death-bed. It tells no single fact about him that was not already known. It exploits no new historic sources, and examines no well-known ones. It has little time for dates; it refuses to annoy itself unduly with mere matters of fact. Does it then pretend to be a new and deeper analysis of the character of his country's Father? It does not. Or a more direct and simple telling of the tale? Far from that. It wanders delightfully along with an entirely legendary story which affords the gifted author opportunity to indite what is probably the

ARISTOCRATIC AFFECTATIONS

most lovely language ever employed in a modern attempt at history. Humanly discerned and honestly described, Washington might have served for a reasonably interesting biography; but could never have afforded excuse for a piece of literature like this.

A romantic rhapsody about a handsome ghost, "bravely appareled," "born a gentleman and a man of honor," "a Virginia gentleman," "if you please," who struts through three hundred pages among a gallery of lay-figures in knee-breeches, wigs and ruffs, snuff and dignity, every one of whom was "bred" to honor or fashion, unless he happened to be "an honest yeoman" (vulgar, laborer), "prone" "shrewdly" to "take counsel" or "perchance" "for the nonce" to "give free leave to opinions" in a day "quick" with — I forget what. One "made shift" to do something or other; another "flouted" somebody or other; others were not "daunted a whit;" all of them were "generous," and "frank," and most of them "very frank." Those who did not possess "vision," in compensation had a "lofty mien."

"Pride," "prestige," "honorable peccadilloes" crowd each other from paragraph to paragraph. Washington "fared forth" "very bravely dight in proper uniform" described in punctilious detail. His "haughty carriage" is noted repeatedly. When the Legislature failed to treat the youthful

THE STORY OF A STYLE

officer with consideration due "a Virginia gentleman of breeding," he resigned, because "it was no part of the tradition of his class to submit to degradation in rank." Fairfax, who dropped his title when he came to Virginia, Mr. Wilson, for the delectation of flunky readers, calls "his lordship" three times in ten lines (page 56).

Everything was "spacious" or, at least, "ample," likewise "gallant;" men were "too proud to fight" or "perchance to dissemble the while." Their frame houses were always "storied." Acres were always "broad." Their possessors "must needs work their plots of ground and devise a domestic economy without servants." Dr. Samuel Johnson once wrote a catechism. I read it as a youth. All that I remember is that, where the old catechism in reply to the question, "What did David do when he heard of his son Absalom's death?" says, "He washed himself and did eat," Dr. Johnson's catechism ran: "He performed his ablutions and partook of refreshments." I think this classic page of learned cant is easily surpassed by: "The sturdy yeomen must needs work their plots of ground and devise a domestic economy without servants." To any honest fool who knows anything about the conditions in which the poverty-stricken and illiterate Virginia diggers of the soil a hundred and fifty years ago lived, an attempt like this to surround them with ro-

ARISTOCRATIC AFFECTATIONS

mance is highly diverting. Perhaps it was intended to be.

Mr. Wilson's language flows on in careful accordance with the schedule. The Puritan is always "hardy." The immigrants are always "out of England." They always prosper "shrewdly." The "breed of noble public men" "touched" with "simplicity" or "consideration" or "dignity" or what not, "had leave" "in their independence, to be themselves." If they left their shanties, it was because they liked to be "quit of the house and free of the genial air." A frontier cabin is a "rough rural barony." Success in an Indian fight is a "largesse of good fortune." When Washington went West to stake out land, he "turned away for a space from the troublous affairs of politics." When Hamilton did what the President wanted, "his measures jumped with Washington's purpose."

George's brother did not die of tuberculosis; "a fatal consumption fastened upon him." Anne Fairfax was "daughter to," not of, her father. The Fairfax settlement was "*within* the Blue Ridge." Nobody stayed; they "tarried." Nothing looked like something; it "showed for" something. A habit or quality did not reveal something; it "discovered" something.

More than a hundred sentences begin with "'Tis," "'Twas," or "'Twould."

THE STORY OF A STYLE

The Hudson is "Hudson's River;" Barbadoes, with equal impressiveness and inaccuracy, "the Barbadoes." "Gentry" are "fain to believe" "withal" "not a whit" more than "was their wont," and "for the rest"—whatever you like that is gallant and ruffled and peruqued and gives out a scent of an age concerning which we can pretend and romance.

What we are getting in all this is evidence of a mind detached from contemplation of the fact, too often indifferent to the compelling charm or the categorical necessity of truth, too much engrossed in the idle assembling of conventional locutions designed to throw a spell of pseudo-romance around the subject.

Very well, if the reader has his doubts, he shall be given chapter and verse, to his heart's content.

First, consider a few samples of the book's especially pompous phrases. It appears, for instance, that nobody should be so many years old; he should be "turned of" so many years; and it is desirable to refer to ages whenever there is any possible excuse, in order to introduce this impressive locution. Thus:

(Lawrence Washington) "had not returned home out of England until he was *turned of* twenty-one and he had been back scarce a twelve-month" . . . (p. 47.)

ARISTOCRATIC AFFECTATIONS

(William Fairfax) "was now, when *turned of* fifty . . ." (p. 49.)

(George Washington) "was but just *turned of* twenty." (p. 59.)

(George Washington) "was but just *turned of* twenty;" (p. 101.)

". . . this hero not yet *turned of* fifty." (p. 216.)

"John Marshall, just *turned of* twenty eight —" (p. 235.)

(Hamilton) "a man just two months *turned of* thirty-three." (p. 287.)

This may, of course, be regarded as fine writing, or as a deliberate affectation; or as a clinic obsession, to be sympathetically examined. But some sort of judgment it is extraordinary enough to require. Why is it necessary for Mr. Wilson to seek constant excuse for pedanticisms like those cited above? Or like these:

"They *gave leave* to their opinions, too, with a like downright confidence, . . ." (p. 5.)

"He had *leave*, in his independence, to be himself quite;" (p. 29.)

"He had robust health, to which he *gave leave* in unstinted work." (p. 106.)

"He had never before had *leave* to be tender with children." (p. 107.)

"Where men *have leave* to be individual.—" (p. 133.)

"The congress in Philadelphia was called upon to recognize it, adopt it, give it *leave* —" (p. 173.)

THE STORY OF A STYLE

“When he succored distress, he did it in pity, not in justice — not excusing fault, but *giving leave* to mercy,” (p. 241.)

(Wherein we have an interesting glimpse of the economic science and political philosophy of Mr. Wilson: — mortal distress is a matter for pitiful mercy — not just consideration. But this is a literary examination.)

An impressive phrase which often lends its charm to the style of *George Washington* is “*must needs*.”

“To find his humble quarters you *must needs* thread a path . . .” (p. 35.)

“Settlers were making their way thither, who *must needs* have their holidays bounded.” (p. 56.)

“The Virginia note had been selected and *must needs* be made the best of.” (p. 85.)

“Beverly Robinson *must needs* have Miss Mary Philipse at his house.” (p. 93.)

“He *must needs* give a ball at Alexandria.” (p. 143.)

(Hunting) “*must needs* give way to a statesman’s cares.” (p. 243.)

“Scorning soldiers who *must needs* blunder.” (p. 296.)

We get already in this book of 1898 a phrase very often since used by the author, which, however, became famous only twenty years later: Washington was “too proud to dissemble” (p. 214); Beverly

ARISTOCRATIC AFFECTATIONS

was "too proud to conceal his opinions" (p. 31); the colonies were "too proud to submit" (p. 26).

We get numerous instance of a curious transposition which later became habitual—like this: "Protest not only, but defiance, rang very clear in these feeling words" (p. 127).

The concepts of space and time merge in the high philosophy of this book: the English "looked in *a short space*" to see French settlements increase (p. 24); Washington, on page 103, was embarrassed "to find himself *for a space* too conspicuous; on page 144 "he turned away *for a space* from the deepening trouble in the East to plunge once more into the western ways." (The land beyond the Alleghenies is usually "the western ways.")

Virginians, "*spite of change and seclusion*," had a temperament in common with England (p. 5); New England kept to a single standard of conduct, "*spite of slow change*" (p. 12); Braddock's troops were able to fight, "*spite of sickness*" (p. 75).

"The Old Dominion *made shift* to do without towns" (p. 6); Colonel Byrd found he "might *make shift* to enjoy" idleness (p. 34); Washington (p. 194) struggled "to *make shift*" with poor levies.

Spotswood was "Lieutenant-Governor *in the stead* of his Lordship the Earl of Orkney" (p. 37); Lawrence Washington got his brother a commission "*in*

THE STORY OF A STYLE

his stead" (p. 58); Massachusetts (p. 168) formed a provincial congress "*in the stead of*" the old House of Delegates.

Men of rustic exterior "*yet were stuff of true courage*" within (p. 127); "*it was stuff of Washington's nature to spend itself thus on*" (p. 167); p. 291, "*it was stuff of his character, this purpose of independence.*"

Colonel Byrd "*was fain to think*" well of New England (p. 12); Washington (p. 73) "*was fain to go into camp.*" Virginians were "*for the nonce*" much of a mind with the Puritans (p. 13); France, on page 199, "*for the nonce*" was quick with sympathy for America. "*For the rest*" (p. 6) Virginia had no cities; "*for the rest*" (p. 30) those who liked could learn the languages; "*for the rest,*" Washington's fortunes were "*to make.*" "There was no great *mart*" to which the trade of the colony was drawn (p. 6); Philadelphia (p. 17) was a busy "*mart.*" No one might "*make breach* of the decorous traditions" of the Assembly (p. 130); British regulars must (p. 87) stand in rank "*without breach* of discipline." They might press forward, "*but where* was the use?" The continentals were driven from Bunker Hill, (so the historian calls it, page 180) only when they "*failed of powder.*" The people of South Carolina (p. 205) "*knew not when* their homes might be plundered." The hero's

ARISTOCRATIC AFFECTATIONS

particularity was sometimes (p. 240) “*shot through* with a gleam of grim humor.” He could not escape the crowds (p. 24): “he was too famous and there was *an end on’t*.”

“It was a country in which men kept their individuality very handsomely *withal*” (p. 28); traders “must make good their title to what they were to trade *withal*” (p. 23); Pendleton (p. 131) “was *withal* so transparent”; Virginians (p. 133) had abundant opportunity to be frank, *withal*, if you will”; John Adams (p. 157) was “public-spirited *withal*.”

The people of England were “*a whit* stiffer than” others (p. 9); the situation mentioned on page twenty-six “was not altered *a whit*”; Patrick Henry (p. 132) “was not daunted *a whit*”; Mary Washington at seventy-four “was not *a whit* bent” (p. 229); George Washington (p. 266) “was not *a whit* the less resolute” to undertake the presidency.

When a Virginian went into his field or mounted his horse, it was, we have seen, for sheer pleasure, “being *quit* of the house and breathing free in the genial air” (p. 28); Washington wanted to “*be quit* of the humiliation of being stinted like a beggar” (p. 80); “Many were fleeing England *to be quit* of the Puritan tyranny” (p. 129); Washington “longed *to be quit* of the narrow life of the colony” (p. 112).

THE STORY OF A STYLE

“ Randolph *flung* out of the house ” (p. 132); America “ *flung* away from her mother England ” (p. 291). “ The days *fell* dull ” (p. 114); “ the streets *fell* silent ” (p. 272); “ the King’s government had *fallen* on defeat ” (p. 50).

John Washington had become notable “ *ere* ” he had been many years in Virginia; George learned his lessons “ *ere* ” war came; the French had scarcely reached Canada “ *ere* ” Dinwiddie knew it; backwoodsmen had been hurried West “ *ere* ” spring; the French commander must withdraw “ *ere* ” he was besieged; Braddock gave an order “ *ere* ” the bullet struck him; Denmore was forced to pay for powder “ *ere* ” he could get rid of an annoyance; Jefferson began “ *ere* long ” to complain.¹

There was once extant a somewhat irreverent pamphlet entitled *Whither, oh! Whither? Tell me Where*. The Wilson volume under examination might almost be entitled, *Whence, Whence? Inform Me Out of What*. For with scrupulous care does the author inform us of the origin of every character, however obscure, and every movement, however unimportant; and nothing, by any chance, comes *from* anywhere; all things come *out of somewhere*. Thus:

“ Out of Virginia, and out of Pennsylvania, as well as out of New York.” (p. 24.)

¹ Pages 40, 41, 63, 71, 88, 89, 171, 287.

ARISTOCRATIC AFFECTATIONS

- “ Out of England.” (p. 16.)
- “ Out of England.” (p. 16.)
- “ Out of England.” (p. 18.)
- “ Out of New England.” (p. 19.)
- “ Out of every colony.” (p. 19.)
- “ Out of the eastern seas.” (p. 22.)
- “ Out of Bedfordshire.” (p. 39.)
- “ Out of Virginia.” (p. 46.)
- “ Out of England.” (p. 46.)
- “ Out of the colonies.” (p. 48.)
- “ Out of the country of the.” (p. 60.)
- “ Out of the west.” (p. 61.)
- “ Out of Canada.” (p. 195.)
- “ Out of Roxbury and East Cambridge.” (p. 184.)

“ The Barbadoes ” occurs on page 26; “ Hudson’s River ” on page 12; “ the Carolinas ” on pages 26 and 27; “ the Floridas ” on page 298.

We approach now a phenomenon upon which it will be necessary to pause and which it will be desirable to illustrate liberally. This is Mr. Wilson’s continued addiction to adjectives, a curiosity noted in the first chapter. Let us analyze more fully some of the features of this addiction visible in *George Washington*.

Seldom is a geographical division or feature mentioned without being decorated with a quality :

THE STORY OF A STYLE

<i>Page</i>	4	the great continent
	5	the virgin continent
	119	the roomy continent
	246	the great continent
	12	the vast domain
	246	the vast territory
	247	the vast territory
	5	busy middle territories
	48	far-unhappy South
	57	fiery South
	117	quiet South
	120	almost feudal South
	119	litigious Massachusetts
	39	sturdy commonwealth
	37	fair colony of Virginia
	49	quiet colony of Virginia
	54	robust colony of Virginia
	101	hale colony of Virginia
	31	quiet land of Virginia
	204	stout little kingdom
	213	proud mother country
	255	powerful states
	45	fruitful northern neck
	5	characteristic communities
	295	quiet settlements
	247	far counties of Carolina
	247	vast counties (Carolina)
	303	vast counties of Pennsylvania
	145	vast quiet counties of Virginia
	54	wild country

ARISTOCRATIC AFFECTATIONS

<i>Page</i>	55	wild but goodly country
	106	far country of Ohio
	33	rude frontier
	106	far frontier
	110	stricken frontier
	15	humble parish
	126	quiet parish
	24	quiet parish
	157	hospitable town
	228	quiet town
	228	fated town
	197	complacent town
	23	veritable town
	15	obscure village
	45	promising village
	246	rude hamlet

No stream or bay can be mentioned without an adjective:

<i>Page</i>	5	spreading Delaware
	191	broad Delaware
	190	that broad river the Delaware
	192	great unbridged stream (the Delaware)
	17	broad river (Rappahanock)
	6	each broad river (in Virginia)
	189	broad Hudson
	16	strong and ample Potomac
	55	swollen Potomac
	55	sparkling Shenandoah

THE STORY OF A STYLE

<i>Page</i>	23	mighty river (St. Lawrence)
	23	flooding Mississippi
	23	great body of dividing waters (Mississippi)
	23	vast river (Mississippi)
	24	spreading stream (Mississippi)
	60	sluggish Mississippi
	60	royal stream (Mississippi)
	295	broad reaches (Mississippi)
	234	long reaches of the James
	245	upper reaches of the Potomac
	246	that great stream (the Ohio)
	23	long rivers
	24	wild banks (of the Ohio)
	41	broad reaches (of the Potomac)
	5	great bay at New York
	18	great bay at New York
	4	long Atlantic seaboard
	17	great coast line
	23	far Lake Michigan
	59	great water courses
	65	swollen rivers
	242	long rivers

Unhappy, indeed, is any topographical feature without its adjective :

<i>Page</i>	24	thicketed hills
	55	swelling hillsides
	41	gentle slopes
	72	sharp slopes
	120	great ridge

ARISTOCRATIC AFFECTATIONS

<i>Page</i>	242	forested mountains
	49	fruitful villages
	61	sweet villages
	26	fair villages
	246	fertile villages
	24	far villages

Never are the forests described without their more or less necessary attributes :

<i>Page</i>	4	still forests
	12	thick forests
	38	rude forests
	54	untrodden forests
	54	thicketed forests
	74	dripping forests
	85	dense forests
	86	shadowed forests
	184	unwilling forests
	195	vast forests
	195	deep forests
	6	virgin woodland
	51	tangled woods
	74	wet woods
	94	fatal woods
	166	autumn woods
	11	broad wilderness
	24	shadowed wilderness
	66	frozen wilderness
	85	tangled wilderness

THE STORY OF A STYLE

Natural enough are the aristocratic attributes ascribed to the ample possessions in Virginia, and farther West, of Mr. Wilson's heroes:

<i>Page</i>	5 ample acreage
	6 broad estates
	16 goodly region
	33 great tracts
	40 spacious homestead
	48 broad estates
	49 ancestral estates
	50 great manor-house
	54 vast tracts
	57 quiet seat
	57 large estate
	85 cultivated farms
	104 handsome property
	110 broad forested tracts
	142 fair lands
	234 handsome seat
	234 broad, half feudal estates
	246 fair region

Times, no less than places, afford opportunity for pause. Periods of the calendar may not pass Mr. Wilson's consciousness without being labeled each with some more or less appropriate attribute. Thus:

<i>Page</i>	5 fateful days
	47 terrible days

ARISTOCRATIC AFFECTATIONS

<i>Page</i>	47	romantic days
	49	those unhappy days
	103	quiet days
	109	frosty days
	307	quiet days
	149	long August day
	22	wearry years
	37	eighteen good years
	49	a hundred healing years
	119	the quiet year (1772)
	139	ominous year
	213	long year
	258	long year
	29	long evenings
	75	dreary morning
	102	dreary autumn
	110	long hopeless summer
	221	troubled summer
	259	slow summer
	168	that portentous spring
	258	an anxious week
	259	the long four months
	102	the healing months
	102	very happy season
	197	bitter season
	34	laughing times
	4	adventurous XV Century

Few are the names which are admitted to this chronicle without an introductory epithet, generally

THE STORY OF A STYLE

of graceful compliment. I allow myself space to list only a couple of dozen examples:

<i>Page</i>	48	the gallant Vernon
	50	the soldierly house of Fairfax
	102	the vivacious house of Cary
	83	the brave and energetic Sharpe
	86	the truculent Braddock
	100	the unhappy Braddock
	100	the dutiful Bishop
	119	bluff Sir Robert
	120	that quiet gentleman, the Rev. Andrew Barnaby
	136	the gallant Fauquier
	136	the officious Dinwiddie
	139	gentle John Blair
	153	quiet Richard Bland
	192	the gallant Cornwallis
	195	the prudent Howe
	200	the boyish Lafayette
	260	the distinguished Steuben
	208	the veteran Steuben
	208	the daring master of calvary Lee
	215	the gallant Montgomery
	235	the quiet Fauquier
	265	the faithful and sedulous Thomson
	59	the good Mr. Beverley
	73	the good Coleman Fry
	84	the sagacious Franklin
	279	Henry Knox, that gallant officer

On page 103 we are introduced to "the gracious

ARISTOCRATIC AFFECTATIONS

and stately Robinson ”; on page 113, the gentleman is bowed in as “ the already veteran Speaker ”; on page 130 he reënters as “ the veteran Speaker John Robinson, so old in affairs, so stately in his age, so gravely courteous, and yet with such a threat of good manners against those who should make breach of the decorous traditions of the place.”

Thus we get an idea as to how many adjectives Mr. Wilson can utter before one can say “ Jack Robinson.”

We get:

<i>Page</i>	13	redoubtable cavalier
	15	gallant colonel
	37	doughty Scot
	37	headstrong agitator
	37	stalwart, formidable master
	45	provident father
	47	provident mother
	47	fair and beautiful girl
	49	stout soldier
	49	fair jilt
	49	spendthrift father
	49	austere bachelor
	51	prudent mother
	51	robust boy
	52	manly brother
	52	generous man
	53	thoroughbred boy
	53	highbred man

THE STORY OF A STYLE

<i>Page</i>	53	daring lad
	53	sober lad
	56	careful agent
	59	efficient lady
	59	young major
	69	testy Governor
	69	hardheaded Scotsman
	65	alert young Virginian
	65	wayworn Ambassador
	73	doughty mathematician
	75	wily Indian
	75	gallant Virginian
	79	good Scotsman
	80	high-spirited officer
	81	brave man
	81	veteran soldier
	82	self-confident gentleman
	83	proud gentleman
	83	stout-hearted old lawyer
	83	every inch a gentleman
	84	cool-headed trader
	93	stout and steady soldier
	99	charming woman
	99	gracious matron
	100	stately young soldier
	100	abstracted officer
	100	young colonel
	101	raw lad
	101	fair young beauty
	102	young soldier

ARISTOCRATIC AFFECTATIONS

<i>Page</i>	102	brave horseman
	103	gallant, indomitable soldier
	103	gallant, indomitable soldier
	107	soldierly young planter
	107	gentle girl
	109	gallant horseman
	110	heartiest sportsman
	111	masterful young soldier
	114	arrogant officer
	117	haughty spirit
	118	that shrewd master
	119	that sturdy Governor
	119	that diligent servant of the Crown
	121	doughty seaman
	121	a worthy collector of His Majesty's customs
	127	very rustic figure
	130	formidable man
	143	man of honor
	143	frontiered soldier
	153	downright gentleman
	155	quiet Massachusetts lawyer

The above instances, jotted down by glancing through less than one-half of the volume, could be augmented indefinitely; they represent in all cases purely ornamental attribution of qualities. It is of no consequence for the purposes of the narrative that the brother was manly, or the agitator headstrong, or the governor testy, the Scot or the seaman or the

THE STORY OF A STYLE

mathematician doughty, the officer gallant, or indomitable, or spirited, or alert. The circumstances are of slight interest in themselves, and of none of this particular story.

This is all — what? Idleness, or vanity, or sluggishness of mind? Does Mr. Wilson stop to tell us that the youth is “an engaging youth,” or the spy a “common spy,” or the owner a “proud owner,” because he desires to prove his own leisurely character and vindicate the rights of leisure by requiring that his readers waste their time? Or has he somewhere got the idea that these tedious and silly epithets are a necessary part of a courtly style? Is he merely infatuated with the sound of certain words which he must incessantly seek excuse to utter? *Or is his brain constitutionally reluctant to propel the advance of thought, and by its nature doomed to hesitate, dawdle, characterize, qualify, eulogize — anything, to postpone the moment of forward-moving cerebration?*

One thing is clear enough. The use of a style like this is poor proof of a devotion to truth for truth's sake. The relation of this biography to the facts of Washington's life is remote, indeed, in any way considered; this carnival of adjectives is only one betrayal of the frivolity of the story; but it is a sufficient one. Colonels are presumed to be gallant, ladies fair, servants diligent, Scotsmen hard-headed,

ARISTOCRATIC AFFECTATIONS

Indians wily. Books are not written to insist upon, or cerebrate, attributes so familiar. It is a confirmed habit of evasion of contact with serious fact which dictates the habitual pause to dwell upon customary and assumable characteristics. While, as to the assignment to other personages of qualities not to be assumed as matter of course, it is in the instances above and in scores more, obviously mechanical and unreal in most cases, supererogatory in all, pertinent in few.

The author's mania for characterization is even more possessing when he speaks of classes or groups of men. They are almost invariably endowed with characteristics, sometimes natural, sometimes forced, sometimes unascertainable if existing, and almost always devoid of importance or relevancy. Anybody who will sit down for half an hour with a copy of *George Washington*, a pencil and a few sheets of paper can double the following list of a hundred typical examples:

<i>Page</i>	7 stately men
	7 sturdy frontiersmen
	10 stout men-at-arms
	10 hardy reformers
	10 hardy people
	14 stout bishops
	14 dashing soldiers
	14 stout polemical priors

THE STORY OF A STYLE

<i>Page</i>	14	thrifty burghers
	14	gallant courtiers
	14	prosperous merchants
	14	public-spirited gentlemen
	17	prudent men
	17	thrifty Quaker
	19	sturdy people
	20	strong men
	22	rough men
	23	shrewd fur traders
	23	dauntless priests
	23	cultivated men
	34	rough people
	34	spirited men
	34	comely women
	36	austere scholars
	35	good churchman
	37	sturdy race
	46	active gentlemen
	48	devoted force
	48	raw provincials
	49	hardy people
	54	fearless woodsmen
	39	hardy militiamen
	61	thrifty Germans
	61	hardy Scots-Irish
	61	enterprising gentlemen
	61	influential partners
	63	placid Quakers
	63	stolid Germans

ARISTOCRATIC AFFECTATIONS

<i>Page</i>	64	hostile savages
	64	hardy travelers
	65	self-reliant traders
	71	ragged regiment
	71	raw volunteers
	76	ragged troops
	76	ragged idlers
	77	stalwart young men
	83	headstrong Quakers
	83	headstrong Germans
	84	dreaded Mohawks
	84	cool-headed traders
	87	steady regulars
	87	motley host
	86	serried ranks
	86	great host
	89	savage enemies
	91	hardy breed
	91	valiant men
	92	helpless people
	101	fair women
	113	raw levies
	117	prudent traders
	117	phlegmatic farmers
	127	courtly gentlemen
	130	quiet men
	131	proud race
	132	proud men
	135	ardent men
	136	accomplished men

THE STORY OF A STYLE

<i>Page</i>	136	vivacious women
	137	high-spirited men
	154	red-coated sentries
	156	plain men
	157	brusque planters
	157	well-to-do merchants
	157	provincial country gentlemen
	157	enlightened citizens
	158	rustic squires
	163	designing politician
	164	influential members
	165	thoughtful Englishmen
	165	thoughtful men
	154	hot-headed mob
	162	frank Virginians
	171	daring provincials
	171	rude army
	180	raw peasants
	180	raw peasants
	180	motley host
	181	uncouth plowboys
	190	raw troops
	195	invading host
	195	splendid army
	200	that studious race of soldiers
	204	gallant men
	224	brutal company
	228	gay company
	242	raw nation
	247	hardy frontiersmen

ARISTOCRATIC AFFECTATIONS

- Page 258 that anxious body
280 that race of Virginia statesmen
281 the common run of people
286 impracticable Quakers

We have asked ourselves more than once what is the secret of this practice of attaching a description to every noun. Mere leisurely habit, love of ornamental words for their own sake, dawdling sluggishness, positive disinclination to advance, have suggested themselves. Is it not clear, now, that the explanation is deeper? If he deems it necessary to label everything with a characteristic — like those symbolic statues of uncertain physiognomy, each with its attribute in its hand, which we sometimes see on old churches — does it not seem as if an author must lack confidence in the ability of the unassisted name of a fact to convey the fact? May we not be getting in this addiction, the extent and obstinacy of which we now begin to see, a symptom of *habitual misgiving*? Whatever else there may be to it, *the suspicion cannot be escaped that this is no mere verbal embroidery, but the result of chronic, constitutional Doubt.*

Additional evidence of this is afforded by every step we advance in the exploration of Mr. Wilson's style.

THE STORY OF A STYLE

Where shall we easily find such haggard anxiety to be believed, such implicit confession that the simple word has no claim to acceptance unless reinforced by a solemn asseveration of its truth — where, as in a book which in “downright confidence” and “in very earnest” with “artless sincerity,” or “candid meaning,” “brutally frank,” in “true sovereign fashion,” under “the plain guarantees” of “unmistakable authentication,” and with “the authentic badge of genuineness,”¹ speaks of:

<i>Page</i>	109	the naked fact
	125	actual legislation
	108	genuine love
	101	real home
	108	real sport
	117	real tempest
	126	real aristocracy
	164	real voice
	167	real concession
	252	real consequence
	293	real sentiment
	9	veritable aristocracy
	21	veritable pirates
	25	veritable sovereigns
	33	veritable town
	102	veritable heart's mistress
	124	veritable tempest
	126	veritable democrat

¹ Pages 5, 62, 130, 32, 65, 17, 123, 156, 226.

ARISTOCRATIC AFFECTATIONS

<i>Page</i>	130	veritable antiquarian
	194	veritable army
	293	veritable art
	170	that very night
	297	that very month
	195	their very homes
	205	her very coasts
	162	the very heart
	236	the very men
	236	the very nation
	241	the very walls
	123	the very constitution
	256	the very impersonation
	268	the very artlessness
	10	the very thick
	215	the very pleasantry of daring
	225	the very French court itself
	24	the very presence almost of the French them- selves

Everything looms large in the pages of the author of *George Washington*. On every page is evident a curious lack of any sense of proportion. "Deep excitement ran through the colonies" after Patrick Henry's speech and the adoption of the Virginia Resolutions (page 134), and "the deep excitement of the gaming table" fills the next page but one. A custom familiar to Virginians for a couple of generations is (page 142) "an immemorial habit."

THE STORY OF A STYLE

When Continental fortunes were at a low ebb, "wholesale desertions began,— as many as one hundred men a month going over to the enemy" (page 206). The agitated author tells us that "though it were in never so quiet a parish, the very walls of the church groaned threateningly under the unaccustomed weight of people" (page 241) gathered to see Washington. At every rustic wedding a generation ago the table groaned under the viands, as a customary manner of speech employed by every provincial newspaper; the phrase has therefore excellent authority and deserves notice here only as an instance of the tip-toe style.

It is difficult — he himself would say, most difficult — for Mr. Wilson to state anything without an intensification. If the object which swims under his ken is not, as it is likely to be, "absolutely," it is tolerably certain to be "most" or "very," something or other. On a single page, (106) for instance, we get "insatiable relish," "unstinted work," "unflagging discipline," and "tireless ride." On another page (218) we read of "the supreme and final test," and of "perfect praise crowned with full meaning." On page 75 we have a story of "*damp* mists," "*slimy* mud," and "*black* darkness." We get:

Page 66 infinite pains
85 infinite difficulty

ARISTOCRATIC AFFECTATIONS

- Page* 276 infinite weight
82 intolerable indignity
142 immemorial habit
159 immemorial privilege
85 endless procession
86 utter want
86 utter want
89 utter destruction
293 complete mastery
136 vastly preferred
287 beyond measure dismayed
214 beyond measure fortunate
127 whole variety
128 whole energy
201 whole face of affairs
258 whole mind and energy
213 the full proofs
218 supreme and final test
227 utterly forgotten
122 every precedent
122 every principle
124 every man
110 heartiest sportsman
112 most tasteful
130 most dear
246 most solemn
279 most critical
34 very anxious
38 very sarcastic
40 very fertile

THE STORY OF A STYLE

<i>Page</i>	40	very close
	40	very close
	64	very influential
	64	very cordial
	70	very manly
	80	very brief
	102	very happy
	102	very bright
	112	very substantial
	112	very elegant
	113	very quiet
	124	very honest
	126	very extraordinary
	126	very capable
	130	very wise prudence
	130	very formidable
	134	very violent
	214	very safe
	214	very resolved
	260	very gallant
	31	very handsomely
	33	very shrewdly
	48	very quietly
	63	very strenuously
	63	very anxiously
	65	very courteously
	119	very bluntly
	136	very seriously
	167	very anxiously
	223	very gravely

ARISTOCRATIC AFFECTATIONS

- Page* 277 very calmly
28 sheer pleasure
78 sheer destruction
87 sheer eagerness
10 wild excess of joy
11 stubborn protest
22 stern endeavor
22 great fur trade
28 rare leisurely intimacy
32 piquant humor
32 quiet sarcasm
31 simple history
47 deadly heat
48 sad miscarriage
49 cruel misadventure
57 frank enjoyment
62 multitudinous fleet
65 brutally frank
76 bitter trial
78 deadly missiles
79 sad blunder
81 sorry blunder
82 intolerable indignity
88 reckless courage
89 frantic search
91 keen knife
112 great gusto
114 keen resentment
118 sound discretion
119 sad blunder

THE STORY OF A STYLE

<i>Page</i>	122	instant exasperation
	123	plain guarantees
	126	flat defiance
	127	essential quality
	129	astounding eloquence
	130	artless sincerity
	131	reverent piety
	135	sad forebodings.
	137	unmistakable authentication
	146	instant impression
	153	downright country gentleman
	158	rich abundance
	158	instant acceptance
	161	straightforward candor
	162	frank cordiality
	172	instant impression
	187	eager obedience
	187	bitter things
	190	bitter defeat
	192	first onset
	179	quite ten thousand
	195	quite twenty thousand
	196	sorely puzzled
	197	deep demoralization
	199	naked fact
	199	stern silence
	206	sheer disgust
	213	hopeless indifference
	213	desperate incompetence
	246	vast gifts

ARISTOCRATIC AFFECTATIONS

<i>Page</i>	249	vast sums
	250	steady self-possession
	256	violent rebellion
	259	masterly plea
	271	masterly self-possession
	279	most critical
	279	masterly papers
	292	cool self-possession
	296	sudden fury
	298	awful courtesy
	298	majestic self-control
	302	vast counties

However, there are not lacking, on the other hand, qualifications — retreats from the full literal meaning of the employed words. In this early work, though, intensifications strongly predominate. In several instances the qualification is added to an intensified sentence apparently as an afterthought suggested by doubt. On page 124, Mr. Wilson writes: “The one was constitutional agitation; the other flat rebellion — little less.” Was it rebellion, or *flat* rebellion, or *little less* than rebellion? On page 24 Mr. Wilson tells us that Virginia perceived that she must stand “in the *very* presence *almost* of the French *themselves*.” We may return to these sentences as illustrations of a capital phenomenon.

A feature which very soon draws the attention of

THE STORY OF A STYLE

the reader is the extremely frequent repetition of certain words; among them "air," "blood," "bred," "broad," "counsel," "eye," "far," "frank," "gal-lant," "genial," "gentleman," "indomitable," "heart," "masterly," "process," "quick." "simple," "shrewd," "touch," and "vision."

When it is said that "business" is a favorite word with Mr. Wilson, it will not, of course, for a moment be dreamed that it is employed in the vulgar sense of a mercantile pursuit. Anything but that; the word is purely pronominal, serving as an invaluable counter for anything under the sun which the writer is too indolent or too distracted to name specifically. My notes record forty cases of "critical business," the most numerous kind of all, "ugly business," "trying business," "fateful business," "terrible business," "stern business," "hazardous business," "troublesome business," "hot business," "bad business," "stiff business," and the like.

The air — the "genial air," or the "radiant air," or the "genial and hospitable air," the "subtle," the "practical," the "gentle," the "native," or the what-not "air" blows through many pages, with the numbers of a few of which, I fear, I must ask the publisher to disfigure this otherwise beautiful and interesting page.¹ I hope a score of examples will

¹ Pages 4, 6, 7, 9, 28, 32, 57 (twice), 66, 75, 112, 159, 252, 275, 277, 287, 289 (twice), 302.

ARISTOCRATIC AFFECTATIONS

satisfy the gentle reader. "The genial air of the wide Empire had blown in all ordinary seasons through their affairs;" "the subtle air of that age," and, thirty words further along, "the practical air of America," will serve to illustrate the usage.

Those important items of the human anatomy, the heart and the eye, possess an attraction for Mr. Wilson which it would, of course, at this stage of investigation, be a grievous mistake to confound with fetishism. It is merely interesting to find that a swift turning of the pages yields thirty-seven references to the cardiac organ.¹ The organ of vision, especially that of the hero of the book, also exercises a peculiar fascination over the biographer. He notes Washington's father's "*frank gray eyes*" (there may be a record of the color, but hardly of the frankness); and the young son's "*steady gray eyes*" (it can only be presumed they were steady); a little later on "his *proud eyes*"; when he courted Martha Custis, it was with "his *frank blue eyes*"; the light sprang into his "*quiet eye*," when Patrick Henry spoke (the historian quotes no documents); at Boston with greater particularity, there sprang "a *blithe light in his blue eyes*"; "his *grave and steady eyes*" challenged his

¹ 23 (twice), 25, 62, 64, 74, 76, 93, 102 (thrice), 111, 162, 202, 203, 216, 225, 233, 239, 248, 249, 256, 266, 267, 268, 308, 10, 20, 77, 83, 92, 154 (twice), 166, 190, 273.

THE STORY OF A STYLE

interlocutor; but the very artlessness of his admirers "brought tears to his eyes"; however, his enemies were "permitted to see not so much as the quiver of an eyelid."¹

But the group of often-repeated words includes several which are employed in a meaning remote from the ordinary.

Typical of this group is the word "*counsel*." My memoranda on *George Washington* note forty-four instances in which, already in 1896, this word was employed by its famous sponsor in the peculiar pedantic sense in which its appearance marks all his later writings. It will be sufficient at this point merely to note those earlier bows; the significance of the addiction will perhaps be discussed in a later chapter. The usage is this:

"To E. A. W. 'without whose sympathy and *counsel*, literary work would lack inspiration'"—Dedication.

"Those who took *counsel* in England concerning colonial affairs had constant occasion to work . . ." (p. 9.)

"European politics straightway entered their *counsels*." (p. 25.)

"The colonies took *counsel*, each for itself, how they should prosper." (p. 27.)

¹ The references are respectively to pages 46, 54, 82, 101, 133, 185, 238, 268, 306. Other instances occur on pages 24, 26, 33, 54, 63, 155, 171, 214, 223, 235, 287, 292, 306, 309.

ARISTOCRATIC AFFECTATIONS

“When he was not quite sixteen, George Washington ‘quit’ his formal schooling and ‘presently joined his brother . . . to seek *counsel*.’” (p. 52.)

“George greatly struck his lordship’s fancy, as a daring lad in the hunt and a sober lad in *counsel*.” (He was sixteen.) (p. 53.)

“. . . laughed a wily Indian, who gave him *counsel* freely . . .” (p. 75.)

“. . . almost every man of chief consequence in the *counsels* of the colony.” (p. 124.)

“. . . a very formidable man in *counsel*” (p. 130.)

“. . . George Mason . . . confirmed him in other *counsels*.” (p. 135.)

“Older leaders resumed that sway in *counsel* . . .” (p. 188.)

“. . . called into *counsel*” (p. 146.)

“It was *counsel* for prudence that . . .” (p. 156.)

“. . . rather than anxious *counsel*.” (p. 158.)

“Had not the *counsel* of his officers restrained him.”

“No man who could lend service a hand or take a turn at *counsel* . . .” (p. 217.)

“The Congress was not slack in sustaining his *counsels*.” (p. 219.)

“. . . a winter of ineffectual *counsel*.” (p. 221.)

“The Congress *counseled* his release (p. 225.)

“. . . had carried its affairs by his own *counsels*. (p. 242.)

“. . . Sheer helplessness and hopeless division in *counsel*. (p. 248.)

“His *counsel* entered into their determinations.” (p. 292.)

Is it literary elegance or rather clumsy pedantry

THE STORY OF A STYLE

to write: "his *counsel* entered into their determinations?" On the page and a half 258-259 we get the word five times:

"Washington had uttered brave *counsel* of wisdom in rebuke."

"Such grave earnestness in *counsel*."

"James Madison, that young master of *counsel*."

"Washington had kept *counsel* with the rest."

"He had given his whole mind and energy to *every process of difficult counsel*."¹

What does it mean: "*Every process of difficult counsel?*" Is it profound thought or babbling echo? We have this on page 122:—"Such challenge of the process was uttered by colonial *counsel*—"

"*Process*," which later becomes a favorite addiction with Mr. Wilson, had not at this period developed its full fascination for him. We get, however, such mystic locutions as this (p. 4):

"Washington's life showed the whole *process* of breeding by which Virginia conceived so great a generosity in manliness and public spirit."

It would be difficult to construct a sentence equally devoid of meaning; it is a vague, random, and in-

¹ Other instances of *counsel* are on pages 86, 134, 184, 208, 214, 223, 224, 235, 242, 260, 279, 280, 287, 288, 289, 308.

ARISTOCRATIC AFFECTATIONS

congruous meandering of phrases. Of course, we must not be certain that the author is not laughing in his sleeve at the audience, as he passes out such solemn humbug.

On page 134 we hear about "the *processes*" of an Act of Parliament; on page 300 we hear about the "*processes* of diplomatic action"; on page 141, the issue of writs is a "*process*"; on page 241, we are delighted with this:

"His mind kept that trait — that trick, as if of Fate, of letting every act come *at* its consequences . . . as if he but presided at a *process* which was just Nature's own."

"*Concert*" is used in a pedagogic sense in such phrases as "*concert* of action" (pp. 133, 146); "*concert* of means" (p. 153); "to *concert* action" (p. 162); "to *concert* a policy" (p. 296).

My memoranda on *George Washington* include some forty or fifty arresting instances of the employment, invariably uncalled-for, of the word "*quick*" — not ordinarily in the sense of swift; more often with a lazy intention of suggesting vitality, nervous sensibility, or pregnancy. I record, without comment, a typical score of illustrations:

We have references to "every stage of *quick* change" (p. 5); "that *quick* air of change" (p. 6); "the *quick* and various English life" (p. 90);

THE STORY OF A STYLE

Hamilton's "*quick years*" (279); and his "*quick genius in affairs*" (p. 283); South Carolina "*showed a quick life*" (p. 18); and love is "*the quick passion*" (p. 101).

"Books, as well as men . . . seemed to fill him with the *quick* principles of the people and policy to which he belonged" (128). There is nothing in the context to show why books and men did this; or why the principles were "*quick*"; or why Patrick Henry, principles, people and policy are associated in the sentence, except to round out an alliteration of *ps*.

Duquesne had "*quick soldier's blood*" (p. 60); Washington "*found his quick blood tonic enough*" (p. 109); Braddock was "*quick with energy*" (p. 81); "France was *quick* with sympathy for America" (p. 199); Pennsylvania was fairly *quick* with incipient revolution" (p. 303); Washington's speech was "*quick with solemn eloquence*" (p. 308).

"This was a business that *touched* the colonies to the *quick*" (p. 24); a letter from Washington "*touched* the imagination of thoughtful men as near to the *quick* as . . ." (p. 70). But it seems that being *touched* to the *quick* is a life-long habit with Virginians, for on page 129, they are "royalists all, and *touched* to the *quick* with the sentiment of loyalty."

Washington "*felt to the quick* the lessons . . ."

ARISTOCRATIC AFFECTATIONS

(p. 77) ; he “ was *cut* to the *quick* ” (p. 190) ; and the abuse heaped upon him on (p. 306) “ *cut* him to the *quick*.”

“ *Touch* ” is a word the figurative employment of which is common. Few writers, however, would employ it constantly, without an occasional resort to some other expression ; merely for relief from monotony, one would occasionally substitute a *tinge*, a *trifle*, a *suggestion*, a *smack*, a *trace*, or even, straightforwardly, a *little*. That verbal monotony attracts, and does not bore Mr. Wilson is the interesting phenomenon we shall more and more witness. In this small volume he talks of

the touch of time
a touch of gayety
a touch of rusticity
a touch of violence
a touch of harshness
a touch of daring
a touch of hardness
a touch of love
an added touch of simplicity
a touch of added bitterness
a touch more of steadiness
a touch of another quality
a touch of old world address

THE STORY OF A STYLE

a touch of their own
that easy touch and intimate mastery
a touch now and again of such pleasures
and so forth.¹

Seriously to consider the book as biography or history is impossible. It is essentially subjective romance, marked by a complacent acquiescence in the conventional picture of the shabby pseudo-feudal society which had pretended to transplant in Virginia the out-worn principles of Georgian England; by innocence of, or contempt for, the larger significance of the emancipated life which was blossoming in the Western Hemisphere.

The whole spirit and tone of Mr. Wilson's story of Washington is so completely that of devotion to the ideals of caste, that no scant quotations can convey a sense of the author's profound reverence for rank and the virtues of those who have it, his glowing gratitude to them, and his happiness in being permitted to write of them. He is never so eloquent as when talking of kings, and he never misses a chance to mention them, however remote the connection; and never does he mention a king except with the due formal appellations of royalty. "He had car-

¹ The references are to pages 5, 34, 127, 155, 188, 191, 266, 268, 30, 302, 126, 53, 53, 224, 50, 184. See also pp. 10, 17, 29, 57, 58, 71, 76, 101, 127, 129, 216, 217, 247, 280.

ARISTOCRATIC AFFECTATIONS

ried the royal commission in his pocket as Advocate-General in His Majesty's Court of Admiralty; but he would not have scrupled, even as His Majesty's servant . . ." (page 123) — is a fair illustration of the possibilities of delightfully lighting up a narrative in this way. He falls, on the slightest excuse, into likening his figures to royal personages:

"Clark, that daring Saxon frontiersman, who moved so like a *king* through the far forests." (p. 204.)

". . . entering the room . . . with his aged mother on his arm, not a whit bent for all her seventy-four years, and as quiet as a *queen*." (p. 228.)

"The singular *majesty* (of Washington) . . . struck the French officers." (p. 215.)

Young Washington "carried himself like a *prince*." (p. 100.)

". . . that mien as if the man (the President) were a *prince*." (p. 175.)

"No *king* in days of *king's* divinity, could have looked for so heartfelt a welcome." (p. 268.)

(Peyton Randolph) "was a sort of *prince* among the rest. . . . There were traditions of loyalty and service in his breeding which no man might rightly ignore. His father before him had won knighthood and the *royal* favor by long and honorable service as his *Majesty's* attorney in the colony. Pride and loyalty had gone hand in hand in the annals of a proud race, and had won . . . a prestige. . . ." (p. 131.)

"No man born in Virginia had a greater property than

THE STORY OF A STYLE

he, a house more luxuriously appointed, or a part to play more *princely*. . . . His breeding had greatly quickened his perception of such things. He had had a long training abroad, had kept very noble company. . . ." (p. 33.)

The book is singularly preoccupied with effort to discover aristocracy. "Punctilios," "traditions," "social primacy," "homage," "loyalty," "largess," "formality," "points of honor," "careful courtesy," "gracious dignity," "proud bearing," "precedence," "nice etiquette," "lordly country gentlemen," "feudal estates," "ancient distinctions of class and manners," and a score more of like phrases, bejewel every chapter. Birth and breeding, dress and bearing, may with perfect justice be said to occupy more space than any other single topic. My memoranda show fifty-seven instances in which in this book Mr. Wilson uses the word "gentleman" in invidious distinction from "the crowd," "the rabble," "the lower class," "the yeomanry," "the raw provincials," "the common run of people." More than seventy times he deems it necessary to refer to "breeding." Even Washington's horse must be "of the full blood of Araby" (p. 110), and his very dogs are named and noted as blue-blooded.

We close the book wondering whether the hero was a strutting braggart, or his painter an ingenuous rustic, or a humorist. Washington, after a long and elaborate preparation for his proud entry,

ARISTOCRATIC AFFECTATIONS

stalks upon the stage like a *matinée* idol. He refuses to fight for his country except as an officer of the grade to which he thinks himself entitled. "It was no tradition of his class to submit to degradation of rank. . . . The high-minded young officer insisted upon a just consideration of his rank." He makes the long trip from Virginia to Boston to see Shirley, the Commander-in-Chief in the Colonies, to obtain "a settlement of the teasing question."

"He went very bravely dight in proper uniform of buff and blue, a white-and-scarlet cloak upon his shoulders, the sword at his side knotted with red and gold, his horse's fittings engraved with the Washington arms, and trimmed in the best style of the London saddlers. With him rode two aides in their uniforms, and two servants in their white-and-scarlet livery. Curious folk who looked upon the celebrated young officer upon the road saw him fare upon his way with all the pride of a Virginian gentleman, a handsome man, and an admirable horseman — a very gallant figure, no one could deny." (pages 92 and 93.)

It was at his own wedding that the young patrician's "love of a gallant array and becoming ceremony was satisfied to the full" for the first time; — it ought to have been, if the scene were anything like that painted in the glittering bravery of this author's phrases. When Washington "took horse" and rode to assume command of the Continental

THE STORY OF A STYLE

Army, he did not fail to play the part which so delights his biographer :

“ There might have been universal license had the rabble not seen their leaders so noble, so bent upon high and honorable purposes. It was an object lesson in the character of the revolution to see Washington ride through the colonies to take charge of an insurgent army. And no man or woman, or child even, was likely to miss the lesson. That noble figure drew all eyes to it; that mien as if the man were a prince. . . . There was something about Washington that quickened the pulses of the crowd at the same time that he awed them, that drew cheers that were a sort of voice of worship.” (page 175.)

There was only one apparent flaw in the princely look of the great man — and that was really only another mark of his courage and gallantry: his face was marked by small-pox. But he had acquired that in a noble way: having been invited to dinner at a house which harbored the disease, he had insisted upon going, “ with true Virginian punctilio ” (page 58). Arriving in Cambridge, he had been “ shocked ” and “ disgusted ” by the “ insolence ” and “ stupidity ” of the “ uncouth provincials ” he was to command. But in midwinter, Mrs. Washington drove into camp, “ come all the way from Virginia with proper escort, in her coach and four, her horses bestridden by black postillions in their

ARISTOCRATIC AFFECTATIONS

livery of scarlet and white; and she had seemed to bring with her to the homely place not only the ceremonious habit but the genial and hospitable air of Virginia." (page 184.)

By the end of the war, the Commander-in-Chief, "in the large dignity and pride of his stately bearing," had conquered all classes of the people, even "the rabble," "filling their imagination and reigning over them as securely as over his troops, who for so long had felt his will wrought upon them day by day." He had to be even more punctilious and masterful and proud and reserved and grim than ever, when he became President. He "set up a fixed etiquette to be observed by all who would approach him." However, as Mr. Wilson insists with much particularity, he was not totally inaccessible; at least, "there should be no parade of inaccessibility." "Henceforth he would pay no more calls, accept no invitations. On a day fixed he would receive calls; and he would show himself once a week at Mrs. Washington's general reception. He would invite persons of official rank or marked distinction to his table at suitable intervals. . . . Every proper outward form of dignity, ceremony, and self-respect should be observed that might tell wholesomely upon the imagination of the people. . . ." (The imagination, not the reason, of the people.) And the common people themselves were permitted to see him

THE STORY OF A STYLE

with their own eyes: "It was not that the President was not to be seen by anybody who had the curiosity to wish to see him. Many a fine afternoon he was to be seen walking, an unmistakable figure, upon the Battery, whither all persons of fashion in the town resorted for their daily promenade, his secretaries walking behind him, but otherwise unattended. Better still, he could be seen almost any day on horseback, riding in his noble way through the streets." Mr. Wilson dwells with the greatest interest upon the extremity of the first President's condescending amiability—"better still, he could be seen almost any day"—on horseback. Not even Foreign Ministers might come to him personally; the French Minister dared to try it, and learned his lesson. "It was not likely a man bred in the proud school of Virginian country gentlemen would miss so obvious a point of etiquette as this" (p. 276). His was more than the manner of courts and majesty—it was divine.

"The singular majesty and the poise of this Revolutionary hero struck the French officers as infinitely more remarkable than his mastery in the field . . . they had not thought to see in him a great gentleman . . . and yet so lifted above the manner of courts and drawing-rooms by an incommunicable quality of grave sincerity . . . it constituted the atmosphere and apotheosis of the man." (p. 215.)

ARISTOCRATIC AFFECTATIONS

When he went on what Mr. Wilson calls his royal progress through the newly-united States, Washington, knowing that "the common run of people must learn respect, studiously contrived to make it everywhere felt by every turn of behavior and ceremonial." With special gusto Mr. Wilson relates how the new President, visiting Boston, forced old Governor John Hancock to leave his bed and make the first call upon him, though the perturbed old patriot had to be borne, swathed in bandages, upon men's shoulders up the stairs, to be "received with grim courtesy."

It is a conjecture not without much support that Mr. Wilson has deliberately modeled himself after what he conceives to be the character of Washington. Certainly he has written of no other American with the enthusiasm with which his biography of the first President throbs; and in the eulogy of qualities with which he credited Washington, it is often clear that he is praising especially those which he has himself studied to display, such as aloofness, dignity and imperiousness. There are, of course, sides of Washington's character that are not so much as hinted at in Mr. Wilson's story; facts of the most vital nature that are never given even passing mention. There are here, on the other hand, not a few

THE STORY OF A STYLE

statements made as if of fact, for which it would probably be impossible to adduce document or even tradition. I know, for instance, of no record that Washington ever "LONGED TO BE QUIT OF THE NARROW LIFE OF THE COLONIES AND TO STRETCH HIMSELF FOR A LITTLE UPON THE BROAD ENGLISH STAGE AT HOME" (page 112). Washington would hardly have called England "home."

One evening — it was when the Presidency was beginning to loom before him — Mr. Wilson took down a volume of Wordsworth and read to his biographer — read with feeling, as the best expression of his ideal of human life, *The Character of the Happy Warrior*. It was with the quotation of this poem that Mr. Wilson had concluded his *Life of Washington*. On another occasion, commenting on the curious part the number *thirteen* had played in his own life, he mentioned to his biographer the circumstance that the name, WOODROW WILSON, like that of GEO. WASHINGTON, contained thirteen letters.

It is nothing more than what every biographer does if the author of this romantic "Life" has projected his own prepossessions and desires into his conception of the career of his hero. Only, Mr. Wilson would be more likely than another to do this, because his book, like all his "historical" work, is, to so very large degree indeed, subjective.

ARISTOCRATIC AFFECTATIONS

It is but slightly encumbered with facts. Hence the opportunity it affords for self-expression. The writer of a biography is not the actor, and is not responsible for the acts or scenes he describes. He does, however, reveal himself in his emphasis and his omissions. In a book like this we see the author vicariously living the story, and shading it according to his disposition. *George Washington* is one long eulogy of the aristocratic virtues, a profession of affection for what the writer conceives to be the culture of an elder time.

But the point of chief importance for the purely literary explorer is perhaps that Mr. Wilson's admiration for the past and its culture is set forth in a style singularly appropriate for its celebration.

The related fact which we approach is that, though Mr. Wilson never again had so congenial a subject as his legendary Washington, he continued and he continues to employ an idiom taught and affected by aristocracy.

It would scarcely be worth while, for the purposes of this merely slight and suggestive investigation, to delve very deeply into the question of the way and the time in which Mr. Wilson's mannerisms suc-

THE STORY OF A STYLE

ceeded in enslaving his thought. We have seen them dangerously triumphing already in *George Washington*, 1896. Another book published that year, though in truth written earlier — it was a collection of essays — *Mere Literature*, contains few marks of distinction beyond the indulgence of the pedantic “ ’Tis ” and “ ’Twas,” an idiom which had ornamented most of the three hundred pages of his *Washington*.

The next ten years were unfruitful in books. It was only after having attained the presidency of Princeton University that Mr. Wilson gave to the world the finished production of a dozen years of meditation and preparation in the form of a baccalaureate address delivered in June, 1908. It has been beautifully published in an expensive brochure, entitled *The Free Life*.

Addressing the graduates before him, the President of Princeton said:

“ In a very real sense, therefore, you are at the threshold of life and this is the day of special *counsel*, when we ask ourselves . . . It may seem strange and futile *counsel* to give to a company of young men . . . but the *counsel* of the words I have quoted is no *counsel* of presumption. It is a mere *counsel* of integrity.”

In the course of this doubtless eloquent, and cer-

ARISTOCRATIC AFFECTATIONS

tainly beautifully printed, baccalaureate, President Wilson seems to have for a period vacillated in his devotion between the beauties of "counsel" and the charms of two other candidates for his favor, namely, "fountains" and "transformation."

"Fountains" recurs nearly a hundred times during the address; it is employed four times on the double page 8-9, and five times among the hundred words of page 11. Thus:

"These *fountains* have always been about you . . . some of them are the *fountains of learning*. . . . And so the *fountains of learning* become the *fountains of perpetual youth*. The *fountains of learning* are not the only *fountains of perpetual youth* and renewal. . . . There are the *fountains of friendship*. . . . Whether we have resorted to the *fountains of learning* or not, we have known the refreshment of the sweet *fountains of friendship*."

Skipping a double page, one finds that he has to face "fountains" five times on pages 14 and 15, of 110 words each. Thus:

"Here are the *fountains* of real *renewal*. . . . Whether we taste it in the *fountains of learning* or of *friendship*. . . . To one deep *fountain* of revelation and *renewal* few of you, I take it for granted, have had access yet,—I mean the *fountain* of sorrow . . . a *fountain* . . ."

Abandoning "fountains," the Princetonian Presi-

THE STORY OF A STYLE

dent laid the floral wreath of the remainder of his address at the feet of "transformation." In the *edition de luxe*, in the sixty words at the bottom of page 19, "transformation" and "transform" are invoked six times:

"Be ye *transformed* by the renewing of your mind. This *transformation* is no apotheosis. It is no changing of men into angels, no transmutation of common flesh into stuff of immortality. It is a *transformation* effected by the *renewing* of your minds, a *transformation* of attitude and motive, of purpose, of point of view. It is the *transformation* effected in . . ."

On the next page and a half, "transformation" is employed only nine times.

This in the year 1908. We can scarcely longer close our eyes to the fact that Mr. Wilson's easy surrender to sound has become a habit demanding investigation.

III

LEARNED ADDICTIONS

WE may now go on, I think, for awhile, without the preciosity of constant reference to document and page. Later chapters will examine particular speeches in detail, and cite from them examples of all the various species of verbal peculiarity which it is the purpose of the next hundred pages or so to illustrate and classify. The publisher will desire to make these pages fair to the eye, I hope, and it would be a pity to embarrass him with a lot of foot-notes. The passages quoted are taken at random from note-books filled with hundreds each of its kind. Only, therefore, where some quotation appears to be of an exceptionally surprising nature will the page be burdened with a reference.

The argument passes to the juncture where attention may be invited to the extraordinary domination exercised over Mr. Wilson's style by a system of favorite verbal formulæ. We shall, before we are through, consider them under various aspects; we shall ask whether they are recommended by careless-

THE STORY OF A STYLE

ness of expression, or laziness of thought, by contempt for popular apprehension, by physical or mental fatigue, by the compelling influence of contending inner impulses, resolved in (perhaps illogical) compromise, by reverence for stately pedantic usage; or by more elusive considerations which we shall have to examine as possibly related to the infantile or savage outlook on the world, indicative of a retrogression into unconscious primitive or abnormal mental life — an outlook in which words appear as magic symbols, rather than as rational and definite ideographs; — or by several, or all, of these causes in combination. It ought to be unnecessary to say that to state the possible explanations is not to make choice among them. What we have now to do is to become acquainted with the phenomena to be explained.

Take the word “*processes*.”

Anything, everything, under Heaven, may be regarded as a process — an election, a bean feast, the incubation of measles, the operation of railroads, the revolutions of the heavenly spheres, the digestion of man, and the passionate paradoxes of history. Each of them may also with equal propriety be called a “thing” — the word “thing” being the ordinary lazy avoidance of accuracy of thought, while “proc-

LEARNED ADDICTIONS

ess," promiscuously used, is a more aristocratic posture of indolence or vagueness of thought.

Mr. Wilson employs "thing" very often, indeed; but he prefers "processes," or even "enterprise." The two latter are of Latin derivation, and, employed in an etymological, scholastic, and technical sense, they more readily suggest a recondite meaning, which the shorter and plainer Anglo-Saxon word fails to reflect.

"Process" is indeed a noble word. One of the greatest of the early Greek theologians sixteen centuries ago wrote of God as a Divine Process; but Origen reserved this word for the operations which (it was his noble conception) explained and vivified to human perception the unique constitution of the divine Source of all life; Origen was not so enamored of the word that he tacked it on to everything else under heaven. It is because the word "process" is so noble and of such historic significance that it is not pleasant to see it manhandled. In how many instances (of which the following, turned up in less than ten minutes' glance at a few Wilsonian writings, are merely typical), would not the words "methods," "activities," "movements," or the like, be far more germane, genuine, appropriate, and accurate:

"The free intercourse of nations is of the essence of the *process* of peace."

THE STORY OF A STYLE

"We are now beginning the *processes* which will some day require another memorial."

"All we can do is to mediate the *process* of change."

"The year has been crowded with great *processes*."

"It became evident that some part of Government itself would be brought to a stand-still by the *processes* of the Virginia resolution."

"The ordinary *processes* of private initiative will not . . ."

"Nobody must interrupt the *processes* of our energy; nobody has a right to stop the *processes* of labor."

"We see in international law the moral *processes* by which law itself came into existence. . . . The *processes* of international law are the slow *processes* by which opinion works its will."

". . . the great *processes* by which the war was pushed forward."

". . . liberate and quicken the *processes* of our national genius."

". . . humanize every *process* of our common life."

". . . square every *process* of our national life with . . ."

". . . balance the claims of property against the *processes* of liberty."

". . . if children be not shielded from the consequences of great social *processes*, which they cannot alter, control, or singly cope with."

Let us not quit this matter of Mr. Wilson's "processes" until we have got quite clearly in mind its significance. The illustrations adduced above might easily be multiplied a thousand-fold; they will be

LEARNED ADDICTIONS

added to, I fear, *ad nauseam*, on pages further along.

The word "process" and its plural, "processes," are excellent words, comprehensive and capable of many, and diverse, interpretations. Mr. Wilson employs "process" or "processes" to describe most of the objects and actions which can possibly be brought within the embrace of these words; when his mind encounters an idea, swimming dimly into its sphere, he forthwith claps upon it the lulling label, the magic cryptogram.

And as to those objects, actions, movements, energies, which naturally, or by long consideration, are distinguishable as "processes," of how many of them can it be said, when they present themselves in the course of an article by Mr. Wilson, that it contributes to the thought to refer to them in their specific character of "processes"?

A bean-feast, the measles, or a bankers' trust, is indeed a "process," if you care to stop and think about it; but it is not always, nor indeed is it very often, necessary to call any of these important cosmic facts up before the mind in its aspect of a "process." It is rarely that any of these facts obtrudes itself upon the mind in the special character of a "process." For ordinary purposes ordinary facts appeal to our attention in one or another of their more obvious, more homely, more prosaic, attributes. If there were any evidence that Mr. Wilson's

THE STORY OF A STYLE

bent of mind is such that he must forsooth regard everything in the philosophic light of a flux; must invariably contemplate business, politics and the human digestion, *sub specie processionalis*, nothing could be said. Myself, I can recognize no such evidence. There may be writ on the entablatures of the portal of Mr. Wilson's brain the motto, πάντα ρεῖ καὶ οὐδὲν μένει; Hegel's *Zurückkehren* and *Negation der negation* may whisper in his ear by day and by night the high philosophy of "becoming;" haunting echoes of *De Principiis*, and memories of the gorgeous tragedies which baptized in blood the sacred postulate of the procession of the Holy Ghost, may visit him; the ensanguined spooks of Alcuin and Theodulf and Byzantine patriarchs and emperors may sit upon his pillow — yet, still, I cannot understand why it is necessary for Mr. Wilson to inform Congress that children should be shielded from social "processes" which they cannot singly cope with.

The conclusion may be wrong, but it is enforced by considerations too tedious here further to enter into, that the adoption and absorption of this particular word into the Wilson vocabulary was unrelated to any special intellectual experience, but was a mere appropriation from some casual source, made much after the fashion of the leggy little lady who comes home from boarding-school at Christmas time

LEARNED ADDICTIONS

and amazes papa and mama by frequently interpolating, in the midst of her still not completely reformed verbal code, the expression: "One does, doesn't one?" The flapper continues in ignorance of all adjectives except perhaps "nice," "swell," and "great." Next term she will probably eschew these simplicities, and everything then will be "so interesting," "so genuine," "if you know what I mean." Next year, she will graduate into "living one's own life," "expressing one's self" and possibly into "complexes."

Mr. Wilson is no fickle school-girl. For half a century he has remained faithful to "processes," as he still is to "counsel" and "quick." Most of the time when he has spoken of "processes," the word has simply sprung into his mouth without troubling to take the trip *via* the brain. In the few remaining cases, the accurate collocation of letters would spell "activities," sometimes "performances" or "achievements," "deeds," "currents" or "movements," "accomplishments" or "methods." These words, however, do not exist in Mr. Wilson's lexicon. They bear no special scholastic connotation, possess no honorific value.

But the favorite object of Mr. Wilson's affection is "*counsel*." This alluring vocable occupies the

THE STORY OF A STYLE

summit of the Wilsonian verbal hierarchy. There is a subordinate priesthood of ceremonial words like "quick," "handsome," "adjustment," "coördination," "visions," and "voices." "Processes," indeed, is consecrated to peculiarly wide and holy offices. But "counsel" is clothed with plenary mystical powers. Nevertheless, "counsel" lives no life of ease. It "needs must" make its appearance, like such a vulgar thing as a cuckoo out of one of those ingenious Swiss clocks, every quarter of an hour or so. No substitute, no vicar-general, can take its place. "Advice" would never do — though "advice" is what it usually means, when it means anything in particular. "Consultation" could never fill the bill, when "consultation" is meant. "Exchange of ideas" carries the taint of commercial suggestion. "Conversation" is, of course, altogether too vulgar ever to be used by the learned in referring to conversation. "Deliberation" and "debate" lack the tang of distinction. So it must run thus:

"The four years which have elapsed since last I stood in this place have been crowded with *counsel* and action . . ."

"Common *counsel* is not jumbled *counsel*. There is often common *counsel* in the committee rooms of the House, but there is never common *counsel* on the floor of the House itself. It goes without saying that the combined acts of a Senate and a House are not a product of common *counsel*."

"Common *counsel* is not aggregate *counsel*."

LEARNED ADDICTIONS

“A common purpose can be formed only by the slow processes of common *counsel*.”

“The leaders of the Senate deal in all *counsel* with the other chamber with regard to legislative business with this single leader.”

“Open *counsel* is of the essence of power.”

“The free peoples of the world have wrought out a plan by which they may remain united in a free partnership of intimate *counsel* to promote the cause of justice and liberty through the beneficent processes of peace and the accords of a liberal policy. It is within the choice of thoughtful men of every nation to enrich the peace by their *counsel*.”

“The war could have come only as it did, suddenly and out of secret *counsels*, without any of the deliberate movements of *counsel* . . . our own contribution to the *counsel* might have averted the struggle.”

“It has . . . set criminal intrigues afoot against our national unity of *counsel*.”

“I esteem it a great honor to be thus admitted to your public *counsels*.”

“There is no reason why we should not take our part in *counsel* on this great theme.”

“I have had a great deal more resistance of *counsel* when I tried.”

“I am happy to draw apart with you to this quiet place of old *counsel*.”

Was Washington's tomb or Mt. Vernon, itself, ever, particularly, a place of old *counsel*?

In Mr. Wilson's vocabulary there is no such word

THE STORY OF A STYLE

as "c-o-u-n-c-i-l." Mr. Wilson's (unedited) writings abound in sentences like these:

"European politics straightway entered their *counsels*."

"George (Washington) greatly struck his lordship's fancy, as he did that of all capable men, as a daring lad in hunt and a sober lad in *counsel*."

"It (the French Revolution) was hurried on, not by statesmen like those who had presided in the *counsels* of America."

". . . an armed body of men in *counsel*."

Within the compass of twelve hundred words of his oration at the cemetery at Suresnes, May 30, 1919, Mr. Wilson used the mystic word "counsel" fourteen times. The speech was weirdly reminiscent of another address, penciled on a torn envelope and spoken by another President, on the field of Gettysburg in 1863: "It is for us, the living, rather, to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us — that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion." Some of the phrases of the later oration ran:

"It is our privilege and our high duty to consecrate ourselves afresh to the objects for which they fought . . ."

"It is for us, who are civilized, to . . ."

". . . utmost to show their devotion. . ."

LEARNED ADDICTIONS

But fancy Lincoln at Gettysburg saying of the dead there:

“The thing that these men left us, though they did not in their *counsels* conceive it, is the great instrument which we have just erected. . . . They died to bring the *counsels* of men together. . . . There is something better, if possible, that a man can give than his life, and that is . . . to resist *counsels* that are hard to resist. . . . The nation that should now fling out of the common *concord of counsel* would betray. . . .”

What did the dough-boys who were being addressed know about the “instrument” that was being “erected”? What comfort was it for them to hear that their dead bunkies had died for something which they had “not in their counsels conceived”; to hear about the “common counsel of concord”? “Call for the cocoa with the Cupid on the can” is intelligible. Conceiving in counsels the common concord of counsel is equally titillating, but lacks any content of objective thought.

The preceding chapter quoted from *George Washington*, among other examples of the cryptic employment of “counsel,” the words:

“. . . had given his whole mind to every *process of difficult counsel*.”

Whatever in the world is a “process of difficult

THE STORY OF A STYLE

counsel"? With the most amiable disposition, the most ready eagerness, to glimpse the shadow of the ghost of a hint of a meaning — it escapes. These two pages were written in the year 1895, and they appear in a book dedicated to a comrade "*of counsel.*" For more than a quarter of a century the cryptogram has continued to be an elusive mystery. Perhaps the patient pursuer may contrive to capture something of its meaning in the shadows of the corridors of this palatial passage of July 10, 1916:

"It seemed wise to substitute for the hard *processes* of the law, the milder and more helpful *processes of counsel.* That is the reason the Federal Trade Commission was established — so that men would have some place where they could take *counsel* as to what the law was and what the law permitted; and also take *counsel* as to whether the law itself was right. The *processes of counsel* are only the *processes* of accommodation, not the *processes* of punishment. Punishment retards, but it does not lift up. Punishment impedes, but it does not improve. Therefore, we ought to substitute for the harsh *processes* of law the milder and gentler and more helpful *processes of counsel.* (White House pamphlet, July 10, 1916.)

This passage contains 115 words; but "the," "or," "to," "and," "fort," "bit," "is," "was," "are," "that," and the like account for fifty-five. The remaining words indicative of thought number

LEARNED ADDICTIONS

sixty, among them "counsel" occurring five times and "processes" seven times.

"*Mr. Dick*" probably seldom yielded to his ruling passion to the extent of introducing King Charles' head twice in every line of ten words. Everybody remembers, and everybody loves, "Mr. Dick." He is one of the favorite mattoids in English literature. Miss Betsy Trotwood had the right idea about verbal obsessions. Mr. Dick's interesting habit of insisting upon the appearance of King Charles' head in most of his written and spoken sentences Miss Trotwood thus explained:

"That's his allegorical way of expressing it. That's the figure, or the simile, or whatever it's called, which he chooses to use. And why shouldn't he, if he thinks proper?"

"I said: 'Certainly, Aunt.'"

"It's not a business-like way of speaking," said my aunt, "nor a worldly way. I am aware of that; and that's the reason why I insist upon it, that there shan't be a word about it in his Memorial."

"Is it a Memorial about his own history that he is writing, Aunt?"

"Yes, child," said my aunt, rubbing her nose again. "He is memorializing the Lord Chancellor, or the Lord Somebody or other — one of those people, at all events, who are paid to *be* memorialized — about his affairs. I suppose it will go in, one of these days. He hasn't been able to draw it up yet,

THE STORY OF A STYLE

without introducing that mode of expression, but it don't signify; it keeps him employed."

Mr. Dick had been for upwards of ten years endeavoring to keep King Charles' head out of the Memorial. But, perhaps, as Miss Trotwood suggested, it didn't signify. Perhaps it doesn't signify that Mr. Wilson for fifty years has apparently *not* been endeavoring to keep "processes" and "counsel" out of his Memorials.

Perhaps it doesn't signify that, when a President, who seeks to impose upon his country a revolutionary world-compact and is met by a rebellious Senate with a score of practical questions of concrete policy which Senators importunately insist mean life or death to the institutions which they hold dear — perhaps it doesn't signify that this President has so slight comprehension of the passionate urgency of the crisis, that he can smilingly, soothingly, murmur: "All we need is to *clarify counsel.*" Is this humor, or is it deliberate scorn of popular intelligence, or is it — a clinic picture of a peculiarly obstinate obsession?

The pedantic addiction, which we are now observing, is, of course, closely related to the aristocratic affectation, which we noticed in the last chapter.

We have seen Mr. Wilson exhibit his admiration

LEARNED ADDICTIONS

for the socially select in rather crude sycophancy; we now see him assume and exhibit the more recondite marks of membership in the leisure class.

Society has found so ineradicable the mass instinct of reverence for those agents of the ruling and exploiting class who can demonstrate their own representative superiority to the ordinary human lot of productive toil by speaking and writing an ornamental language, that, even to this day, practically all men regard complacently the existence of a fraternity detached from materialistic concerns, professionally practicing an idiom which advertises its detachment.

Indeed, it would not be untruthful to say that, while many other of the insignia of leisurely superiority had fallen into desuetude, and because they have, the honorific value of recondite speech has increased. A professional "scholar" cannot nowadays parade in cap, gown and hood, outside the halls and campus, but he can carry with him everywhere the more or less subtle suggestion in his speech of his elevation above vulgar affairs.

The learned phratry as it survives to-day is, of course, no longer a caste of priests employed in the definite service of a supernatural monarch whose power and glory it is desirable to impress upon the

THE STORY OF A STYLE

masses; it has shed its original definite duties, but it retains many of its congenital characteristics, such as addiction to titles, degrees of rank, antique and encumbering vestments, ritualistic functions, and, especially, devotion to a special speech. Even when the original character of "learning" has been otherwise almost obliterated, this last survival persists, in testimony to its origin in the barbarian epoch and to its enduring sentimental devotion to the leisure class culture, with its craving for distinctions and its fondness for the display of non-utilitarian accomplishments. The Methodist minister's uniform has been reduced to a white neck-tie, but he is faithful to the special diction by which the ministry put into evidence their unique familiarity with supernatural affairs and their leisured training in modes of speech which the vulgar and busy have unfortunately had no opportunity to acquire. The physician has ceased to be the wizard and enchanter, specially patronized by the tribal chiefs and long indistinguishable from the priest, but he continues to write his prescriptions in bastard Latin. The lawyer (at least in America) has laid aside his horse-hair wig and gown, but his learned circumlocutions and well-nigh endless repetitions continue to weigh down the records with testimony of the desirability of maintaining, for the performance of legal "justice," a guild of experts in musty phraseology — time-consum-

LEARNED ADDICTIONS

ing, totally unnecessary, but magically impressive.

It surely does not require to be pointed out that the habit of slang, vulgar or learned, would be fatal to precision of thought, even if it did not have its seat in incapacity or indisposition for precise thought.

The point is, of course, not that any reprobative criticism could possibly attach to the employment of a good word of learned historic or symbolic meaning when the turn of thought actually calls for it, any more than there could to the use of a racy idiom of vulgar slang. This is precisely what the discriminating brain, the informed intelligence, the sensitive ear, and the educated pen, are for. The point is, that the promiscuous, indolent, incorrect, inaccurate, and tiresome recourse to a few pompous words borrowed from half-forgotten scholasticism neither represents nor allows clear, differentiated, exact and thorough thinking.

More than once, indeed, Mr. Wilson is *express* in his satisfaction with the hazy and inconclusive. Rome and England are held up in his book, *The State*, as the patterns of political success. "Neither," he explains, "has been too curious in examining the cause of its success, or in working out the logical consequences of its practice." No logic, if you please, gentlemen, is often Mr. Wilson's declared principle. "Above all, neither Rome nor England has suffered any taint of thoroughness to

THE STORY OF A STYLE

attach itself to its political methods." (*The State*, page 578.)

Mr. Wilson follows the precept which he extols; no taint of thoroughness has been suffered to attach itself to his methods. As teacher of history, and writer of books on historical subjects, he is complacent in the most superficial narrative, and entirely innocent of any design to penetrate those deeper causes and meanings which engross the true historians. As a political philosopher, he is of course the merest purveyor of platitude, never pretending to an original theory, nor advancing a novel principle. The ready-made, standardized and long-accredited, suffice him. He counts as the date of the extreme political advance of his life the day when Mr. U'ren converted him to belief in the Initiative and Referendum. He would regard it as no reflection whatever upon his scholarship to assert that he never entertained certainly, probably never conceived, an original idea on any subject. The employment of archaic symbols instead of exact words does not conduce to original thought; it forbids it. But that, of course, would go without saying. What is more unfortunate perhaps is that even in his absorption of the ideas of others, no taint of thoroughness is permitted to obtrude.

There is no attempt at smartness in this remark. It is the fact, quite free from all color of even gentle

LEARNED ADDICTIONS

derision, quite literally the fact, that Mr. Wilson, constitutionally does not approve or admit thoroughness. He will not and cannot exact of his mind exhaustive performance.

Though Mr. Wilson's chief formulas are built around the two faithful words, "counsel" and "process," he does not let these Gold Dust Twins do all the work. To their aid he summons "voices," "visions," "concert," "hearts," "tides," "fountains," "dawn," "uplands," "stuff," "light," "air," "minds," "breath," "adjustment," "enterprise," "essence," "coördination," "polity," "murmur," "privilege," "rôle," "bred," "fling," "assess," "appraise," "compound," "interpret," "refresh and renew," "awaken," "adjourn," "handsome," "quick," "provident," "great," "authentic," "familiar," "gracious," "generous," "frank," and a few more verbal retainers. Without the four first enumerated, no chapter or speech of Mr. Wilson's is complete. Nodding forgetfulness never neglects them.

These all be excellent words. Seldom does Mr. Wilson by any inadvertence employ one of them in its simple, natural sense. He is never talking about real voices, or fountains, or tides, or concerts; but always about things which he represents as voices or

THE STORY OF A STYLE

concerts or tides or fountains — and anything may be any one of these things, and everything is likely to be at one time or another all of these things, in Mr. Wilson's books. It is not that Mr. Wilson is talking about anything being really flung or awakened or ad-journed, but that he wishes to convey some more or less vague impression of motion by the figurative suggestion of these verbs. His adjectives and ad-verbs he may perhaps occasionally and grudgingly ask for a literal meaning, but they are such adjectives and adverbs as connote large tracts of inclusion, rather than definition. "Great" is his most often employed adjective. It occurs, for instance, ten times on the first full page of the compilation of his *Addresses and Messages*. You can call almost anything "great." The word, however, is of no special repute; it has no special aristocratic flavor, carries no reminiscence of learning, wields no magic suggestion. "Quick" is better, if you are careful never to let it have its common vulgar meaning.

" . . . communities *quick* with a character and purpose of their own."

"our Congressional annals have not been *quicken*ed by many dramatic incidents."

"Great communities *quick* with industry. . . ."

" . . . the *quick* and various life. . . ."

" . . . the *quick* principles of the people."

" . . . a farewell address *quick* with solemn eloquence."

LEARNED ADDICTIONS

“ This nomination comes to me *quick* with a sense of obligation.”

“ This nomination comes to me quick with a sense of obligation.” It is a stimulating sentence. It conveys no definite idea, of course. It is a marvel of Rosicrucian mystification, a feat in the occult seldom surpassed by Mr. Wilson himself; its meaning can never be guessed, for it can have none. The treasure of its import is not only inaccessible, but non-existent; it is an empty arcanum.

“ Handsome,” in a sense remote from that in which it is ordinarily understood, is one of Mr. Wilson’s favorites. Subjects as far apart as a sum of money, a speech, an outlook, a process, an enterprise, and many devious “ things ” of various categories, are called “ handsome.” In every case the adjective, for any definite purpose, had better have been another one. Anything agreeable to the eye or the judgment, anything generous or proper is, of course, “ handsome,” and the word can be stretched a long way. The criticism is that to stretch it a long way too often is to confess mental laziness, or hesitation. A school-girl is no more to be condemned for describing most of the things within the compass of her experience as “ nice ” or “ wonderful ” or “ grand,” than is a famous writer for making too many of them “ handsome.” The broad use of the last word

THE STORY OF A STYLE

alone, however, is uncommon and carries with it a flavor of polite erudition ("nice," in point of fact is far more interesting etymologically). The addiction is exhibited in the following excerpt, which exhibits also, in pronounced form, Mr. Wilson's servility to the unmeaning refrain — a curiosity which we shall have to notice at some length later :

"Boasting is a very *unhandsome* thing. Advancing enterprise is a very *handsome* thing, but to exaggerate local merits is not a particularly *handsome* thing or (nor) a particularly intelligent thing. . . . When peace is as *handsome* as war, there will be no war."

An affectation, rather than an addiction, is Mr. Wilson's "essence." He can get along perfectly well without it, and does, in most of his essays and addresses. The word is a precise counterpart, in its philosophic cast, of "progress"; but it has not become for our author a necessity, like its fellow. Indeed it is seldom used alone for its own sake, but almost always merely as part of the special recondite phrase — "of the essence of."

". . . make intimate approach to the very *essence* of constitutional government; but we approach that *essence* still more intimately when . . ."

". . . understandings regarded as *of the very essence* of their life."

LEARNED ADDICTIONS

"It is *of the essence* of a constitutional government that its people should think straight."

"Agitation is *of the essence* of a constitutional system."

"Open counsel is *of the essence* of power."

Attention was drawn in an earlier chapter to the fact that Mr. Wilson was much given to prefaces. His favorite prolegomenous phrases include:

"I am privileged to say that . . ."

"I am bound to say that . . ."

"I undertake in all candor to say that . . ."

"I need not tell you that . . ."

"I take it for granted that . . ."

"I welcome the opportunity and the occasion to say that . . ."

"I particularly invite your attention to the circumstance that . . ."

"I shall take the liberty of saying that . . ."

"I hesitate to venture" to say that —

"I take it for granted that . . ."

"I dare say" that —

"I am sure it is not necessary for me to remind you that . . ."

"I once more take the liberty of recommending that . . ."

"I have only to suggest that . . ."

"Will you not permit me once more to say that . . ."

"I count myself particularly fortunate in being able to say that . . ."

THE STORY OF A STYLE

" I take the liberty of saying that . . . "

" I venture to say that . . . "

" There is profound truth in the saying that . . . "

" It goes without saying that . . . "

If it goes without saying, why say it?

Before me lies a copy of a brief official note by the President. Five of its six short paragraphs respectively begin:

" I feel constrained to say that . . . "

" I feel it due to perfect frankness to say that . . . "

" I suggest that . . . "

" Permit me to answer by saying that . . . "

" I can only express the confident opinion that . . . "

There are several observations to be made concerning this habit. First: it is a symptom and in part a result of mental fatigue, or of impeded cerebration. A mind in good form and eager for the jump, does not need a running start and a springboard. The athlete does not require a cocktail. These prefaces are, ninety-nine cases in a hundred, a total waste of breath, so far as any contribution to the meaning is concerned. They serve, however, to fill the time until the brain has resumed functioning or has resolved its difficulties. Vulgar persons of sluggish minds often have each but a single time-killer, such as — " If you know what I mean," or

LEARNED ADDICTIONS

“you understand,” or “I mean to say.” The scholarly gentleman with the same affliction keeps a menagerie of time-killers.

The addict to this practice no doubt finds a stimulant, as well as a momentary relaxation, in his formula. But the habit of taking a rest and consuming a stimulant is one which grows upon the men who indulge it. It easily becomes a most pernicious vice. The verbal cocktail has ruined many a fair young life.

But the learned prologue is significant of leisure and of aristocracy. This not only because it wastes time at each repetition, but also because it demonstrates to the audience that the speaker has all his life wasted time in acquiring the habit of circumlocution and in familiarizing himself with recondite and elegant modes of expression. It thus doubly puts into evidence the honorable position occupied by the speaker: he is a person of leisure who has been free in the past to engage in non-productive wasteful gestures, is to-day free to do so, and, not only so, but is of such dignity that he expects his auditors to engage in the non-productive, wasteful gesture of listening to his elegant and unnecessary phrases — which the auditors are always willing to do, with a gratified sense of their own at least momentary association with easeful and learned aristocracy. There is almost nothing the populace likes more; it will admire

THE STORY OF A STYLE

the baldest style if a sufficient number of sentences begin: "I venture to put it as an observation which all known experience confirms that,"—grass is green. "I submit in all candor that"—twice two is four.

The sentence-preface, like all affectations of polite letters, belongs in the category of conspicuous consumption, and is of quite special honorific value in the scheme of predatory life. It is in this little book assumed that it is unnecessary to argue what Mr. Veblen¹ twenty years ago made clear—that the leisure-class culture, which maintains even to-day in human society, ranks of warriors, priests, sporting-men, parasites and delinquents, practices battle, religion and games, and believes in prowess, prayer and luck, is a survival of the savage or infantile mind, and is not motivated by reason. At every point where we may pursue to their basis the peculiar phenomena of Mr. Wilson's style we shall be, it seems, in danger of coming upon irrationality.

Examples adduced in a preceding chapter initiated us into recognition of Mr. Wilson's fondness for set phrases. These are really not very many in number, but to the list of those that could be made forms

¹ *The Theory of the Leisure Class*. Published by B. W. Huebsch, New York.

LEARNED ADDICTIONS

with which we are already acquainted might be added, as among the more conspicuous addictions:

in touch with
shot through with
all fours with
along the line
in the last analysis
in respect of

Mr. Wilson, it is to be noted, is unaware that repetition ever becomes tiresome. For many years, for instance, he has been accustomed to say that his is a "one-track mind." He is fond of talking about "matching minds." When he desires to state that he has not arrived at an opinion, his invariable formula is "My mind is to let." To express mild distrust, he says: "I ha'e my doots." They are admirable phrases, but those who are associated with him are apt to grow rather weary of them. He is much given in private to the repetition of two or three limericks. He never tires of them; acquaintances do.

Is this conservatism, indolence, fatigue, inhibition, mere obliviousness to the repeated assaults of sound? Has it some relation to resurging pulses, tides and echoes? Monotony is not monotonous to Mr. Wilson. His mind is apparently not of the order which requires, or welcomes, new ideas or even

THE STORY OF A STYLE

new forms of expression for old ideas. The tried and familiar, in substance and in sound, suffices. Contented himself with the same thoughts, and finding unabating pleasure in their expression in the same phrases during forty years, Mr. Wilson is aware of no reason why his readers and hearers should desire new ones. As a matter of fact, they do not. "The people" have many virtues, but they are tormented by no Athenian eagerness for novel thoughts. They understand and applaud the commonplace, and suspect any would-be leader who puzzles them with original ideas. In many respects, Mr. Wilson's mental processes run quite wonderfully (in another of his locutions) "on all fours" with those of the crowd. Which may be why it is persuaded that he is a superior being.

Mr. Wilson's neologisms would afford a chapter precisely of the length of the boy's composition on *The Snakes of Ireland*. "Nothing doing." He is abundantly satisfied with words accredited by the experience and wisdom of the past. "Hath it not been said by them of old time?" His utmost venture in the direction of putting new wine into old verbal bottles was probably one made when he seems to have been captivated by the possibility of applying the financially technical locution "underwrite" to

LEARNED ADDICTIONS

political affairs. The response may have been unsympathetic, or there may have been a scholarly reaction against vulgar commercialisms, or the effort to incorporate a novel symbol into a long-established body of sacred images may have been too exhausting. The effort was not repeated.¹ Similar soon-abandoned experiments might be cited — not many. There is a little punning now and then: the farmer who paged his cows; the invalid who, having used up his constitution, was living on his by-laws.

A figure such as Mr. Wilson has become can speak no word that is not instantly and eagerly scanned. In the case of a writing man attaining wide renown (in his 56th year, presumably having already reached the height of his faculties), there will have been special eagerness to recognize genius, originality and power in his utterances. The main locutory contributions with which Mr. Wilson has aroused attention are:

watchful waiting.

too proud to fight.

make the world safe for Democracy.

break the heart of the world.

Each is significant of some psychical characteristic

¹ Since this sentence was written, Mr. Wilson has reverted to the expression. See page 291.

THE STORY OF A STYLE

of the author, but the list is too meager to detain us here. Originality of thought or of diction is no feature of Mr. Wilson's genius.

An affectation which Mr. Wilson never forgets is the transposition of "not only" and "not merely" from their customary places, thus:

"She will lend her moral force, not only, but her physical force."

". . . play a part in writing, not only, but in public speech."

"War has interrupted the means of trade, not only, but also the processes of production."

". . . public men, not only, but public opinion."

"This is the explicit principle of American law not only, but of English law also."

"Every matter of detail not only, but also every minor matter of counsel."

". . . growing stronger and stronger, not only, but growing better and better."

The above examples are few and merely illustrative; the practice on Mr. Wilson's part is constant — has been, for a quarter of a century, constant and un-deviating. I am unable to cite the considerations which urge him to this syntax. They may be worthy ones. It is difficult to believe them so compelling as to make it a matter of principle for the reason to

LEARNED ADDICTIONS

observe the arrangement which he favors, in opposition to general usage. He seems to attach importance to a certain order, a certain procession of words, as if there were necromancy in the sequence. A similar belief moves witches to recite the Lord's Prayer backward.

Mr. Wilson invariably says "so long as"; he is never, I believe, betrayed into the vulgar "as long as." Yet he is innocent of the niceties of "will" and "shall," "would" and "should." He might have been the well-known foreigner who despairingly cried from the water: "I will drown; nobody shall help me."

With meticulous care he invariably writes "Scot," "Scottish," "Scotsman,"—a practice which on one occasion made it necessary to order rye. Yet he is often quite at sea as to modern ethnological distinctions.¹

It is difficult to discover a principle, but it seems not unfair to say that where we find attention to the meticulous inures to a reputation for erudition, Mr. Wilson has formed the fixed habit of keeping it on guard; in matters of ordinary accuracy, he is no stickler. Mr. Wilson's famous formula, "open covenants, openly arrived at," traverses what used to be an imperative precept of the grammarians; the

¹For recent illustrations see the concluding chapter of this book.

THE STORY OF A STYLE

form in which I committed this to memory (irreconcilable urchin) was: "Never use a preposition to end a sentence with." A writer who declares that he is "very elated," or "very gratified," or "very pleased," instead of "very much elated," or "very much gratified," or "very much pleased," forfeits forthwith any possible claim to real mastery of the scholastic mandates of the language in which he writes. This is precisely the complacent claim which Mr. Wilson has made from the moment he took up his pen. His circumspection is sufficient for his own, and for popular, satisfaction, however.

It is the design of this chapter to move swiftly over the surface, calling to mind, briefly in each case, the more notable types of addiction and affectation exhibited in Mr. Wilson's style, with merely such comment as shall suggest their significance in the analysis of his mental habits. A few scant paragraphs only, therefore, can be allowed for reference to the prevalence in the Wilsonian vocabulary of words of large content.

The chief of these words is "thing." It is quite natural, if you can't think of any other description for the object of your thought, to call it a "thing." Only, if your thought is clear and unimpeded, you

LEARNED ADDICTIONS

will think of this object not vaguely as a "thing," but definitely as some particular thing, with a special name. My young son, who is discovering the fun in a book most of us have forgotten and who hopes this book is going to be amusing, too, has, I find, annotated the page of notes from which I am now transcribing, with the words, "See *Tramp Abroad*, Vol. II, 28." I cannot quite represent page 28 of Volume II of *A Tramp Abroad* as having been writ by Woodrow Wilson, but in one feature it strongly recalls the more serious author's style:

"It may interest the reader to know how they 'put horses to' on the continent. The man stands up the horses on each side of the thing that projects from the front end of the wagon, and then throws the tangled mess of gear on top of the horses, and passes the thing that goes forward through a ring, and hauls it aft, and passes the other thing through the other ring and hauls it aft on the other side of the horse, opposite to the first one, after crossing them and bringing the loose end back, and then buckles the other thing underneath the horse, and takes another thing and wraps it around the thing I spoke of before, and puts another thing over each horse's head, with broad flappers to it to keep the dust out of his eyes, and puts the iron thing in his mouth for him to grit his teeth on, up hill, and brings the ends of these things aft over his back, after buckling another one around under his neck to hold his head up, and hitching another thing on a thing that goes over his shoulders to keep his

THE STORY OF A STYLE

head up when he is climbing a hill, and then takes the slack of the thing which I mentioned a while ago, and fetches it aft and makes it fast to the thing that pulls the wagon, and hands the other things up to the driver to steer with. I never have buckled up a horse myself, but I do not think we do it that way."

It is when a man has no particular object in his thought that he calls the vague presentment which he feels he ought to be talking about, but of which he has no clear conception and for which, consequently, no name, a "thing"—hoping, perhaps, that the dim glow at the end of his own halting vision may, in the intelligence of his readers, brighten into some sort or another of substantiality.

In an address of twelve hundred words before the International Law Society, assembled in Paris as I write these notes, Mr. Wilson told his hearers that international law "had — *something* behind it"; that "the processes of law are processes of slow disentanglement from many — *things*"; that "America was ready to do that — *thing*" which he was privileged to call upon it to do; that "the spirit of America illustrated — *something*." He solemnly instructed his hearers "not to be afraid of new — *things*, and, at the same time, not to be intolerant of old — *things*." The time has come, the President said, to talk of many things; of ships and shoes and sealing wax, and cabbages and kings.

LEARNED ADDICTIONS

Another class of words of large and beckoning import is headed by "the world" and "America." It is assuredly unnecessary to adduce examples; pages could be filled; the addiction will instantly be recognized as a familiar characteristic of the presidential style. Mr. Wilson seldom indeed speaks of "the earth," "the globe," "the planet," "the universe," "the cosmos," or of "man," "mankind," "men," "the race of men," "the sons of men," "the human race," or "humanity." There is, indeed, no special reason why he should, except that he generally means either the earth or men. Neither is there apparent any special reason why, instead of a discriminating variant, he should always say "the world"; no special reason, but perhaps several special considerations which derive from motives founded elsewhere than in cold reason.

One of these motives might be, unquestionably is, the case of employing on every possible occasion a standardized comprehensive word the use of which calls for no laborious discrimination. Another motive might lie in the reflection that the large standardized symbol is safe — commits one to nothing in particular — cannot be objected to by any scrupulosity of the consciousness — starts no doubts. But probably more compelling motives are habitual faith in and dependence on, the vague and mystical, in preference to the definite.

THE STORY OF A STYLE

It appears that Mr. Wilson relucts from the fact. Its approach is inhibitive on his thought; he flees at once to the airy freedom of large words. Before he can do with a concrete reality, he must blur its outlines and drag it into the twilight of his occult phrases. The objective verity disappears, and a word takes its place.

Is it that a sense of reality, or appreciation of the duty of factual representation, is lacking? Or is it, perhaps, some constitutional indisposition to envisage facts?

It is no argument against this conclusion that Mr. Wilson often denies it. He was at pains to charge his biographer to make it clear that he was a man that cared for nothing but facts — that any slight youthful tendency he might have had towards rhetoric and easy generalization had been thoroughly medicined and eradicated at Johns Hopkins by Professors Ely and Adams and the fact-grubbing historians and economists who were their colleagues. And over and over, again and again, he asserts that he is the man who is dealing with facts, while the mouths of others are filled with theories and sentiments. The following passage is characteristic:

“ I have come to have a great and wholesome respect for the facts. I have had to yield to them sometimes before I saw them coming, and that has led me to keep a weather eye open in order that I may see them coming.”

LEARNED ADDICTIONS

The very frequency of his protestations would be suspicious, even if we did not have overwhelming evidence that it is words, not facts, which constantly occupy him. One who is really engrossed with realities does not have to protest that he is — it would not occur to him to do so, if he were not troubled with an unadmitted consciousness that he is not.

Enough was probably developed in our study of *George Washington* to render unnecessary any further evidence of Mr. Wilson's inordinate affection for adjectives. It was an infatuation which has persisted unabated to this day. My note-book pages of citations, from later writings and speeches (they lie here ready for use, if needed) are only wearying catalogues of old friends without new faces. One somewhat entertaining addiction which perusal of our friend's so far completed words reveal in strengthened light is his fondness for coupled adjectives. In my notes they are collected under the description, "Syzygy List." This chapter must proceed too rapidly to allow a stop here to examine the psychology of the verbal syzygy. Besides, I don't understand it. Probably it belongs in a chapter (which I fear will not be written) on Rhythmic Resurgence, The Pulse in Speech, and that sort of thing, if you know what I mean. The phenomenon con-

THE STORY OF A STYLE

sists in the disposition to reënforce one adjective with another. It may imply doubt of the sufficiency of the first; or perhaps further hesitation (already evidenced by the original qualification) to proceed to the subject. Or it may be the result of a sensuous desire to hear a pleasant sound repeated — syzygies are often alliterative — or of a more obscure longing for phonetic satisfaction. We may not be overingenious here. The addiction, whatever else it is due to, beyond question betrays a deficient sense of reality, a lingering over words for their own sake.

Precisely the same, in one of its aspects, at least, is the significance of the intensifying habit. It exhibits a schism in the writer's mind between word and fact. Words chiefly interest him. Facts are sometimes useful excuses for them. Facts may be quiet, gray, ordinary; but words must be strong, tall and splendid — superlative if possible.

On second thought, I will oblige with one list of interesting intensifications and syzygies, all from a single address — before Congress, May 21st., 1917.

indispensable instrumentalities
exhaustive study
enormous expenses
immensely serviceable
exactly realize
most liberal
least of all

LEARNED ADDICTIONS

least possible inconvenience
much more rapidly
as lightly as possible
greatly facilitate
exceptional disturbance
exceptional significance
long delayed
largely evaded
considerable range
very much needed and very welcome
very earnestly
very urgently
very little way
very different destination
very stimulating
a very true sense
shown very clearly
this very field
very practical
innumerable questions
critical need
prompt attention
essential matter
organic way
full recognition
right life
right advantage
proper success
great shipyards
great reforms

THE STORY OF A STYLE

great process
wantonly destroyed
special consideration
abundant supplies
positive legislation
successful maintenance
thoroughly kind
peculiarly insidious
obvious prudence
steadfast courage
pressing necessities
grievous burden
immediate contact
immediate adoption
absolutely necessary
whole world
whole country
genuine democratization
genuine coöperation
real prosperity
sound practical sense
actual reforms
clearly not the time
clearly desirable
mere reconstruction
single generation
experienced skill
daily labor
free capital
willing hands

LEARNED ADDICTIONS

dreaded antagonists

happier and better
greater and more vital
operative and manifest
great and honorable
immediate and substantial
legitimate and not burdensome
equal and equitable
immediate and very practical
simple and easy
timely and helpful
complete and intelligible
uniform and coördinated
constant and adequate
insidious and dangerous
difficult and expensive
thorough and satisfactory
less disturbed and less weakened
peculiar and stimulating
strong and well-equipped
citizens and human beings
plans and purposes
spirit and method
form and spirit
form and degree
advice and information
counsel and suggestion
best experience and best thoughts

THE STORY OF A STYLE

reorganization and reform
scope and swing
credit and enterprise
significance and value
justice and advantage
confusion and inconsistency
coördination and adjustment
capacity and resources
sustain and advance
hope and believe
preserving and safeguarding life and health
set up and develop
was and may be again
supplement and enrich
urged and debated
unify and improve
lack and ought to have

Mr. Wilson does not concur, he entirely concurs; he is seldom gratified, he usually is profoundly gratified; he does not feel pleasure, he experiences unaffected pleasure; he seldom says anything, but he is always privileged to say, or, speaking from his heart, says, or in all frankness says; nothing is unnecessary, something is always clearly unnecessary; nothing is merely indefensible, it is clearly indefensible; nothing is necessary, something is always absolutely necessary; few things are obvious, but almost everything is particularly obvious; nothing is impressive, everything is gravely impressive.

LEARNED ADDICTIONS

Recently a noticeable exhibition of this generosity has been in connection with the word "frank"—another of Mr. Wilson's favorite collocations of letters and sounds. It is true that the history of the United States contains no suggestion or hint of a President who practiced secretiveness with anything approaching Mr. Wilson's squirrel-like, jackdaw-like instinct; but it is equally true, and in candor should be admitted, that Mr. Wilson has never claimed to be "frank." Mr. Wilson is always at least "very frank," sometimes "extremely frank," and not infrequently "absolutely frank." He also speaks, sometimes, with "the utmost candor."

There are grammarians who assert that if a glass is full, it is a locutionary crime and a confession of either mental confusion or moral indifference, to describe it as "very full." Either the glass is full, or it is not full. The case is clear as to such qualities as truthfulness and honesty; they do not exist in degrees of comparison. A lady is not "absolutely virtuous," or "quite virtuous," or "rather virtuous." A man, it would seem, is frank, or he is not frank. There is no room for graduated assessment of the amount of frankness in a man's mind. This is not, however, the case with Presidents, apparently.

Even Mr. Wilson's "absolute" is a matter of comparison. I believe that "absolute zero" has

THE STORY OF A STYLE

never been attained by science. Mr. Wilson would hardly regard the quest as worth while. He would be satisfied with nothing less than "very absolute zero." Ordinary, merely "frank," minds contemplate the absolute as the end of the vista of reason and of speech. But minds gifted with the ability to be supererogatorily frank, comparatively or superlatively frank, understand that the absolute itself is a mere matter of comparison. Accordingly Mr. Wilson writes of "the President's control, which is *very* absolute, of the nation's foreign relations" (*Constitutional Government*, page 77).

He is not satisfied to describe a principle as fundamental; or even as *more* fundamental; it must be MUCH *more* fundamental. "Shipwreck": is there a word in the language that more deeply moves the ordinary mind with the sense of complete catastrophe? Mr. Wilson must speak of "*calamitous* shipwreck."

The testimony which the intensified style gives of the writer's infatuation with words is, curiously enough, also a confession of his mistrust of them. He not only believes in words, but at the same time he doubts them. He is sure that nothing is more effectual, but he is never sure that they are effectual. So he piles them up. Mr. Wilson constantly says: "the nation *itself*," "and reaction *whatever*," "the

LEARNED ADDICTIONS

VERY *fundamental* presumptions," "MORE *essential* reasons," "the *very* ESSENCE ITSELF."

*I am the Doubter and the Doubt;
They reckon ill who leave me out.*

IV

SYMBOLISM

“SYMBOLS,” runs the statement of the student of *Symbolbildung*, Silberer,—“symbols may originate when man endeavors to grasp mentally something which his intellect finds too remote; may originate also when man’s intellectual powers are reduced as in sleep (in dreams), nervous exhaustion, or by mental disturbances. . . . An inferior mind, or a mind incompetent for its stated mental task, unable to use the accurate language of science or philosophy, will resort to a symbol.” “In other words” (is André Tridon’s comment),¹ “thinking in symbols is infantile, archaic, inferior, thinking. Instead of determining in scientific ways, by the operation of logical mental operations, the nature, essence and significance of a new phenomenon, it simply compares it with some already familiar phenomenon”—in other words, is unable to discriminate and advance, can only hesitate, stop and cover its confusion by the invocation of a revered name.

¹ *Psychoanalysis: Its History, Theory and Practice*. By André Tridon. New York, B. W. Huebsch, Inc.

SYMBOLISM

The subject of Woodrow Wilson's initiation into the mystery of words invites a moment's attention.

His youthful idols were his father and his grandfathers — two Presbyterian preachers and an editor. His every known male ancestor was either printer, pedagogue or parson. His father was all three; bred in the family printing-office, Joseph Wilson started his career as a teacher of rhetoric, then married the daughter of a pedantic dominie and became one himself. Of him Mr. Wilson's biographer writes that he

“ had been a professor of rhetoric, and he always remained one, taking very seriously, and practicing with a sense of its sanctity, the art of words. He read his sermons, every one of which was marked by high literary finish, although in no sense unduly rhetorical. A man of unusual scholarship and a student to the end of his days, he is remembered to have indulged in but a single form of pedantry; his regard for language had inclined him affectionately toward the original significance of words, and he was sometimes observed to use them in an antiquated sense. Thus he occasionally indulged in such a phrase as ‘ I wonder with a great admiration.’ Charles Lamb used to do the same thing, as you will learn if you will read the first sentence of *Imperfect Sympathies*.

“ When indulging in his harmless foible, the preacher might have been caught glancing around the congregation to catch, if it might be, the pleasure of an appreciative gleam in some hearer's eye. He was a man of humor as well as of learning and thought, and, when his son had grown to dis-

THE STORY OF A STYLE

cerning years, always showed great delight if the boy evinced, by repeating it, that he remembered some fanciful or eloquent or learned phrase." [*The Story of His Life*, p. 25.]

Yet, curiously enough, the scion of this race of verbalists, the son of the professor of rhetoric, was not taught his letters until he was nine years old — "for one reason or another," his biographer remarks. For one reason or another, also, Tommy Wilson as a boy always ran or skipped; "he can scarcely be said to have walked until he was fourteen or fifteen years old." It was about this time, at this critical age, that he began to read and to write industriously.

Whether it was on account of some youthful nervous tendency, or by the deliberate intent of his father, who, though making the boy the constant companion of his thoughts and dreams, yet withheld him from knowledge of the secret of the written word, nothing could have operated more effectually to impress him ineffaceably for life with a belief in the magic of words and their graphic symbols — more important, more sacred, than the facts and thoughts which they stood for, and which had long been familiar things surrounded by no special mystery.

His childhood was filled with stories of the grandfather who had learned the art preservative in the shop that had been Benjamin Franklin's, and who had established the first newspaper west of the Alle-

SYMBOLISM

ghenies; of the uncles who could stick type faster than any rival — except his father. From his earliest youth he saw that father busy six days among his books and over his manuscript, and on the seventh beheld him ascend the pulpit and read from mysterious signs on sheets before him, solemn and moving words to silent congregations. When it was not his father in the pulpit, it was his grandfather (himself, they said, born with spectacles on his nose and a quill in his hand). There was a dictionary on every table in the manse; and the voices of devout grammarians wrestling mightily often awoke him in the night. Yet he grew up, in such surroundings, to the age of ten before he could read.

Would it be strange if the tardily-admitted neophyte soon outdid his masters in devotion to the cult of verbiage; strange if letters, which had so long been cabalistic, always retained for him something of a magical content; if a word remained forever for him really rather a wonder-working image than a commonplace vehicle for a plain thought or a downright fact? It can hardly be mere fancy that the postponement of his initiation into the fellowship of letters wrought in him an added respect for them above that already made probable by his inheritance and his early environment — made religious reverence for the symbols themselves a permanent element of his character.

THE STORY OF A STYLE

For what we have discovered about the adult Wilson's use of language amounts to this; may at least be put thus: that he is given to words of large connotations, and that he habitually employs them without definite relevancy — that is to say, he uses them as symbols.

The essence of a symbol is that it is something, not the fact, which, however, by some one or another of its included semblances, reminiscences or suggestions, is assumed to represent the fact. The likeness, reminiscence, or suggestion, is perceived by the inventor of the symbol; it may afterward be detected by others — it may be so natural that it is instantly recognized by others as a graphic representation of the fact. More often, it is only through explanation and frequent repetition that it comes to be accepted. Usually, also, the implications of the symbol are so indefinite and broad that it can suggest, not a specific reality, but only a class or group of realities. He who employs it may have in mind a single thing, but he can only presume that it is that particular thing which will be called up in the minds of his readers or auditors. But, more likely, the symbol-user does not have in his own mind a specific and clearly-conceived reality, and is of course not endeavoring to communicate to his readers a clear conception of a specific reality — being without it himself.

SYMBOLISM

The discoveries of the ultra-modern psychologists who term themselves "Behaviorists" would probably throw much light on the subject of the response of the mind to the suggestions of the symbolist orator or writer — if I were capable of expounding them. It seems that when an artificial stimulus is associated for a long time with a natural, native stimulus, it acquires power to effect the same result. It is all, they say, a matter of a reflex muscular expansion or contraction somewhere, or of a secretion by this or that gland. Whether the sound of a bell soothes with the tender emotions of a golden evening, or thrills with the excitement of a midnight alarm, turns on certain variations of catabolism which await the decree prescribed by association.

It is possible for a sound, a color, an odor, to awaken twelve different emotions in a dozen persons. And therefore, pragmatically, it has been the effort of advancing civilization — conscious of the value of rational communication between men — to redeem certain tracts of these stimulations from ambiguity; to train the equivocal to be univocal.

The spoken and the written word have been the chosen ministers of this process. They who appreciate the importance of the possibilities of definite communication between mind and mind will habitually eschew the ambiguous, emotional employment of words — even if thereby they sacrifice an

THE STORY OF A STYLE

easy means of winning popular approval and of excusing themselves from the task of confronting facts, making decisions on them, and supervising, with rational attention, the movements of thought.

Like every other vice, the symbolic use of words not only originates in a weakness,— but fosters that weakness. The addict to vague speech is encouraged in the vagueness of thought which it probably was that led him to his first indulgences. Precisely like the victim of narcotic drugs, the symbol-addict is likely to continue to flee exacting realities and to live among the pleasurable phantoms created by his addiction.

But rational thought must live among realities, and deal with realities. Symbols will suffice for the hazy mind of the superstitious savage; but, as knowledge widens and reason deepens, their expression must grow more definite. Symbols will be left behind, and realities will come to be explicitly dealt with. True words will crowd out the first crude efforts to name things. “What, after all, is a word?”— asks Trench —“ what but the enclosure of a certain district from the vast out-field of thought and fact?” Narrower and narrower districts will be delineated; more and more subtle verbal representations will be employed to name each of the in-

SYMBOLISM

finite varieties of fact and idea which throng the teeming world and increasingly press upon the apprehension, and which can be made our own only to the extent and in the degree to which we do thus subtly name them. They only will continue using mystic generalizations who for special reasons occasionally design to appeal to the emotional imagination, or they who linger in the infantile intellectual stage, or are estopped from free adult thought by constitutional inner complexes or by the paralysis of sleep, narcotics, sickness or fatigue.

If we accept the Trenchant definition, we shall be obliged to ask what certain district is, by Mr. Wilson's ubiquitous "processes" for example, enclosed from the vast out-field of thought and fact. That question we shall ask in vain — and ask it concerning scores of the most abounding of his phrases. They are not proper words, but symbols. They do not describe things; they do not represent them; — they substitute for them.

Now, it is merely a natural and expectable result that the substitute should supersede the reality. There was a happy-faced sentence somewhere on the opening pages of this book insinuating that there is no necessary disparagement in describing a personage as a "man of words." No *necessary* disparage-

THE STORY OF A STYLE

ment, certainly; but nevertheless there is a persistent instinct that a man of words is in danger of being a man of little else — a man who mistakes images for realities. That is what he will be if he employs words as symbols. He will juggle with the substitutes, instead of doing business with the *facts* with which he confuses them.

It is an imperative instinct of the savage and the infantile mind to confound the effigy with the thing it was assumed to represent. The little girl showers her kisses upon her doll. The religious (the undeveloped, superstitious) mind for thousands of years has been satisfied with images. Irrationalized mobs of grown men to-day burn in effigy. Wax figures stuck with pins are melted before the fire in peasants' cabins in remote districts, not only according to the stories of Hardy and the poems of Rossetti, but in the daily newspapers. Quite modern persons, otherwise cultured, in our own days, have been known loth to let their photographs get out of their own hands. Wars have been fought for the possession of an ark, a xoanon, a palladium, a sacred picture. Whole nations profess willingness to bleed and die for a flag or a motto.

“A word,” says the scholarly Trench again, “is a sacrament.” By authority, a sacrament is defined as “the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace.” Nothing, indeed, could be more

SYMBOLISM

beautifully sacramental in the best sense than a sound word faithfully employed as a true sign of an invisible idea. It is the world of spirit taking flesh in the world of matter; it is a sacred oath of the consecration of the reason to the cause of truth; it is a veritable transubstantiation. But sacraments are notoriously open to abuse. Where the *real presence* is absent, when a symbol-word, in its futility, is allowed to depose and supersede the reality, it becomes the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual — disgrace.

At this point, as well as at another, we may pause to record the merely just observation that Mr. Wilson's symbolism is of no common, plebeian order. There are objects which popular imagination has everywhere seized upon as convenient vessels for emotion which altogether fail to appeal to him as reputable symbols. The more popular patriotic fetishes are not over-frequently employed by him. He seldom personifies, and never apostrophizes, the most common images of national life.

“The flag,” for instance, is rather less often on Mr. Wilson's lips than on those of other oratorical patriots who in war-time believe that they also serve who only stand and wave. The flag is a pure and proper symbol. It is created to symbolize; it is an

THE STORY OF A STYLE

image, lifted up to be revered, in all reason, for what it stands for. During the mental moratorium which all wars declare, the flag indeed tends to become a fetish, gathering to itself properties and claiming treatment which only superstition can justify. I am unacquainted with any passage in which this war-President ascribes any thaumaturgic properties to the national ensign. Likewise "the uniform" seems to invest for him no special mystic virtue. He did not himself exchange the toga for the paludamentum. Indeed, his tributes to the flag read labored, and often singularly infelicitous: "I venture to say that a great many things are said about the flag which very few people stop to analyze. . . . How can any man presume to interpret the emblem of the United States, the emblem of what we would fain be among the family of the nations and it is incumbent upon us to be in the daily round of routine duty?" (What does that sentence mean?) "If you lose the physical emblem, be sure you wear it in your heart." That is hardly happy. Mr. Wilson's stock eulogy of the flag runs as follows:

✓ "When I look at that flag it seems to me as if the white stripes were strips of parchment upon which are written the rights of man, and the red stripes the streams of blood

SYMBOLISM

by which those rights have been made good. Then in the little blue firmament in the corner have swung out the stars of the States of the American Union. So, it is, as it were, a sort of floating charter that has come down to us from Runnymede . . .”

This passage, which in spontaneity and sincerity certainly compares favorably with Rodman Drake's "When-Freedom-from-her-mountain-height" rhapsody, was well received in all parts of New Jersey during the state campaign of 1910-1912, and has done yeoman's duty in various presidential addresses. Mr. Wilson has never succumbed to sincere emotional impulse on this subject. His infrequent allusions to the uniform are equally unsatisfactory to the superstitious mind; his most notable utterance is "We need wear no uniform except the uniform of the heart" (whatever that is).

It is fair to say that Mr. Wilson does not affect fetishes of the common, popular order.

Why not? In the first place doubtless because the compulsion of his pedantic training inclines him to aloofness from the plebeian tongue and limits his vocabulary to terms learned and abstruse; but, in the second place, because the common symbols have acquired a somewhat definite meaning, and are consequently confining, exacting and burdensome to inex-

THE STORY OF A STYLE

act cerebration, and, furthermore, are less efficacious in arousing the admiring imagination. Mr. Wilson is no elementary, but an advanced, symbolist. He desires words of such truly splendid vagueness of metaphoric content, that they will satisfy his own ambiguous emotions and impress his auditors with his profundity.

There was a certain phenomenon in the early Church known as "speaking with tongues"—namely, babbling nonsensical syllables under the supposed inspiration of heaven. St. Paul was much concerned about it, and he encountered it with a delicious satire which makes one of his letters the classic on the subject of plain speech:

"He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself, no doubt; but he that teacheth openly speaketh unto men to edification and exhortation and comfort. I would that ye all spake 'with tongues'; yet greater is he that speaketh openly than he that speaketh with tongues — *except he interpret*. I had rather speak five words with my understanding than ten thousand words in a 'tongue.' Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret. If there be no interpreter in the assembly let him keep silent and let him speak to himself — and to God. Why, even inanimate things that give sound, whether pipe or harp, unless they give distinct notes in the sounds — how in the world shall it be known what is piped or harped? If the trumpet give a sound that is uncertain who shall pre-

SYMBOLISM

pare himself to the battle? So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? Ye shall speak in the air."

There is no doubt, however, that speaking in "tongues" continued in much esteem in the early Church; it has often been revived, especially in the more fanatical times and places. Just as among the most primitive peoples, so down to this day, gibberish enjoys a very special repute as a mark of knowledge of sacred things. The incoherent ravings of the violently insane may not indeed nowadays be regarded as divine, but the jargon of illiterate "psychics" is to-day listened to with awe by half the world, apparently. The last great hoax of "tongues" was the Book of Mormon; if a pair of magic spectacles had not too thoughtfully been provided for its interpretation, its prestige would probably be even greater than it is to-day.

Mr. Wilson's employment of the hieroglyph and the "tongue" is of course no vulgar matter of either fanaticism or deception; but clearly it does touch, yes, enters well into, the realm of the magical.

A number of preceding paragraphs have hinted at the connection between symbolism and magic. While this investigation is hasty, superficial and

THE STORY OF A STYLE

merely suggestive, it ought not to fail to note somewhat more positively the tendency of the leisure-class mentality (trained to servility before earthly and un-earthly superiors, reverence for prowess and chance, in irrationality and superstition), constantly to indulge in un-rational appeals — as by ritual, costume, and talismanic words. Just as masses and litanies are in effect enchantments, and as the special dress of priests, scholars and sportsmen represents a desire to honor, propitiate and charm supernatural powers, so there is a necromancy of words. Indeed, there lingers always even in the ordinary employment of written or oral symbols for things, something of their original primitive mystery. Words, we have seen, even at their best, are not things, but images, icons. It is the business of reason to remember their purely representative office, to accept and handle them only as counters, valueless in themselves, estimable solely in the degree with which they describe the fact behind them. But the disposition to attribute mystic power to the image, and consequently to employ it magically, is universal. Words, too, were probably in their origin phonetically and graphically imitative. But imitation was one of the primitive forms of magic. (Imitation remains no doubt the chief element in all magical performances.)

Moreover, there are few methods in which the

SYMBOLISM

superior few can display their elevation more conspicuously, constantly or impressively than by their possession of a large and, even more desirably, of a special and elegant, vocabulary. What more natural than that the populace should be inclined to identify the power of the possessors of the esoteric vocabulary with its possession — and to become word-idolators? What more natural, as the next step, than that the word-wielders should themselves fall under the infatuation with which they had hypnotized the people? The rigmarole of the law, the pig-Latin of the practitioners of healing, are easily distinguishable as magical in intention and effect. Rationally they are cumbersome, inconvenient and unsafe; every practical reason is against them; yet they survive. The age of miracles has not passed. But the cant of the sportsman or of the preacher, and the learned style of the scholar, are no less of a magical cast. They put into evidence the superiority of the speaker, they suggest occult sources of power, and they become an instrument of wizardry upon which the practitioner comes to rely — with good evidence of its efficacy; — comes to believe in.

Mr. Wilson not only employs the ordinary magical apparatus of his class — the peculiar diction of the professional pedant and aristocrat; he has a private stock of enchantments. “Counsel,” “processes,” “hearts,” “visions,” “voices,” etc., as he

THE STORY OF A STYLE

uses them, and as we have seen, are talismanic vocables. They ordinarily represent the merest residuum of definite thought, and are effective only as vessels into which indefinite emotions may pour themselves. The effect of their employment is to lull and stupefy the reasoning mind and summon phantasms from the vasty deep. Mr. Wilson's "counsel" is as truly a wonder-working image as is the figure of the Virgin of Guadalupe or of Chenestova. Mind you, while we talk here of the spell of speech, the wizardry of words, their magic and enchantment, we are not using figurative language at all, but the language of scientific realism.

We are not talking, of course, of merely phonetic charm. Everybody is familiar with the hypnotic effect of sounds. De Quincey counted as most solemn and heart-quaking the appellation, *Consul Romanus*; Mark Twain wrote of German words so movingly that they make a stranger to the language weep; more than one actor and bishop have been credited with working the same miracle by breathing the blessed word, "*Mesopotamia*." Poe in *The Bells* composed an onomatopœic marvel. Most of the great artists in words have the faculty of happily marrying sound and sense.

Little relation between sound and sense is to be found in Mr. Wilson's writings; so far as I can discover, with neither instinct nor conscious art does he

SYMBOLISM

ever associate the idea and the tone. There is a great deal, a very great deal; indeed, of sound repetition — a phenomenon indeed perhaps the most arresting we shall have to observe. But I detect no passages at all in which sound is accommodated to orchestrate the mood, after the manner of the great masters of human speech. Here is no wizardry of music, no clash of trumpets here, or sighing of soft breezes there. The magic is of another kind. It depends upon the recitation of a few words, each of large and accommodating connotation; and the investiture of them, through insistent reiteration in all sorts of connections, with an emotional, mystical, hieratic character. It is their constant invocation, their association with every dimly-formed thought, the continuous assumption of their plenary and esoteric significance — not their sounds — that impart to these words their mystic power.

If this were a treatise of wider range, a main question for us would be why talismanic words are effective; we should reflect upon the irrationality of the public. For the immediate purposes of this study, the question is: why does Mr. Wilson employ them? We are probably now justified in saying that few writers have made so constant use of the sacred verbal image, have so often invoked the mechanism of superstition.

Now, not all purveyors of sorcery have faith in it.

THE STORY OF A STYLE

Many a doctor must write his cabalistic symbols with his tongue in his cheek; many a young lawyer or divine must have found it hard to contract the habit of mystic speech (though certainly the very employment of magic is likely to weaken the intellect and beget the superstition to which it panders). We cannot, out of hand, convict a caballist of irrationality; he may be a wise quack. But it is difficult to reconcile a life-long devotion to the verbal incantation, often employed even in handling the greatest and most serious concerns, with a serene and possessing rationality.

A man whose mind obeys the precepts of logical thought practices definite speech and has faith in definite speech. Certainly he feels no constant need for mystical phrases. And when he enters the more difficult regions where especially clear thought is called upon to dissipate darkness, his words will shine with that definite, cold, calm radiance of reason which lights the stars as they swing through the night.

The Freudians have not proved their theory of the obsessive nature of numbers. Their arguments, so far as they have come to the attention of the author of this immortal work, seem to him absurdly fine-spun and over-ingenious. But that there are a few

SYMBOLISM

certain numerals which, by reason of magical associations, do intrude themselves upon the consciousness, everybody well knows: chief among them the sacred Three and Seven, and the diabolic Thirteen. Mr. Wilson takes much interest in the curious fact that the number Thirteen has figured conspicuously in his life. This interest, so far as avowal, and, without doubt, so far as consciousness goes, is merely an amused noting of coincidences. A psychoanalyst would no doubt prove that it represented a subconscious, and inhibited, belief in the influence of the magic number — ridiculed, yet, with due conscious disparagement, indulged. The fact that Mr. Wilson notices that his name, like that of "Geo. Washington," contains thirteen letters, has already been noted. Mr. Wilson has more than once in my hearing spoken of the list it would be possible to make of the critical events in his career which had occurred on the 13th of the month. The press has widely commented upon these coincidences. There is no evidence that Mr. Wilson himself first noticed them; he probably did not in any event communicate them to the press. But his interest in the number was the suggestion which directed attention to the coincidences which have since been awaited and noted, and which, as I happen to know, have continued to entertain him.

The irrationality of any belief in the mystic power

THE STORY OF A STYLE

of numerals is not consciously indulged by Mr. Wilson; his writings show nothing of the arithmomania exhibited by the author of the Book of Daniel or of the Book of Revelation or by Rossetti.

Among the most frequent of Mr. Wilson's addictions are, we have noticed, the words "heart," "voices," and "visions." Their tireless reappearances in his writings have caused some newspaper merriment. These three words, and a few others of their class, are symbols of a character peculiarly infantile — in the philosophic sense.

Personification is the first instinct of a savage, or of a child, brought face to face with a natural fact. He instantly imputes its effect to the will of an indwelling spirit. He visualizes a personality with the limbs, organs, senses and disposition of a living being — preferably of the genus with which he is best acquainted — man. What he cannot conceive as anthropomorphic must be at least animistic.

The habit of personification might, on first thought, be deemed an evidence of especially vivid apprehension. Does it not mean that the writer realizes the object of his thought so thoroughly that it is actually animate to him? It lives in his imagination. It is invested with the attributes of an active conscious being; it is no dead abstraction. The

SYMBOLISM

breath of life has been breathed into its nostrils. What could be more significant of strength and vitality of vision, than to talk of the mouth of the river, the bowels of the earth, the rising of the moon, the setting sun, the laughing waterfall, the foot of the tree, the voice of the thunder, the hands of the clock, the scent of danger, the tooth of time? These and hundreds more like personifications are firmly incorporated in universal human speech. To be without them, would that not be to devitalize and dull, not only language, but apprehension? And does not the possession of a special power of personification mark, and account for much of the fame of, many masters of literature?

As I write the above paragraph there comes to my mind a tribute once paid to an author commonly adjudged to be one of the most vivid and moving of novelists. The address attributed much of the power of Dickens to his capacity for personifying the inanimate. Part of it ran:

“ Charles Dickens never outgrew his childhood ; he thought as a child, saw as a child, and spake as a child, and when he became a man he did not put away childish things. . . . A child has the power of personifying very strongly developed. For the child, the house is really looking out of its windows, the flowers are really dancing and flirting with their neighbors. So Dickens gives us whole chapters about how the wind chased the leaves, the emotion of the wind as it

THE STORY OF A STYLE

chased the leaves, the sentiments of the leaves, the culpability of a wind which would chase leaves; long passages about another wind which penetrated into a church and stalked through the aisles, reading the inscriptions on the tombs, sighing over some and howling over others, trying the organ and rattling the windows. In other places he personifies the cricket on the hearth, the quarreling of the bells, the song of the waves; again, footsteps in a lonely street bring a personal message of impending disaster. This is not, with Dickens, a literary trick, at all; but an inevitable exercise of that personifying tendency of the child, to whose fancy the inanimate things of Nature live and speak.

“Dickens, you know, was precocious as a child. He told Forster that he distinctly remembered events that must have occurred before his third birthday. He was bred in poverty, lived in a garret, and when he was ten years old was working in a dark cellar to keep body and soul together. The agonies of those years made him a man in experience before he had outgrown the mental habits of his childhood. A child, therefore, he remained in many respects. Such he was, to the end, I think, in the essence of his genius, however mature he may have been in the exercise of that genius. That is the reason why there lurks in his pages a magic like the magic of the spring and the dawn that renews the face of the earth in jubilation and glory.”

These words were spoken at the Commemorative Dinner given at Delmonico's in New York by the Dickens Fellowship on the Centenary of the novelist's birth. There could have been in them no in-

SYMBOLISM

tention of disparagement. I meant them, and they were received, as an eulogium; yet they connect the habit of personification with the intellectualisation of the child.

That connection is unquestionable. It was in the childhood of the race that the thunder threatened, the tree-tops whispered, the clouds refused their rain, the parched bosom of the withholding earth waited to be entreated, the constellations hunted and were hunted in the firmament, the demons of the west devoured the god of day, the waves danced or hungrily gnawed, the wind singing in the cordage was the voice of sirens lulling the senses of seamen in the presence of danger.

And it is the child-mind which, amid the enlightenment of modern knowledge, continues to think of the inanimate as the abode of life. The child touches a watch with reverent wonder; whips the hobby-horse that has flung him. The primitive instinct, asserting itself in a moment of pain and anger, has been known to impel a modern man to kick the chair on which he has barked his shins.

Our lists of quotations are in danger of growing too long. Let us content ourselves this time with the first dozen examples of personification from the pages of them which my note-book contains:

“Swords made uneasy stir in their scabbards.”

THE STORY OF A STYLE

“. . . sinister Power that has now at last stretched out its ugly talons.”

“These are the breath of the nation’s nostrils.”

“We have seen tariff legislation wander very far afield.”

“A cry had gone out from every stricken home.”

“The nations that have been long under the heel of the Austrian have called out to the world. The liberated peoples call out for this thing.”

“Two spokesmen in the Senate have added its voice to our counsels in a place where voices can still be individually heard. The fact that the Senate has kept its original rules of debate and procedure unchanged is very significant. It is a place of individual voices. The suppression of any single voice would radically change its constitutional character, and its character being changed, the individual voices . . .”

“There is, moreover, a voice calling for these definitions of principle and of purpose which is, it seems to me, more thrilling and more compelling than any of the many moving voices with which the troubled air of the world is filled. It is the voice of the Russian people.”

“Columbus had turned his adventurous prow straight toward the heart of the seemingly limitless ocean.”

“Europe is a bit sick at heart.”

“. . . never felt the great pulse of the heart of the world.”

“Now the heart of the world is awake and the heart of the world must be satisfied.”

“Dare we reject it, and break the heart of the world?”

Especially symptomatic of the animistic attitude is the addiction to the word “quick” which possibly

SYMBOLISM

may have been noticed before in these pages. It has the recommendation, to a pedant, of being a practically obsolete word,— that is to say, in the sense in which Mr. Wilson employs it — with Scriptural associations. It conveys an invidious distinction — that between “ the quick and the dead ” — suggests the ghostly visit of a spirit to a corse, summoned by a Dr. Dee or a Witch of Endor. Thus it carries a magical implication.

But in fact and in truth, the objects to which Mr. Wilson is fond of referring as “ quickened,” “ quickening,” or “ quick with,” are necessarily and forever inanimate. It is an animistic superstition, foreign to sober thought, to endow them with life.

We must, however, do Mr. Wilson this justice: His mind is not so active as really to contemplate the object of his thought under the multitudinous aspects of life which the more imaginative child or savage discerns. His personifications are of an extremely rudimentary character. They have few organs; they perform only two or three acts. They are rather indeterminate visions; yet not disembodied, for they have hearts, explicitly; and they must have mouths, for they utter voices. This is about the extent with which we are made acquainted with these rather feeble, commonplace phantoms. In other words, they are not vivid creatures of an alert imagination, at all; but only stage figures, or

THE STORY OF A STYLE

rather reappearances of a single stage figure, meager and threadbare and sadly overworked. Mr. Wilson has fallen into the personifying habit; he talks of almost everything under the sun as having the two or three most obvious animal organs, but he does not really vividly conceive them in the abounding vitality of the creations of primitive or childlike fancy. The poverty of his imagination scarcely relieves him from the imputation of the infantile habit of mind; but it suggests again the fatigued or otherwise impeded effort with which even his most characteristic mental operations are carried on.

Mr. Wilson's confidence that the symbolized content which words hold for him they must inevitably hold for others, and his surprised impatience with minds which do not always and instantly follow his own ideation, were well illustrated in his White House Conference with the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, August 19, 1919. Confronted with concrete questions as to the meaning and effect of the language of passage after passage of the Paris Peace Treaty and Covenant of Nations, and annoyed by irrepressible murmurs of doubt from every side, the President spent two hours in protestations and exclamations over the lack of faith and vision on the part of his interlocutors.

SYMBOLISM

The following exchanges took place between the President and one Senator :

The President: " I must frankly confess I am unable to understand. . . .

" I am frankly unable to understand why such doubts should be entertained. . . .

" There was absolutely no doubt as to the meaning of any one of the resulting provisions of the covenant in the minds of those who participated in drafting them, and I respectfully submit that there is nothing vague or doubtful in their wording."

Senator Brandegee: " Of course, that is your opinion, if I may say so."

The President: " Yes, sir."

Senator Brandegee: " The fact that you think now that everything in the treaty is plain, and that there is no doubt about the meaning of any of the provisions, and the fact that I think there is grave doubt about many of the provisions, will not seriously affect the opinion of the council or of the arbitrator that finally passes upon the true meaning of the treaty when dispute arises."

The President: " No, Senator, but the plain wording of the treaty will have a great deal to do with it, and the meaning of the wording is plain." ✓

Senator Brandegee: " That is simply another way of stating, is it not, that you are clear in your opinion that the provisions of the treaty are plain. But I am suggesting that there will be a dispute between nations as to what the treaty means after we have passed from the scene." ✓

THE STORY OF A STYLE

The President: "No, sir; it is a question of being confident of what language means, not confident of an opinion."

Senator Brandegee: "I mean, we derive our opinions as to the meanings of the treaty from the language of the treaty, do we not?"

The President: "Yes."

Senator Brandegee: "Now they would derive their construction of what the treaty means from the language of it, we not being there?"

The President: "Yes."

Senator Brandegee: "So that what we think about it now will not determine in an international court or before an arbitrator twenty years hence, in case of a dispute between nations as to the meaning of the treaty?"

The President: "Certainly not, but language will."

Senator Brandegee: "Of course they will have the language before them, but the language which determines it is now disputed between you and certain lawyers of the country, and certain Senators, as to its meaning."

The President saw no difficulty in any one of the eighty thousand words of the treaty document. The young gentleman, a junior in college, who in 1879 informed the world that "nothing could be more obvious than" one of his theories, had, during forty years of later life, never very successfully struggled to conceal his contempt for those whose less gifted minds found fewer things entirely axiomatic. Other responses to the inquiries of Senators on this occasion ran thus:

SYMBOLISM

“Certainly! Oh, certainly!” (How could any one doubt it?).

“Oh, undoubtedly!” (How could anybody think otherwise?)

“The idea is, undoubtedly, . . .”

“Nobody has any doubt about what was agreed on.”

“Why, Senator, it is surprising that such a question should be asked!”

“Nothing more clear than . . .”

The subject of the League of Nations is one deeply involved in politics. Nevertheless, there are aspects of Mr. Wilson's advocacy of it which may not be ignored by the student of his literary traits.

When Mr. Wilson embarked from France on his second return home, he believed, with the faith of a zealot, that he was the custodian of a formula fated to determine for centuries the course of history. The Treaty and Covenant of Versailles, as he brought it home, represented in Mr. Wilson's mind, the highest kind of achievement — a verbal achievement. By the time the great seals of the Powers had been placed on the document, in the reverent twilight of the Hall of the Clock, in the palace of France's Augustan king, it had come to be, for Mr. Wilson, a thing precious beyond estimate, in itself — no longer merely, or at all, for its contents or its purpose. It had emerged, like an historic creed

THE STORY OF A STYLE

from ancient Councils of fabled Fathers, a sacrosanct symbol, established forever, its every accent to be held inviolate from the sacrilegious hands of pagan and heretic. It might have borne, without irreverence, the *imprimatur* which the First Council of the Church did not scruple to set upon its decree: "It hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us."

A curious circumstance was the President's anxiety to keep the sacred text from the public as long as possible. With miser-like delight in the look and touch of his treasure, he gloated over it in secret. It is true that the text was on the streets in Paris, and that enterprising American bankers and newspapers easily secured it; but the leather case containing the Presidential copy might have been the Ark of the Covenant of Jahveh with Israel. There were many references in the press to the affectionate care with which Mr. Wilson personally guarded the document on its journey from Paris.

The word "fetish" is nowadays so casually employed that I am reluctant to employ it — am entirely unwilling to employ it in anything short of its precise scientific sense; but no hesitation need wait upon the conclusion that the document incorporating the Treaty and Covenant of Versailles had become a fetish for Mr. Wilson.

A life-long devotee of words, here he found a supreme accomplishment in words. A life-long

SYMBOLISM

refugee from realities, a confirmed seeker for havens of refuge from embarrassing facts, of relief from the disturbing and distressing doubts which herald the approach of facts — here was a monument of security. As if by some special dispensation of Providence, there had arisen, for the astonished comfort of his anxious heart, the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Ungrateful indeed would Mr. Wilson be if he failed to yield the devotion of the remaining days of his life to this merciful image of refuge and release.

The chronic indecision of the President's mind having found a rallying-point in the phrases of the Paris Treaty, having endowed those phrases with his own particular interpretations, his puzzled anger at Senators who failed to understand them in the exact sense in which they accredited themselves to him was — the incensed assertion of his positive self against the annoyance of his own doubts, now incarnate in others.

The President's insistence, at this conference and in repeated addresses, that the war was still on, and could be "stopped" only by the particular formality of ratifying the unamended Treaty, was perhaps the supreme illustration which his life affords that he is ruled by words and not by facts. With deep

THE STORY OF A STYLE

feeling he argued the distressed state of American social, industrial and trade conditions, and dilated upon the perils that threatened the world, unless a technical peace were formally completed in the precise words he offered. These distresses and dangers were imposed upon a hundred million of people, not by the fact of war (for there existed in fact no war) but, he asserted, by the failure of the Senate to accept without alteration a particular form of words, eighty thousand of them, which he had happened emotionally to embrace.

Verbal superstition could hardly go further.

It is necessary to inspect another statement made at this White House conference. On this occasion the follow dialogue was recorded:

Senator McCumber: "Would our moral conviction of the unrighteousness of the German war have brought us into this war if Germany had not committed any acts against us without the League of Nations, as we had no League of Nations at that time?"

The President: "I hope it would, eventually, Senator, as things developed."

Senator McCumber: "Do you think that if Germany had committed no act of war or no act of injustice against our citizens we would have gotten into this war?"

The President: "I do think so."

SYMBOLISM

Senator McCumber: "You think we would have gotten in anyway?"

The President: "I do."

This statement has been savagely attacked for its inconsistency with hundreds of declarations in an opposite made by a President reelected on the slogan "He kept us out of war."

Mr. Wilson's answer to Mr. McCumber was, however, probably nothing more than what is recognized by psychoanalysts as the projection of a wish-phantasy into the past. Every one is prone to imagine that he did what he wished he had done. In a certain type of mind, under certain conditions, this imagination is likely to become vivid. It would be a natural operation for a mind like Mr. Wilson's to credit its present sentiments with an existence at the very time when their opposites were actually in control, and to do so with entire sincerity.

The members of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations spent four hours with the President, playing hide-and-go-seek and blind-man's bluff. The stenographic report of the Conference is an entertaining document. "What is the use," explained one Senator as he left the White House, "what is the use of trying to draw information from a mind which functions like that!" The Senator meant that the President was talking in symbols, and his interlocutors had come for facts. Mr. Wilson had always

THE STORY OF A STYLE

talked in symbols. He is a practiced artist in obnubilation. The emotions of the bewildered Senators must have been akin to those experienced by certain Princeton students forty-one years before. They had been talking theology.

“Some question then arose about the flood;
Tom Wilson spoke, and all was clear as — mud.”

V.

PHONETIC PHENOMENA

ONE of the most clearly marked characteristics of the brain temporarily or constitutionally incapacitated for fixed attention is the inability to resist the fatal fascination of sounds. "The mattoid hears a word and feels compelled to repeat it; or it calls into his consciousness other words similar to it in sound, but not connected with it in meaning, or with only a remote and weak connection." I am quoting from Professor Nordau's *Degeneration*. It is an axiom with all psychologists that if the normal mind is occupied with an idea which it clearly discerns and desires to impart, it will infallibly find the means of imparting that idea in definite language. If the idea is not definite, if the will of the writer or speaker is not resolute to impart the idea, if his control of his mental processes lies not within himself, but lies subject to casual circumstances, then the expression that flows from him will betray its desultory character by departures from the fixed highway of thought in favor of every inviting shadowy by-path.

THE STORY OF A STYLE

The same behavior will characterize the writer or speaker who is beset by doubts. He will find welcome relief from the necessity of explicit speech in trailing sounds, instead of pursuing thought. In the case of chronic, constitutional psychic schism, whose victim's mind is a house divided against itself, the constant pressure of contending emotions will early teach it that trick and confirm it in the comfortable habit of its practice. If it be asked why the schizophrenic does not abstain from speech, the answer is that he above all others is likely to feel the necessity of it, seeking to resolve his complexes, or to prove to himself that he has none.

At this point, it would be in order to investigate Mr. Wilson's heliotropism towards certain sounds. That his writings and especially his speeches show special tympanic sensitiveness to the charm of four or five elements of our speech, I am convinced. The subject, however, is difficult, and what investigation I have been able to give it has not afforded results that would be generally convincing. At this time I do no more than throw out the suggestion that a little attention will discover what seems to be a special affection for the sounds represented by *p*, *v* and *s*.

“ . . . conduct our operations without passion, and our-

PHONETIC PHENOMENA

selves *p*reserve with *p*roud *p*unctilio the *p*inciples of fair
*p*lay we *p*rogress . . .”

Washington, April 2, 1917.

“It would be an unprecedented operation reversing the
process of Runnymede; but America has before this shown
the world enlightened process of politics that were without
precedent.”

Constitutional Government, 53.

“ . . . part of the familiar process of popular government.
We have learned that pent-up feelings are dangerous; whis-
pered purposes that are revolutionary; that covert follies war
and poison.”

There exist tables purporting to show how frequently the several letters and sounds of the language recur in the average normal speech. Every one knows that *e* is the letter most frequently employed. The lexicographers profess to be able to say what percentage each element of our utterance contributes to English speech. If I mistrust these statistics, and refrain from citing them, it is not because they militate against my suspicions of the importance of Mr. Wilson's addictions. Quite otherwise; I am suspicious, rather, of the statement that the *p* sound constitutes two per cent. when I find that analysis of ten pages, turned to at random, in Mr. Wilson's books shows that it occurs three times too often. “Proud punctilio,” “petty passion,” “plain purpose,” “principle and purpose,”

THE STORY OF A STYLE

“process and purpose,” “processes and peace,” fairly haunt these pages. Why should any one talk of “the processes by which men purchase place,” except for sensuous gratification in the alliteration?

Other chapters have noticed cases of phonetic elaboration based on the sound *v*. “The vitality of a various people” (*Congressional Government*, 129) is another fair sample of vibrant phrases with the merest ghost of possible meaning. That the *s* sound should very often occur may not be so remarkable, seeing that this sibilant is a sort of hydrogen among the elements of language, uniting readily with more other sounds than does any other consonant. Nevertheless, there may be ground for suspicion in many passages of which the following is an example:

“. . . struggling step by step up the slow stages to the day when he shall live in the light which shines upon the uplands, where all the light that illumines mankind shines straight from the face of God.”

Washington, Oct. 24th., 1914.

Another field of investigation which promises to be fruitful, but which we must pass with a mere reference to its existence, is offered by the extremely frequent allusion to the pulses and the tides.

PHONETIC PHENOMENA

“When the tide is rising to meet the moon, you need not be afraid that it will not come to its flood. We feel the tide. We rejoice in the strength of it.”

“. . . those of us who have felt the beat of its pulse.”

Mr. Wilson's published writings show many hundred allusions of this kind to recurrent impulses. Whether these are significant, and if so, of what they are significant, I shall not here pause to investigate. I fancy, however, there is not lacking a connection between this constantly confessed interest in the rhythmic throbs of nature and their imitation in the acousmatic pulsations which very shortly we shall be studying.

There can be no question that Mr. Wilson, having once uttered a favorite word, is tempted to repeat it. It cannot long escape the notice of an attentive reader of any writing, or listener to any speech, of his, that the verbal addictions tend to constellate. If we get “visions” once, we are pretty certain to get it several times; “aspect” will be used for the first time in a book, and then will be well worked for three or four pages; “interpret” will bob up suddenly, and show itself half a dozen times. “Great” will run along for a page or two. And so on. I have memoranda showing many instances in which when “visions” disappeared, “voices” took their

THE STORY OF A STYLE

place; and in which "great" ran off into "grave"; one set of notes in which "sheer," which had not before in the volume appeared, was used four times, and was shortly followed by as many employments of "sturdy." "Common counsel" generally gathers to itself the companionship of "concert," "coöperate" or "compound." Running rapidly through *Congressional Government* for illustrations of "counsel," my attention was struck by the fact that one page which contained "light of counsel," "matter of counsel," "matters of counsel," and "men of counsel," also exhibited "intimate use of his colleagues," "intimate daily consultations," and "intimate and peculiar sense." Closely following pages gave:

intimate consciousness,
intimate coöperation,
intimate and cordial coöperation,
intimate and confidential,
intimate relationship of confidence,
intimate contact,
intimate understanding,
intimate consultation,
intimate influence,
intimate access,
intimate contact,
intimate access,
intimate consultation,

PHONETIC PHENOMENA

intimate relationship of confidence,
intimate understanding,
intimate influence,

and then came a page and a half which presented this:

intimate and domestic process,
intimate and detailed process,
intimate measures,
our processes,
own processes,
real processes.

It would justly be deemed fanciful to attach significance to what might be a few coincidences like these, but when they occur by the thousand and in every work, it is necessary to ask their reason. It ought, by now, to be unnecessary to say that a phenomenon so pronounced is indicative of laziness, fatigue or restrained cerebration. There is something going on besides free thinking.

A step lower than servility to that fascination of sounds which suggests unreasoning alliteration or rhyme, is addiction to the *unaltered* repetition of a combination of sounds. It requires more intellectualization to pun than it does merely to repeat a word.

THE STORY OF A STYLE

When phonetic intoxication reaches the point where it can only repeat the word, it passes into the stage of intellectual feebleness known among alienists as "echolalia." The symptoms of this disorder are familiar to psychiatry, and it may be said that some of our most famous literary idols are among the patients whom it has afflicted. Others deliberately adopt the practice, in the knowledge that it is popularly effective.

There is of course ample justification for the occasional resort to verbal repetition. It is occasionally recommended by reason, it is more often justified by controlled emotion. Especially in poetry is the refrain, or repetend, often extraordinarily effective in perfectly reasonable and proper ways. Its legitimacy in prose becomes a question largely of the frequency of its use. For not only does the presumption lie against the necessity, or even the possible justification, of its too frequent use, but it has the suspicious qualities of a mechanical, automatic and unrational habit, betraying brain fatigue or degeneration. Employment of the refrain cannot be regarded as pathologic unless its frequency reveals it as an addiction; it will be safely recognizable as a true mania, indeed, only when the addiction is extravagant, amounting to an obsession.

Nevertheless, that some taint of irrationality al-

PHONETIC PHENOMENA

ways attaches to the refrain is confessed in the following paragraph from the pen of its best known poetic master, Edgar Allan Poe:

“ In carefully thinking over all the usual artistic effects — or more properly points, in the theatrical sense — I did not fail to perceive immediately that none had been so universally employed as that of the *refrain*. The universality of its employment sufficed to assure me of its intrinsic value and spared me the necessity of submitting it to analysis. I considered it, however, with regard to its susceptibility of improvement, and soon saw it to be in a primitive condition. As commonly used, the refrain . . . depends for its impression upon the force of monotone, both in sound and thought. The pleasure is deduced solely from the sense of identity, of repetition. . . . I determined to produce novel effects . . . The next desideratum was a pretext . . . I did not fail to perceive that the *difficulty lay in the reconciliation of this monotony with the exercise of reason on the part of the creature repeating the word.*”

The above extract is a poet's profession of his confidence in the psychologic power of the repetend; also of the difficulties which he encountered in endeavoring to make the repetend reasonable. Poe solved the difficulty by putting the refrain into the mouth of an unreasoning creature. It was a raven who persisted in saying, “Never, nevermore.”

Tennyson loved the repetend, but he had the sound sense to justify it by connecting it with in-

THE STORY OF A STYLE

animate and unreasoning objects: the wind, the tide, the bugle.

Sweet and low, sweet and low,
Wind of the western sea,
Blow, blow, breathe and blow,
Blow him again to me.

Break, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, Oh, Sea!

Blow, bugle, blow, Set the wild echoes flying;
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, Dying, dying, dying.

Shakespeare was fond of the refrain, but he took care to put it into the mouths of clowns and idiots.

It is the impish Ariel who sings:

Come unto these yellow sands
And then take hands;
Court'sied when you have, and kiss'd
(The wild waves whist)
Foot it featly here and there;
And, sweet sprites, the burden bear.
Hark, hark!
Bowgh, wowgh,
The watch-dogs bark:
Bowgh, wowgh.
Hark, hark, I hear
The strains of strutting chanticleer,
Cry, Cock-a-doodle doo.

PHONETIC PHENOMENA

It is into the mouths of weird sisters dancing around the devil's pot that Shakespeare puts the dolorous refrain:

Double, double, toil and trouble;
Fire burn, and caldron, bubble.

They are grave-digging clowns, in *Hamlet*, who howl:

A pick-axe, and a spade, a spade,
For and a shrouding sheet:
O a pit of clay for to be made
For such a guest is meet.

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O a pit of clad for to be made
For such a guest is meet.

But reasoning creatures, in Shakespeare's representation of them, do not, ordinarily, intone refrains — unless it may be deliberately, like King Henry VI imitating a stupid shepherd:

O God! methinks it were a happy life,
To be no better than a homely swain;
To sit upon a hill as I do now,
To carve out dials quaintly, point by point.
Thereby to see the minutes how they run: —
How many make the hour full complete;
How many hours bring about the day,
How many days will finish up the year;

THE STORY OF A STYLE

How many years a mortal man may live.
When this is known, then divide the times, —
So many hours must I tend my flock ;
So many hours must I take my rest ;
So many hours must I contemplate ;
So many hours must I sport myself,
So many days my ewes have been with young ;
So many weeks ere the poor fools will yean ;
So many years ere I shall shear the fleece,

But this is intention. The refrain is consciously employed as representing the sullen waves that listlessly move in the dull mind of the hind. Shakespeare's most easily recognizable comic characters talk like this:

Shallow: It is well said, in faith, sir; and it is well said indeed too. It is good; yea, indeed, is it: good phrases are surely, and ever were, very commendable, very good; a good phrase.

Bardolph: Pardon me, sir; I have heard the word. Phrase call you it? by this good day, I know not the phrase; but I will maintain the word with my sword to be a soldier-like word, and a word of exceeding good command, by heaven. Accommodated; that is, when a man is, being, whereby a' may be thought to be accommodated; which is an excellent thing.

PHONETIC PHENOMENA

Shal: Barren, barren, barren; beggars all, beggars all,
Sir John: marry, good sir. Spread, Davy;
spread, Davy; well said, Davy. . . .

A good varlet, a good varlet, a very good varlet,
Sir John: by the mass, I have drunk too much
sack at supper: a good varlet. Now sit down,
now sit down.

The English poet selected by Nordau as a type of the degenerate is Rossetti, and the chief stigma of his degeneracy is his predilection to the unjustifiable refrain: Nordau's analysis condemns as pathological even the youthful lines of William Morris whose music has haunted my memory for many a year:

Gold on her head and gold on her feet,
And gold where the hems of her kirtle meet,
And a golden girdle around my sweet.

'Tis good to think of her sitting there
In glory of gold and glory of hair,
And glory of glorious face most fair.

Poe, though born in Boston, is accounted a Virginian. His contribution to American letters was perhaps principally his demonstration of the hypnotic power of the refrain. Nothing could surpass the emotional effect of *The Bells* or of the raven's "Nevermore!" Poe did not by any means always

THE STORY OF A STYLE

put his refrains into the mouths of bells and birds. Often they are frankly expressive of madness, actual or impending, as in *The Haunted Palace* and *The Conquering Worm*.

It is in a poem depicting the summit of madness — the madness of a lover who fancies himself dead — that Poe most daringly employs the refrain:

And oh! let it never be foolishly said
That my room it is gloomy, and narrow my bed;
For man never slept in a different bed,
And, to sleep, you must slumber in just such a bed.

And I lie so composedly now in my bed
(Knowing her love) that you fancy me dead;
And I rest so contentedly now in my bed
(With her love at my heart) that you fancy me dead;
That you shudder to look at me, thinking me dead.

But how slender the contribution of the Virginian Poe to the literature of refrain compared with the contribution made to it by another Virginian. I pick up the official report of the address made by Mr. Wilson in Boston, February 25th, 1919.

✓ “ I have seen earnestness, I have seen tears come to the eyes of men . . . but they were not the tears of anguish — they were the tears of ardent hope.

“ Was there ever so wonderful a thing seen before? Was

PHONETIC PHENOMENA

there ever so moving a thing? Was there ever any fact . . .”

The next paragraph:

“ They remember territory that was coveted; they remember rights that it was attempted to extort; they remember political ambitions which it was attempted to realize . . .”

A little further along:

“ Think of the picture, think of the utter blackness that would fall on the world. America has failed! America made a little essay at generosity and then withdrew. America said: ‘ We are your friends,’ but it was only for today, not for to-morrow. America said: ‘ Here is our power to vindicate right,’ and then the next day said: ‘ Let right take care of itself and we will take care of ourselves.’ America said: ‘ We set up a light to lead men . . . we set up a great ideal . . . do you realize . . . do you believe . . . do you believe. . . .’ ”

The next paragraph but one:

“ It (the burden of the war) did not fall upon the national treasuries; it did not fall upon the instruments of administration; it did not fall upon the resources of the nations.”

The next paragraph but one:

“ There is a great deal of harmony to be got out of common knowledge. There is a great deal of sympathy to be got out of living in the same atmosphere.”

THE STORY OF A STYLE

And then soon follows:

“The Europe that I left the other day was full of something that it had never felt fill its heart so full before. It was full of hope. The Europe of the second year of the war, the Europe of the third year of the war, was sinking to a sort of stubborn desperation. They (he means ‘it’) did not see any great thing to be achieved even when the war should be won. They hoped there would be some salvage; they hoped they could clear their territories of invading armies; they hoped they could set up their homes and start their industries afresh. But they thought it would simply be the resumption of the old life that Europe had led — led in fear, led in anxiety, led in constant suspicious watchfulness.”

The words quoted above are not selected; they are reproduced accurately from what must have been one of the most carefully considered speeches of Mr. Wilson’s career, though, in fact, this happened to be the speech delivered on the day when these pages were written.

Is this cool reason, marshaled by a collected mind; or is it, let us say, mental fatigue, exhausting itself in monotonous reiteration? Would it have been seriously listened to except by the swaying masses of a vast audience, emotionalized by a great occasion, persuaded by the unchallenged prestige of the speaker, and hypnotized by the soothing wash of words?

PHONETIC PHENOMENA

“I did not fail to perceive,” said the southern poet, “that the difficulty lay in the reconciliation of this monotony with the exercise of reason on the part of the creature repeating the word.” The desideratum was a pretext. Poe found his pretext in a parrot; he might have found it in a President.

Turn to any speech, state paper, lecture or book ever composed by Mr. Wilson, and you may depend upon it with absolute certainty that you will find him talking like this: “We are here . . . we are here . . . we are here.” “I remember . . . I remember . . .” “It is not. . . . It is not. . . . It is not. . . .” “The thing they did was to. . . . The thing they did was to . . . The thing they did was to . . .” “America asks. . . . America asks. . . .” “A message of . . . a message of . . .” “Think of the . . . think of the . . . think of the. . . .” “Never before has . . . never before has. . . .”

“America has a heart and that heart throbs with all sorts of intense sympathies, but America has schooled its heart to love things that America believes in and it ought to devote itself only to what America believes in; and believing that America stands apart in its ideals, it ought not to allow itself to be drawn, as far as its heart is concerned, into anybody’s quarrel. Is it America first or is it not?”

“We remind you what America said she was born for. She said she was born to show mankind the way to liberty.

THE STORY OF A STYLE

She was born to make this great gift a common gift. She was born to show men . . .”

“ It has witnessed a great history, has floated on high the symbol of great events, of a great plan of life worked out by great people.”

“ These are days of very great perplexities, when a great crowd of trouble hangs and broods over the greater part of the world. It seems as if great material forces were . . .”

“ Not a hundred years of peace could have knitted this nation together as this single year of war has knitted it together; and it is knitting the world together.”

“ It is a problem which must be studied, studied immediately, studied without bias.”

“ It means much more than the mere success of a party. The success of a party means little except when the nation is using that party for a large and definite purpose. The nation now seeks to use the Democratic party. It seeks to use the Democratic party because . . .”

“ Men’s hearts wait upon us; men’s lives hang in the balance; men’s hopes call upon us.”

“ A message of genuine comradeship, a message of genuine sympathy, and I have no doubt that if our British comrades were here they would speak in the same spirit and the same language. For the beauty of this war is that it has brought a new partnership and a new comradeship and a new understanding.”

“ We ought not to permit that sort of thing to use up the electric energy of the wires because its energy is malign, its energy is not of the truth, its energy is of mischief. The great heart of the American people is just as sound and true

PHONETIC PHENOMENA

as it ever was. And it is a single heart; it is the heart of America. It is not a heart, etc., etc.”

“If I did not believe that, I would (should) not believe in democracy. If I did not believe that, I would not believe that people can govern themselves. If I did not believe that the moral judgment would be the last judgment, the final judgment, I could not believe in popular government. But I do believe these things, and therefore I earnestly believe in democracy.”

“Lawyers like charted seas, and if they have no charts, hardly venture upon the voyage. Now we must venture upon uncharted seas to some extent in the future. In the League of Nations, we are starting out on uncharted seas.”

“You have made me deeply happy by the generous welcome extended to me. But I do not believe that the welcome you have extended to me is half as great as that which I extend to you. . . . There have been many things that softened my homesickness. One of the chief things that softened it was the very generous welcome that they extended to me, and it was still more softened by the pride, . . . When I got there I saw that army of men, that army of clean men, that army of men devoted to the highest interests of humanity, that army one was glad to point out. . . . They did not walk the streets like anybody else. I do not mean that they walked the streets self-assertively. They walked the streets as if they knew that . . . But while these things softened my homesickness, they made me all the more eager to get home where the rest of the folks live; to get home where the great dynamo of national energy was situated; to get home where the great purposes of national action were formed.

THE STORY OF A STYLE

. . . Those peoples of Europe have had yokes thrown off them. Have you reckoned up in your mind how many peoples, how many nations, were held unwillingly under the yoke of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, under the yoke of Turkey, under the yoke of Germany? The yokes have been thrown off . . .”

“ It is a great privilege if we can do that kind of thinking for mankind, human thinking, thinking made up of comprehension of the needs of mankind. And when I think of mankind, I think of the very simple men that make up mankind. Most specimens of mankind are not well-dressed. The heart of the world is under very plain jackets. The heart of the world is at very simple firesides. The heart of the world is in very humble circumstances, and unless you know the pressure of life of the humbler class you know nothing of life. Unless you know where the pinch comes you do not know what the (person, pinch, p —) what the pulse has to stand, you do not know what (stand, st —) strain the muscle has to bear, you do not know what trial the nerves have to go through to hold on. To hold on when there is no glee in life. Those of us who can sit at leisure and think of the past, the long past and project the future, the long future, we are not specimens of mankind. The specimens of mankind have not time to do that.”

This may not be profoundly logical, but consider how beautifully tautological!

“ Women have seen visions of duty, and that is something which we not only cannot resist, but which we Americans do

PHONETIC PHENOMENA

not wish to resist. America took its origin in visions of the human spirit and as visions, etc., etc.”

“. . . be from age to age rekindled. For these hopes must constantly be rekindled, and only those who live can rekindle them. The only stuff that can retain the life-giving heat is the stuff of living hearts.”

And what does that mean? What is the “stuff” of living hearts,—is it wool, cotton? How does that “stuff” retain heat, and how is that heat life-giving? Is this rational thought?

“. . . a new spirit of which the world has never seen; not the spirit of those who would exclude others, but the spirit of those who would excel others.”

Is this rhythmic regurgitation, this ponderous rag-time, a produce of the mind?

not { the spirit of those who would ex {clude } others?
but { cel }

Here is another:

“Valor is self-respecting; valor is circumspect.”

Is it not pretty clear how this sentence came into being? The speaker uttered the word “valor.” When Mr. Wilson is in doubt, he often falls back on words beginning with the *v* sound. According to habit, he felt valor must be labeled with its attri-

THE STORY OF A STYLE

butes. He had been talking about being self-ashamed. Valor was not that; quite the contrary: valor was "self-respecting." The rest did itself: The echo needed only to be slightly muted to issue as "circumspect." Then, until an idea came, the sibilant carried on — happily *s* is the sound which of all sounds in the English language combines most readily with others. So, with two echoes going, one of a word exactly repeated, the other an extended sound in varying combinations, we can do nicely, thank you, without troubling the mind or the will:

"Valor is self-respecting; valor is circumspect. Valor strikes solely when it is the right to strike. Valor withholds itself from all small implications and entanglements and waits."

What possible rational message is conveyed to the intelligence when this repercussion of sounds assails the ear? When, where, how, in what sense, by what conceivable exercise or stretch of reason, imagination or fancy, does valor withhold itself from all small implications and entanglements, and wait? When was valor specially circumspect and self-respecting? Can it be pretended that this acoustic concatenation represents the progress of a reasoning mind towards any valid result? Is this laziness, or contempt for the audience or — echolalia?

I mean to suggest that the quotation is irrational

PHONETIC PHENOMENA

rubbish, and that it came into existence solely because the intellectual controls of the speaker were temporarily paralyzed, leaving the motor apparatus to function automatically, passing from sound to sound like a drowsy monk nodding as he drones his compline. There is no relevancy in "circumspect" to what goes before it; no relevancy to it in what follows. There is no propriety in the whole sequence except its sibilance; "strikes," "withholds," "entanglements," "implications," "waits," are dying echoes of "self-respecting" and "circumspect." The echoes linger on still for a line or two until the inhibition passes and a real image emerges.

"Valor waits for the great opportunity when the sword shall flash as if it carried the light of Heaven upon its blade."

A scrutiny of Mr. Wilson's writings and speeches obliges us to notice that:

His ideation often appears casual, fugitive — determined, not always by the inner will to hew and pursue a path of logical thought, but by extrinsic and apparently fortuitous circumstances, such as the sound of a chance word calling up another, for the employment of which now some excuse must be invented; such as the imagined necessity for the continual exploitation of pedantic formulæ or the cling-

THE STORY OF A STYLE

ing to a symbol; such as a sudden recollection which invites entertainment, a sudden caprice of the mood which asks indulgence. Over and over are we compelled to witness the absence of control of the currents of rational thought; over and over called upon to observe the relaxation of the attention or the will of the writer, whose nodding indifference or perplexed despair permits casual associations to direct the procession of what we cannot call his thought. The ensuing idea springs, too often, not out of an ordered march of cerebration, but out of the sound, or out of some semi-relevant connotation, some collateral association, some oblique glance, of a word. Why is this? What is the secret of this impairment of the will?

A well-known illustration of rambling thought is that immortal one put by Mark Twain into the lips of an intoxicated story-teller attempting to narrate an accident which befell his grandfather's ram. The toxins of fatigue, sporadic and temporary, or constitutional, have somewhat the same effect. Ideas succeed each other evoked as often phonetically as rationally. The will to persevere in a given path flickers and is inconstant. There is small pertinacity of attention. There is no faithful persistence in selecting for response from among the many impressions constantly assailing the brain-cortex that one which reason requires. There is lacking the

PHONETIC PHENOMENA

stern discipline of attention which refuses to be beguiled by sonorous associations or beckoning images from the idea to which the advance of the thought has now led.

Precisely similar is the ideation of the dreamer — as all know and can testify. Rambling and confused images, thoughts, desires and fears crowd one on another. They are not marshaled into order by a controlling will. That is the secret of dreams — the will is paralyzed. How? By what? By contending impulses. Sleep diminishes the vigilance of the accustomed repressive watch we keep on our unconscious urges. Primitive instincts, “forgotten” unadmitted wishes, assert themselves as they dare not in daytime. In the emotional contest, the power of determination is unseated; the sequence of ideas ceases to take its orders from reason, ceases to report to reason. No doubt there is an explanation for every dream and every feature of a dream, however apparently casual — just as there is no doubt an explanation, if we had the time and the skill to find it, for every echolalic fortuity. Nothing is causeless, but the cause of many things is not to be found in orderly processes of an undisturbed mind.

Sounds, by the way, play a very important part in dreams. Very slight noises are instantly seized upon in sleep, and interpreted in some strange connection with the subject which agitates the confused

THE STORY OF A STYLE

brain of the sleeper. Just as sounds are readily accepted by the wide-awake tonal addict in any one of a wide range of meanings that happens to be floating in his brain. The rumble of a milk-wagon may have as many and as plausible possibilities of significance to a dreamer as the word "process" has for Mr. Wilson. The following sentence, taken from Nordau's *Degeneration*, was written to describe the sound-symbolist; but it might precisely as well have had the dreamer as its subject: "A mystic persuades himself that the nebulous ideas which a sound awakens in his brain are the meaning of that sound. But any one who demands of words that they should be the media of definite thought will perceive that the author was not thinking distinctly of anything, although he was dreaming of many things."

The phenomenon of echolalia is one which is perfectly familiar to psychiatrists. Illustrations of it from Mr. Wilson's writings might be multiplied a thousand fold. They reveal a phase of the author's character and mentality, the psychic and mental significance of which it is impossible to ignore. Naturally, the alienists and psychoanalysts, being professionally in quest of degeneracy, are prone to magnify the seriousness of a symptom which is

PHONETIC PHENOMENA

quite capable of a more sympathetic explanation. Complacency, languor, fatigue, may often account for even extravagant addiction to the refrain. It is really not necessary to look upon it as in the ordinary sense pathological. But it *is* necessary to confess that wherever the seat of this addiction, it is not in reason.

VI

DOUBT AND THE FLIGHT FROM THE FACT

INTERROGATION, as a literary device, has a singular fascination for Mr. Wilson. It is difficult — I find it impossible — to recall a writer who asks and answers so many questions:

“Do you not know . . .?”

“Are we not obliged to say . . .?”

“What does this mean but that . . .?”

“May I not express . . .?”

“Have you heard what started the present war? If you have, I wish you would publish it, because nobody else has, so far as I can gather.” (Cincinnati, October 26, 1916.)

“Is it worth while to stop to think of party advantage? Is it worth while stopping to think of how we voted in the past?”

“Have you reckoned up in your mind how many . . .?”

“Where did the lines of that map lie?”

“And now what happened?”

“Are the United States a community?”

“Does not every American feel that . . .?”

“Dare we reject it and break the heart of the world?”

THE FLIGHT FROM THE FACT

“ And have you not noticed that . . . ? ”

“ What is the object of this association? ”

“ . . . Do you not know that these things are true? And do you not believe with me that the affairs of the Nation can be better conducted upon the basis of general counsel than upon the basis of special counsel? ”

“ What shall a man give in exchange for his soul? Will he sell that? Will he consent to see another man sell his soul? Will he consent to see the conditions of his community such that men’s souls are debauched and trodden under foot in the mire? What shall he give in exchange for his soul, or for any other man’s soul? ”

“ Are the forces that fight for the nation dispersed? Are our forces disorganized? Are we content to lie still? ”

“ Whom do I command? The ghostly forces who fought upon these battlefields? These gallant gentlemen stricken in years . . . ? What are the orders and who rallies them? ”

“ How shall we hold such thoughts in our hearts and not be moved? ”

“ How many of you have devoted yourself to the like adventure? How many of you will volunteer . . . ? How many of you will forego . . . ? Do you covet honor? You will never get it by serving yourself. Do you court distinction? You will get it only . . . ”

“ Do you not see what is going to happen? Do you realize that New York . . . ? Do you realize that a line down . . . ? ”

This life-long habit can hardly be dismissed as merely a rhetorical formula. Like every other habit,

THE STORY OF A STYLE

it has a reason and a meaning. If it is a formula, it is one which has been adopted and is followed either deliberately or unconsciously and, in either case, because some taste, some feature of mental constitution, recommends it.

The practice of raising and answering questions, as Mr. Wilson follows it, may be described as a simulation of combat. If the queries were propounded to an adversary, and he were challenged to answer them, the combat would be real. Or if the replies were replies to questions propounded *by* an adversary. But here the questioner and the triumphant resolver of questions are one. The opponent is a straw-man. His challenges are made solely and only in order that they may be triumphantly answered. The debate is fictitious; the combat is a sham-battle. Usually the answer is implied in the question. "Do you not know?" Of course you do. "What were we told?" Why, of course we were told what you are about to repeat.

As a rhetorical device, the question-and-answer formula serves to stimulate interest in the audience (if not used so often as to become tiresome); it at the same time generates a glow in the breast of the speaker, as he assumes the posture of a gladiator,

THE FLIGHT FROM THE FACT

and enters by fancy, and in the Thespian sense, into a little of his spirit. Furthermore, it gives the orator time; it allows him to stretch out his statements and repeat them; thus it is suspicious as an evidence of fatigue, or indolence,— which latter also it encourages. It is a lazy habit, certainly, whatever else may be said of it, just as is the confirmed employment of the refrain. Indeed the question-and-answer habit is a modified form of the echolalic addiction. That is perfectly evident, without argument. Its significance, in this aspect, has been sufficiently studied under the clearer declarative illustrations of the repetend addiction in which our author's work is phenomenal:

I am disposed, however, to see something more in this constant recurrence of the question-and-answer device.

It would not be violent to assume that the confirmed public habit corresponds to an inner private tendency — that, namely, to alternations between a positive and a doubting attitude — between the assertive impulse and the faint-hearted mood. The existence and struggle in Mr. Wilson's psychical life of these contradictory pulses we have already, by other marks, been led to suspect. It would be un-

THE STORY OF A STYLE

natural for a man whose inner consciousness entertains no questions, to be forever proposing questions, whenever he speaks or writes.

We should not, probably, expect anybody except a philosopher to exhibit and debate in public the particular questions which were troubling him. Especially if he had to maintain a public character as an executive; more especially, if he were sensitive on the point of a lack of conviction. Experience teaches that men take pains to conceal their most painful doubts — even from themselves. It is much pleasanter to debate, even with ourselves, subjects on which our opinions are fixed without possibility of change. The degree of our irresolution on a given question may almost be said to be indexed by the ingenuity with which we refuse to debate it, and the fervor of our protestations of resolution concerning it.

Of course we do not get in Mr. Wilson's questions and answers any account of his real struggles. He is not a Socrates, a Hamlet or an Amiel, whom we overhear thinking. At the utmost he allows himself to utter aloud any serious misgivings only in order to confirm himself in some conclusion by publicly committing himself to it.

No, not the particular subjects of doubt will be revealed; but may not the habit of doubt be revealed by an addiction so pronounced as Mr. Wilson's to

THE FLIGHT FROM THE FACT

the mimic fray of words? May not the unreal verbal contest with himself, from which the victor emerges in easy and smiling victory over himself, represent and cover something very much more real and tragic in his secret inner life?

Would it be strange if our studies led us to suspect that Mr. Wilson's is really a character of a peculiar instability of judgment and weakness of will? — that of a man torn by conflicting emotions, shaken by doubts of himself and his every thought and act, haunted by a never-to-be extinguished apprehension of his own inferiority?

On that very account, and for that very reason, just because he secretly knew himself to be a man of irresolution, would he never suffer himself to betray the fact. It may be taken that he would guard the secret — even from himself, too, of course — with the most elaborate, jealous and never-slumbering vigilance. It may be taken indeed that just because he were actually of vacillating opinion and courage would he constantly force himself to play the part of unwavering resolution — to overplay it — with loud reiteration of his conclusions and his will, with denunciation of those who might suggest to him what he knew were already his own doubts, or recommend an opposite course which he subcon-

THE STORY OF A STYLE

sciously knew he would rather be pursuing. There would be heard in his words never a single confession of wavering doubt; but there might well be audible (what no art or sleepless vigilance could hush) in the incorrigible recurrence of trivial or contentless questions, a dream-like echo of the perplexed surges that beat in the distraught soul which is the essence and the tragedy of his story.

In such a suspicion, suggested now again by our studies, we do no violence to our common knowledge of human nature, of ourselves if we are at all sincere with ourselves, and especially of those characters among us which exhibit certain common traits in so enlarged a degree that we are tempted to call them abnormal. It is a well-known fact that man has a tendency to claim, and to claim most loudly, possession of the very qualities which he secretly knows himself to lack. And the claim is made no less for his own ear than for the world's.

A good deal of the entertainment of life has its root in this human disposition. Literature pictures many Tartarins and Zaglobas; life shows more. So notorious is this fact that it is quite commonly, and properly, regarded as suspicious to find a man boasting. It is assumed that a defect is exhibiting the phenomenon of protective coloration.

THE FLIGHT FROM THE FACT

Boasting need not take the naïve and vulgar form of loud assertion. It may express itself by subtler means — by delicate suggestions, far stronger than outright protestations; by modest self-depreciation too great to be taken at its face. Or it may proclaim itself, not by words at all, but by deeds — deeds done in defiance of desire. Many a man has committed violence just to prove (to himself, also) that he was not (what he knew he was) a coward. Many a man has been forced to live a long life opposed to his strongest instincts and never-slumbering impulses, forced by the ironical necessity (imposed not less by self-love than by social pressure) of contradicting them beyond open question.

If we remember this truth when we review the words and acts of Woodrow Wilson, it will serve to remind us that his character it not to be assessed immediately in the light of the unquestionable fact that he is a man of positive words always, of bold deeds often, of stubborn and arrogant bearing by habit.

All this may easily be defensive.

The degree to which he practices inaccessibility, for instance, is so extreme that it is just ground for

THE STORY OF A STYLE

conjecture: May not this be an effect of a sense of inferiority, rather than of superiority?

The author of *Woodrow Wilson: The Story of His Life* tells how his hero loves to pull an old hat over his eyes, turn up his collar and plunge into the current of the crowds in city streets. There is nothing distasteful to him in the silent touch of the people; it is the exchange of communications with his equals that he dreads. The biography declares that it is his passion, "his fondest habit — the stealing off to move unknown among throngs, and to drink in, in silence, the sense of human strivings, to look into the faces of multitudes and listen to their voices, one to another." *One to another.*

The biography declares that it

"has not hinted at his shyness, that love of retirement, inherited with the strain of his mother's blood, which had to be overcome, with agonizing, before he could commit himself to the path of public life, and which still makes the knocking at a strange door or the reception of a new caller a real, though never a perceptible, effort."

The biographer's notes here refer to a number of instances of shyness narrated to him by Mr. Wilson: one was concerning a call which he failed to make on a somewhat distinguished scholar, when on a visit abroad. The President of Princeton University (as he was then) carried a letter of intro-

THE FLIGHT FROM THE FACT

duction to the foreign savant and went to his house to present it. Mr. Wilson's courage failed and he passed and repassed the house several times, and finally paused before it, but with trepidation so great that he could not ring the bell; the call was never made. It was not an exceptional case. "This," Mr. Wilson is quoted as saying, reflectively, "is why I know so few people I should like to have known."

Is it possible that it is because he dreads the clash, even the friendly exchange, of ideas with others, that he pretends to dispute with — himself? That it is because he shrinks from real contest, that he satisfies his sense of prowess, according to the psychic law of compensation, by engaging in mock tournaments? I find nothing in my own personal knowledge of Mr. Wilson in conflict with this hypothesis.

Nor would such a conclusion, should these purely literary investigations recommend it, be incompatible with the facts of Mr. Wilson's public career. The President's public acts are familiar at least in broad outline, and general knowledge is competent to judge whether the suspicion of irresolution and doubt of himself is incapable of reconciliation with his behavior. There could of course be no pretense that his is a record of palpable cowardice; quite the reverse; the record is, on the whole, one of such audacity, and so monumental a self-assertion, that it

THE STORY OF A STYLE

may fairly be said to lend possibility, if it does not go to prove, the existence of repressed impulses of the opposite nature. Men are not likely to be needlessly stubborn unless they subconsciously feel their weakness; it is not those serenely confident of their own powers who isolate themselves in stately loneliness; he only need fling defiance into the face of the whole world who is struggling with a mortal fear the content of which is knowledge of his inferiority.

There exist in the soul of every individual, impulses opposed to those which dominate his life. They are survivals, many of them, of emotions characteristic of the primitive, savage, infantile stage of human existence. In the light of the latter-day illumination (such as it is), some of them seem horrid, some contemptible, and all inhuman. We put them aside; we refuse to admit that they are possible. In curious ways, indeed, they often work their revenge, but in the large picture of reasoned and ordered social existence they are allowed no acknowledged part.

Take the elementary article of the attitude of a human soul to the world of hard fact in which it awakens, in which it must struggle for existence and for reason, by adapting itself to its environment while retaining what it can of the pride of individual

THE FLIGHT FROM THE FACT

identity and satisfying so far as it can the instincts which command it to fulfill its yearnings. From the dawn of his consciousness, man has found himself confronted by nature and by the opposing wills of other men. How terrible must have been the tortures of the soul of the primitive savage, mad with hunger, panting with lust, raging with desire to slay, yet faced at every turn by enemies of his own kind and by the invisible enemies of nature, stern, cruel and mysterious! His desires he must satisfy, and his soul must clothe itself in resolute rage. But what terrors, inconceivable by us now, affrighted him; the cunning and strength of living foes (the like of whom, indeed, we have now again learned to know,) but also the fearful threats which an invisible world howled and thundered and flashed in the tempest and more frightfully whispered in dreams, in the mystery of the corpse, in the nodding tree-tops, the echo, the eternal and never-decided battle of day and night, summer and winter. The awful mysteries amidst which he lived scorched the soul of the savage with a capacity for terror-stricken panic which not the ages since in which he has grown into something like reason and the confidence of reason, have cured. It is there, in the heart of man to-day.

The race has, it is true, suppressed most of its specific terrors — except notably that of death,

THE STORY OF A STYLE

which it continues to allay with the superstition of a future life — but it has not conquered the impulse of Doubt. It carries on, bravely on the whole; just as it declines to countenance the other primitive but a-social impulses which have become taboo, so it exalts and generally practices confidence, and refuses to admit Doubt. The excessive and quite unreasonable degree in which we agree in extolling courage, the singular applause we reserve for deeds of bravery, the irrationality with which we decline to condemn rashness — are evidence, of course, of the inextinguishable persistence within us of unacknowledged but dreaded impulses of timidity.

The history of the dreadful process of the adjustment *by the race* of its self-satisfying urges to its fate amidst enemies in an unkind world, is repeated in the *individual* tragedy of every child of man who survives to confront life. Consider the infant emerging with his amazed and angry wail from the kind matrix where, without effort of his, protection, warmth and nourishment have been provided for him, into the world where instantly he faces the necessity of exerting himself to overcome conditions which do not automatically minister to his wants. Among all the later tragedies of life there is probably none greater than those which crowd the path of the infant's adjustment to the realities of mundane existence. The babe is conceived and cradled for

THE FLIGHT FROM THE FACT

months in his secret retreat in unconditioned sovereignty. His dimmest desires are instantly satisfied, even before he has taken the trouble to feel them. He is ushered into the conscious world under the illusion of omnipotence. How cruel the passage into the presence of the realities! Whatever the loving solicitude with which it is endeavored to initiate him into the rigors of life, how frightful the fall from the summit of confidence to the agonized surprise with which he sees his little realm of certainty contract and dissolve! As soon as he begins to suspect the existence of that repressive world in which he is fated to the day of his death to move,

“ There will be doubt, hesitation and pain,
Never glad confident morning again.”

The adult mind naturally retains no recollections of the tragedy of infancy; refuses to retain them; a protective amnesia covers them. But the fear and mistrust, then dreadfully born, are deathless. Next to the prime impulse of self-assertion, forever qualifying it, and forever next to its heart, lying ready to paralyze it, is the instinct of Doubt, twin-child both of racial and individual birth.

The enemy of the soul, its desires and its will

THE STORY OF A STYLE

is — reality. The individual must assert himself, must function, in confidence. But tough facts confront him. Shall they be allowed to daunt him? Shall the will falter, and desire grow cold, and the ghost of possible failure paralyze the facilities? *ml*

That possibility exists in every human heart. Ordinarily a man works out an adjustment between his will and the repressions of reality; achieves, and is content with, a reasonable satisfaction of his desires, and contrives to maintain through life a fairly consistent attitude of tempered confidence.

The doubt is always there, but it exists in a state of repression. It is, in ordinary time, static. A newly learned fact, or a newly admitted idea, may make it dynamic; the dangerous fact or idea must be suppressed; if it be recognized, even to the extent of denying it, it may bring the latent impulse into action against the ordinarily dominant principle which has kept it under and kept it inactive. The struggle is disturbing to reason. Both the motive which is commonly calmly dominant, and the impulse which has been awakened to contumacy, become emotionalized. There is no end or limit to the delusions, inversions, displacements and all manner of wayward curiosities which may be born in the agitated soul. They represent an excited effort to harbor, and somehow — anyhow — to reconcile, contradictory impulses.

THE FLIGHT FROM THE FACT

Conflicts of somewhat this nature are constantly going on in us all.

No description of the everyday life of an average normal psychology but must take account of frequent psychic disturbances. The range of their result is usually slight — or, rather, the usual results are so familiar as to go unnoticed. The disturbances are, too, usually of a passing nature; and equilibrium is soon restored. In other words, the average man maintains on the whole a consistent attitude towards reality; he has forced his ambivalent impulses into a working agreement, and the motives which he has enthroned as dominant remain so, except in a condition of sleep, intoxication or unusual excitement. His deviations from the settled course of thought and action are within narrow bounds and are easily adjusted. The hero will perhaps not always vanquish his fears; the coward and weakling will not invariably play the poltroon. But there will be a distinguishable, indeed an unmistakable, preponderance of impulse, a steady current toward this pole or toward that. The triumph of courage over doubt, of generosity over meanness, or the reverse, will have become a habit; the lurking denial, the inhibited desire, will have been tamed, thrust down, and effaced, so far as its ordinary appearance, or its effectual part, is concerned. It will not be consulted, nor permitted to intrude, as

THE STORY OF A STYLE

the triumphant impulses unfold their nature in the steadfast, calm, and undebated program of deeds. Though the internal conflict will never be utterly quelled; though dim and ever dimmer protests of denied instincts will still continue their subdued clamor, the general ascendancy of one or the other character will be evident.

Unhappy are they who have not achieved that degree of customary control over their unadmitted impulses which alone can fit man to play a confident and consistent part in the human drama.

And especially unhappy, if to play a conspicuous part is their life-ruling ambition. There are indeed natures which, if they do not quite rejoice in their own internal conflicts, at least find some contentment in confessing and observing them, as philosophers; who, the native hue of resolution sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought, retire from life, surrendering the rôle of participant for that of critic. Far more pitiable than the philosophic tragedy of a Hamlet or an Amiel, is that which is likely to be enacted when a soul internally unreconciled is pursued by ambition to prove in high action his possession of the qualities which he secretly knows he lacks.

If such a character were to write, we should expect a long story of irresolutions, cloaked with pro-

THE FLIGHT FROM THE FACT

testations of positiveness, but betrayed by the habit of endless debate — not of the questions actually disturbing, however; a confirmed practice of flight from reality, the substitution of words for facts, with every refinement of reverence for the substituted symbol; pleasure in mimic representations of struggle, betrayals of psychic disturbance in concealed hesitation of speech, vagueness, errors, contradictory tendencies to exaggerate and to qualify, aboulie tendencies, and frequent retreat to the infantile stage of thought.

In his character as spread for the perusal of history, we should expect an endless series of contradictions, which, however, would probably each and all be carried through, with, in each case, the entirely sincere conviction of the semi-personality which at the moment ruled; expect a series of apparent ingratiitudes towards friends, one by one discarded as the settled convictions of their own less disturbed minds failed to vacillate with the trepidations which agitated his own; of implacable enmities born of suspicion of those who were able to continue in opinions unshaken by the doubts which he was constitutionally doomed to experience, enmities which grew the more bitter as they were indulged, even through a secret sense of shame at their indulgence.

There are regions of investigation here which it is impossible to inspect; common knowledge will in

THE STORY OF A STYLE

some degree supply the absence of specifically stated facts. But certain tracts lie open to literary review.

Mr. Wilson is known to be extremely fond of the theater. Many "great men," occupied with large affairs, have found relaxation in viewing the stage or in reading cheap novels.¹ What they obtain is opportunity for a lusory discharge of their emotions without consequences that need be considered, and vicarious satisfaction, without effort, of their desires. The *voyeur* identifies himself with one or another character on the stage, and shares the happiness of his chosen character's virtuous triumph. Theater-goers probably take most interest in acts which they forbid themselves, and commonly applaud sentiments on which, in real life, they do not themselves at all proceed. The play affords a conveniently accessible field in which those whose lives are monotonous may meet adventure and obtain the mental excitement which the necessity of daily toil denies them. When an individual, whose life is already necessarily full of the dramatic, evinces a constant desire to view mimic dramas, it may be taken as indicative of a shrinking from struggle, a desire to flee the arena of perplexing reality for the easier world of phantasy, where he may be sure that

¹ No other public man is known to have set up a moving-picture apparatus in his own house and to attend performances daily.

THE FLIGHT FROM THE FACT

all difficulties have been beforehand happily and plausibly resolved.

The nature of the dramatic representations especially favored by Mr. Wilson in his hours of relaxation would probably be interesting, as pointing to particular repressions of his active life. — But that is beyond the bounds of this little treatise. Indeed this whole excursus is a little afield. I will bring the argument back to its proper ground by referring to the fact that Mr. Wilson's writings abound in allusions to the stage. They are simple and monotonous allusions, consisting almost entirely in metaphors borrowed from the theater; but they are constant and inveterate, betraying in every chapter an unconscious propensity of the mind to retreat into the mimic life.

On the top of a pile of Government Printing Office pamphlets by the side of my desk lies a copy of — let me see — the President's speech in the Senate, July 10, 1919. It will serve. Let us ascertain whether theatrical figures occur in it.

A hurried reading notices these :

“. . . the part it seemed necessary for my colleagues and me to play at the conference. The part was dictated by the rôle America played in the war.”

“. . . the rôle that America was to play in the conference. It was a very responsible rôle to play.”

THE STORY OF A STYLE

"It was thus that a new rôle and a new responsibility has come. The stage is set, the destiny disclosed."

"They have given me too high a rôle to play up to."

From my note books, I transcribe the first dozen or so of instances of figures borrowed from stage-life:

(Lincoln) "emerged upon the great stage, himself the center of the great plot."

"The nation has become aware of its rôle and ambition."

"It is a process which has gone forward with a noble dramatic, even epic, majesty, filling the whole stage of the continent with movement."

"Mr. Cleveland played a leading and decisive part in the quiet drama of our national life."

". . . limited his action in these significant rôles."

"The rôle of party leader is forced upon the President."

"The President has the rôle of party leader thrust upon him."

"One of the most dramatic and interesting scenes in our history . . . is that enacted when Andrew Jackson . . ."

". . . attempts the rôle of statesman as well, but though the rôles be combined . . ."

". . . solemnly taking part in a farce."

"It looked as if they were entrenched in a fortress; it looked as if the embrasures of the fortress showed the muzzles of guns; but, as I told my good fellow-citizens, all they had to do was to press a little upon it and they would find that the fortress was a mere cardboard fabric; that it was a

THE FLIGHT FROM THE FACT

piece of stage property, that just so soon as the audience got ready to look behind the scenes they would learn that the army which had been marching and countermarching in such terrifying array consisted of a single company that had gone in one wing and around and out at the other wing, and could have thus marched in procession for twenty-four hours."

" . . . trod the stage with masterly assurance."

" . . . calmly awaited his cue."

" . . . longed to stretch himself for a little upon the broad English stage."

" . . . international forces across the colonial stage heretofore set only for petty and sectional affairs. The colonies had grown self-conscious and restless as the plot thickened. . . ."

"The plot is written on every scene and every act of the great tragedy."

The principle of Sport is the simulation of battle. While the theater stages a representation of the conflicts of real life for the eye of the beholder, in Sport the satisfaction is initially for the players themselves. They erect obstacles and organize difficulties in a world of pleasant artifice, where the results are of no real importance. The pleasure lies in the discharge of the emotions of enmity, the exercise of predaceous powers, strength and cunning, and the opportunity of demonstrating superiority and win badges of honor — all without the risks

THE STORY OF A STYLE

of actual battle, and all with the added satisfaction of knowing that the effort has no taint of useful purpose.

Whether the game be a contest in athletics or in gambling, or a descent upon the lower animals, imagined as enemies, the element of make-believe is everywhere conspicuous. There is usually a ceremonious costume, assumed under pretense of utility, an accumulation of accoutrement out of rational proportion to the need; a special language is used; mascots, charms and luck-gestures are (perhaps half playfully) universally employed.

Of course, in the case of the mere spectators, the constituent of pretense has absorbed everything else; sitters on the benches imagine themselves participants in the game, and even describe themselves as "sportsmen."

"Making-believe" is an infantile exercise — "child's play," and addiction to it by adults is a symptom of arrested, or diverted, development.

Mr. Wilson remembered to tell his biographer what fun he had had as a boy playing Indian, in feathers, face stained with poke-berries, terrifying little darkies with tomahawk and war-whoop. Every child has done the like. The biography of not every one, however, would contain three pages about a game like this:

THE FLIGHT FROM THE FACT

“Tom (then fifteen) appears to have retreated here into the more exciting scenes of an imaginative life. He forsook in mind the streets of the commonplace town and the dreary banks of the Congaree, and adventured forth in search of exploits in far-off lands. All boys do something of the sort, but there can be no doubt that, in the case of this young dreamer, the exercise of imagination was constant and vivid and that during a great part of his days he lived, so far as his mind was concerned, in one or another of the various characters which he had invented and assumed. Thus for many months he was an Admiral of the Navy, and in that character wrote out daily reports to the Navy Department.”

The biography summarizes the “reports,” declares that their realism reminds one of Defoe, and remarks upon the “length of time — several months — during which the boy lived the greater part of his waking hours in the character which he had invented.”

Mr. Wilson describes himself as having always been a lover of sport. He probably never killed an animal, even a squirrel or a fowl, for his pity is sincere and his aversion to suffering deep. His name does not appear on any college team; but one year at Princeton he was president of the Baseball Association, and another year, of the Athletic Committee. While a professor at Wesleyan University, he was a member of the Athletic Committee, “and

THE STORY OF A STYLE

took the keenest interest in college sports. One student of the time remembers how incensed he became at the limited ambition of the Wesleyan boys who, when they played against Yale, were satisfied only to keep the score down. 'That's no ambition at all,' he used to cry. 'Go in and win; you can lick Yale as well as any other team. Go after their scalps. Don't admit for a moment that they can beat you.' "

His writings exhibit constant allusions to sporting life, but these are even less numerous in their variety than are his references to the theater.

I avail myself merely of notes taken during a reading of *George Washington*. The book is full of compliments for "Virginia gentlemen who kept old customs bright and honored in the observance"—that is, who were "keen on" "the hale old sport" of galloping in the rear of dogs, and, with canine assistance, murdering vermin—a performance euphemistically known as "following the hounds." The tormented animals figure in Mr. Wilson's pages as "the crafty quarry," the most blood-thirsty sadist as "the heartiest sportsman of them all." Gambling ("gaming" in Wilsonian cant) again and again, in association with horse-racing, makes its due appeal to the surviving remembrance of feudal virtues. Mr. Wilson's anxious hope to qualify as an

THE FLIGHT FROM THE FACT

English sportsman is, however, unfortunately ruined by his failure to recollect that an English gentleman never adverts to a "gunning," but always to a "shooting" party.

Occasionally Mr. Wilson indulges in bits of sporting slang, but never with the unconscious abandon of the true devotee of sport. There is a certain excitement in hearing a Presbyterian elder, a Doctor of Letters and a President, say that he is "playing a lone hand," or tell his opponents to "put up or shut up"; but in numerous efforts at the vernacular, we seem to recognize a deliberate innocence and awkwardness, subtly intended to convey the impression that the speaker is condescending to speech with which he is really not familiar. Mr. Wilson never betrays intimacy with the more succinct racy idioms of current sporting slang.

Mr. Wilson for many years has been accustomed to speak of "matching my mind against" other minds, as if intellects were pennies, or perhaps athletic teams. The frequency with which he uses this phrase somehow arouses the perhaps gratuitous suspicion that it is his own mind — and not that of an opponent — against which he is matching. For twenty-four years, indeed, his only opportunity for other matches was with undergraduate minds in his class-rooms.

THE STORY OF A STYLE

Protestations of anxiety to engage in contests abound in the works which we have under review. The examples below are merely typical:

“If any one wants a scrap that is an interesting scrap and worth while, I am his man. I warn him that he is not going to draw me into the scrap for his advertisement, but if he is looking for trouble that is the trouble of men in general and I can help a little, why, then, I am in for it.”

“If you were to subject my Scots-Irish blood to the proper kind of analysis, you would find that it was fighting blood, and that it is pretty hard for a man born that way to keep quiet.”

“Almost every time that I ever visited Atlantic City I came to fight somebody. I hardly know how to conduct myself when I have not come to fight against anybody, but with somebody.”

“I sometimes feel like the Irishman who saw some of his countrymen enjoying themselves at the fair and called out: ‘Is this a private fight, or can anybody come in?’”

In the course of other chapters, reflection has been made on the significance of too-ready and unnecessary protestations. To be over-suspicious on this point would be as unscientific as to be naïve. All that we are justified in saying is that it is noticeable that on some subjects the gentleman doth protest too much; that those subjects are, singularly enough, ones concerning which a degree of distrust has been

THE FLIGHT FROM THE FACT

forced upon our conclusions; and that the coincidence deserves attention.

Mr. Wilson, for instance, is constantly affirming that nothing interests him but facts, and we know better; he repeatedly asseverates the absolute positiveness of his convictions, and not infrequently these are the very convictions which he abandons the next day, without an expressed regret; his favorite poem is *The Happy Warrior*, and he brags rather like an Allen Breck, "Am I no' the bonny fighter?"—but we cannot forget that at times, at least, he is too proud, or too something, to fight. In like manner he often disparages rhetoric, just before declaiming one of the versions of his justly-admired peroration. "The flag," he says, "does not express a mere body of sentiment"; and proceeds himself to express a body of sentiment. "It has not been created by rhetorical sentences"—such as those with which he now regales us. He writes one of his best chapters proving that the American Constitution is not a machine of checks and balances, but a living organism; and then seven more chapters which describe the Constitution in detail as a machine of checks and balances. He ridicules seclusion, practices it as no public man has ever practiced it; and then denounces it some more; he hides himself in a locked White House behind iron gates guarded by sentinels and writes:

THE STORY OF A STYLE

“ I have heard some say that I am not accessible to them, and when I have inquired into it, I found they meant that I did not personally invite them. They did not know how to come without being invited, did not care to come upon the same terms with everybody else.”

“ What I am constantly asking is that men should bring me counsel, because I am not privileged to determine things independently of this counsel.”

“. . . no patience with a cloistered virtue that does not go out and seek its adversary.”

“ Seclude a man, separate him from the rough and tumble of . . . life, from all the contacts of every sort and condition of men, and you have done a thing which America will brand with its contemptuous disapproval.”

“ I am amazed that there should be in some quarters such a comprehensive ignorance of the state of the world. I do not know where these gentlemen have been closeted, but I do know that they have been segregated from the general currents of the thoughts of mankind. . . . I cannot understand how these gentlemen can live, and not live in the atmosphere of the world.”

It is impossible not to get the disturbing sense that we are listening to a consciousness condemning itself, without confession; impossible not to feel that some, at least, of Mr Wilson's protestations represent defense against his own fears.

If this be the case, the situation would compel us to ask whether there were not ground to conclude that his positiveness is assumed, and his courage (all

THE FLIGHT FROM THE FACT

the more praiseworthy on that account) a self-protective cloak for constitutional timidity; in short, whether we had not to do with a psychology of — unusual interest. If our conjecture should prove correct, it would be no surprise if we further found the soul and mind of our hero disturbed — kept in a chronic state of disturbance — by conflicting impulses; if we found that his intellectuation, hindered by psychic complexes unresolved and apparently incapable of resolution, sought refuge in vague generalities, which soon assumed the form of symbols, which came to be credited with mystic properties, came to be employed magically, came to manifest the unhappy domination of the intellect by precepts other than those of calm rationality — all the while the inner struggle working cumulative nervous exhaustion and brain fatigue.

To attempt a catalogue of Wilsonian errors is a task I decline. Not that it would be a hard task: the list would not be long, nor yet would it require much searching to make it. But enough mistakes have been and will be noted in connection with particular subjects discussed, to render a separate chapter on errors unnecessary.

There are errors of fact and of expression. Most of the first class can be attributed only to what this

THE STORY OF A STYLE

book prefers to call fatigue, meaning to include under that description all manifestations of forgetfulness, carelessness, mistaken acts of memory or deduction, and unrecognized compulsions which are at all events connected with a subnormal mental condition. We understand to-day that forgetfulness is a positive act, and not merely a negative condition; the desired fact is there, but a repression sits upon it, or a contradicting urge plays tricks with it. I presume it is good psychopathology to say that something like an index of the degree of mental vigor is afforded by the frequency and the character of errors of intellection.

It would be excellent fun to catch a professor of history with his galligaskins down; but unfortunately we cannot quite believe that Mr. Wilson was ignorant that it was Gladstone, not Bryce, who wrote the much-quoted tribute to the American Constitution. Nor can we attribute it to sheer ignorance that a candidate bidding for the Democratic nomination for the Presidency, in a "Jackson Day" speech before a national audience¹ should have confounded the date of the battle of New Orleans with the birthday of the Democratic idol.

Lapses like those require some little explanation, but among Mr. Wilson's transgressions are some which are more difficult of explanation. This,

¹ Washington, January 8, 1912.

THE FLIGHT FROM THE FACT

for example: "You cannot establish a line by two posts." Wilson, true, was not a surveyor, like Washington and Lincoln, but at one period he was fond of writing about theodolites, and plumed himself a little on his geometry.

"You cannot establish a line by two posts; you have got to have three at least to know whether they are straight (sic), and the longer your line the more certain your measurement."

The address in which this statement was advanced and repeated was made at Washington, February 26, 1916, and is printed in the *Congressional Record*, LIII, page 3308.

There are far more errors of expression than errors of fact — one is tempted to imitate his style and say there are infinitely more errors of expression than of fact — in Mr. Wilson's writings. This is of course partly because he has little to do with concrete facts concerning which definite mistakes can be made. Quotations of expressional inanities already crowd this book; if we have not yet had enough samples of them, consider these:

". . . nothing is more fundamental than . . ."

". . . shows how unanimously you sustain . . ."

". . . the center of the heart of it all is . . ."

". . . living principles that live in the heart."

THE STORY OF A STYLE

“. . . A very large proportion of these sums were raised by . . .”

(Message to Congress, May 21, 1919.)

“ We see that in many things life is very great.”

(First Inaugural Address.)

“ Experience, ladies and gentlemen, is made by men and women.”

(Washington, June 14, 1915.)

“ Unless he carries freight of the spirit, he has not been bred where spirits are bred.”

(Swarthmore College, October 25, 1915.)

“ When those men have been gibbeted they will be sorry the gibbet was so high.”

(Paterson, N. J., October 5, 1912.)

“ It is very difficult for a body which compounds its legislation by so miscellaneous a process as that of committees.”

Congressional Government, 106.

“ The threadbare phrase seems new stuff when we wear it on our understandings.”

Congressional Government, 23.

This is probably what is meant by “ stuff and nonsense.”

I am interrupted in the composition of this chapter by a maid who lays on my desk, among other pieces

THE FLIGHT FROM THE FACT

of mail, a pamphlet reporting the speech of President Wilson before the Paris Congress of the International Law Society.

The President's address contains 1200 words — a newspaper column. The first sentence is perfunctuary; the second sentence is ungrammatical:

“Sir Thomas has been peculiarly generous, as have been the other gentlemen, in what he has said of me, but they have given me too high a rôle to play up to.”

It was appropriate that at a Peace Conference which is to bring in the millennium, the singular verb should lie down with the plural noun. And, after all, why should not the President say, as well as an Emperor: “*Ego sum super grammaticum.*”

The third sentence is parsable, but its syntax is so faulty that the probable meaning can be surmised only by violent transposition:

“It is particularly difficult to believe one's self to be what has been described in so small a company as this.”

The fourth sentence reads:

“When a great body of people is present, one can assume a pose which is impossible when there is so small a number of critical eyes looking at you.”

There is probably nothing concerning which Mr.

THE STORY OF A STYLE

Wilson would take more pains to be correct than concerning matters of taste. He would regard with horror a solecism of deportment, and value no personal quality higher than urbane discernment of the proprieties.

Why, then, did he at the Buckingham Palace state dinner, thus address the King of England:

“For you and I, Sir — I temporarily — embody the spirit of two great nations.”

No living monarch would dream of claiming to embody the spirit of a nation. The President was flattering King George as kings are not nowadays flattered by their most groveling slaves; and was attributing to himself a character which to assume is either blasphemy or nonsense. There has been no Incarnation since the time of Jesus Christ. Nobody to-day embodies the spirit of two nations.

The President's toast ran on:

“The welcome which you have given me and Mrs. Wilson has been so warm, so natural, so evidently from the heart, that we have been more than pleased . . . I believe that I correctly interpret that welcome as embodying not only your own generous spirit towards us personally, but also as expressing for yourselves and the great nation over which you, Sir, preside, that same feeling for my people,” etc., etc.

When the President of a republic addressed the

THE FLIGHT FROM THE FACT

King of England as one who *presides* over a nation, and in the next breath spoke of his own fellow-citizens as "*my people*"; and when he expressed appreciation of a royal welcome as meant, first, for himself and his wife personally, but also, in the second place, for his "people,"— we may be sure that the orderly rational processes of that President's mind were in a state of disturbance. Inspection of the address confirms the suspicion; it is flabby with the familiar stigmata of fatigue: "*so warm, so natural, so evidently from the heart . . .*"; "*more than pleased*" (not just honestly pleased); "*I believe that I correctly interpret . . .*" (I have a doubt, but I certainly believe that); "I correctly interpret that—" (what was the word I used a moment ago?—"welcome") "that welcome as" (what was that other word—oh! yes! "embody")—"as embodying—" (what did I say after "embody"—oh! I remember, "spirit")—"as embodying your" (I have said "generous" only two or three times so far)—"as embodying your generous spirit"—And so on..

In connection with this exchange of compliments with King George, a moment might be spent in considering Mr. Wilson's Lincoln oration. This is referred to in my notes as one of several passages containing the solitary quotation from Shakespeare I notice in Mr. Wilson's books, and it is questionably

THE STORY OF A STYLE

used. "To the manner born" is the quotation. There is no question about the spelling, because the word we now write "manor" was not so spelt in Shakespeare's day. It is probable that the sense of Hamlet's statement to Horatio on the terrace of the castle of Elsinore was

". . . though I am native here
And to the manor born, it is a custom
More honor'd in the breach than the observance."

Whichever of the two meanings is correct, the allusion was an infelicitous element of Mr. Wilson's strained attempt, speaking at the door of the lowly backwoods cabin where Abe Linkhorn opened his eyes, to celebrate this honest son of Kentucky illiterates as a romantically miraculous personage "whose vision swept many an horizon which those about him dreamed not of, whose mind comprehended what it had never seen, and understood the language of affairs with the ready ease of one to the manor born" — the manor being a dirt-floored hut, without windows and a quarter section of wilderness.

The only existing authentic account of the birth and infancy of Lincoln is in the hands of J. L. Scripps, who, so far as I know, never communicated its contents further than he did to Lincoln's law partner, Herndon, in a letter which says: "Lincoln seemed painfully impressed with the extreme

THE FLIGHT FROM THE FACT

poverty of his early youth and the utter absence of all romantic and heroic elements. He communicated some facts to me concerning his ancestry which he did not wish to have published then, and which I have never spoken of, or alluded to, before." Abraham Lincoln was born on skins in a corner. His father could not read or write. When his mother one day gave a party, she handed around raw potatoes. In the third improved cabin in which he lived as a boy, Abe had a shake-down in a low loft up to which he climbed by pegs driven into the logs. And this is the language in which one of his successors in the Presidential chair patronizes his lowly birth:

"How eloquent this little house within this shrine is of the vigor of democracy. There is nowhere in the land any home so remote, so humble, that it may not contain the power of mind and conscience to which nations yield and history submits its processes. Genius is no snob. It affects humble company as well as great. It serenely chooses its comrades. This little hut was the cradle of one of the great sons of men, who presently emerged upon the great stage, himself the center of the great plot. It demonstrates the vigor of democracy. Such are the authentic proofs of the validity and vitality of democracy. Here, no less, hides the mystery of democracy. Who shall guess this secret of nature and providence and a free polity? Whatever the vigor and vitality of the stock from which he sprang, its mere vigor and vitality

THE STORY OF A STYLE

do not explain. . . . This is the sacred mystery of democracy. . . . This is a place of mystery. . . . It is the spirit always that is sovereign. Lincoln was put through the discipline of the world, a very rough and exacting discipline for him, an indispensable discipline. . . . This also is of the essence of democracy. . . . We will not look into the mystery of how and why they came. . . . No writer has in fact penetrated to the heart of the mystery. . . . That brooding spirit had no real familiars. It was a very lonely spirit that looked out from underneath those shaggy eyebrows and comprehended men without communing with them, as if it dwelt apart, saw its visions of duty. . . .”

What is it that makes this tribute to Lincoln so ghastly in its sterility? There have been hundreds of attempts to portray this great American by tongue, pen, brush and chisel, but can there ever have been an effort so pompous, and a failure so complete? What interdiction sat upon Mr. Wilson's soul as he stood by the cabin in which Honest Abe was born? What impediment to his thought forced him to drivel like this with

processes,
authentic proofs,
providence and a free polity,
visions,
the vigor and vitality of the stock,
mere vigor and vitality,
the vigor of democracy,

THE FLIGHT FROM THE FACT

the vigor of democracy,
the validity and vitality of democracy
the essence of democracy,
the mystery of democracy,
the sacred mystery of democracy,
the mystery of how and why,
the heart of the mystery,
place of mystery,
spirit,
brooding spirit,
the discipline of the world,
exacting discipline,
indispensable discipline.

This is not thought. This is acousmatic improvisation filling up time for vacuity of idea, inhibition, or advanced fatigue.

This chapter is entitled *Doubt and the Flight from the Fact*. The chapter, like the rest of a swiftly-written book, attempts nothing more than a hasty assembling of certain phenomena with which the future historians of this dramatic age and its more conspicuous figures, will naturally have to deal.

Woodrow Wilson promised, for a year or two, to be a very large factor, perhaps one of the determining factors, on the stage of the world, as the great drama of the reconstruction of human society pro-

THE STORY OF A STYLE

gressed. What part he, with a more stable constitution, might have played — may, fifty years hence, furnish an afternoon's topic of conjecture for some historian lecturing before students who, after their kind, look often at the clock, and yawn over the professor's eloquent drone, as he utters the judgement of another generation concerning a character around whose sad figure had played the irony of History's illimitable derision, and makes the explaining comment:

*If sun and moon began to doubt,
Immediately they would go out!*

VII

A TYPICAL MANUSCRIPT

AN interesting Wilson document is in my possession. It is a type-written "manuscript" prepared for the President from memoranda furnished by him, the text conscientiously phrased in his own style by a student of it, and revised by Mr. Wilson's own hand and pen. The alterations are significant; the chief ones will be noted below.

There are few deletions. Mr. Wilson never clarifies or strengthens a sentence by shortening it; he improves after the fashion of the ingenuous lady who, dissatisfied with her hat, corrects its style by bestowing upon it a few more flowers and ribbons. Mr. Wilson corrects words with additional words.

First as to the less significant additions:

A certain number of them seem to have been dictated by mere doubt as to whether the reader were getting his money's worth of words:

"(*It happened that*) one of the men who knew the least about the subject happened to be . . ."

THE STORY OF A STYLE

"A newspaper (*happened to have*) said that . . ."

". . . need (*to*) be exercised."

". . . ought never (*to*) permit it."

". . . such an uncompromising fact as (*this*) that . . ."

"Men see (*that*) there is nothing to conceal."

"(*our*) architects are also engineers."

"There is a better way of defending themselves, and that (*better way*) is . . ."

Several of the interpolations represent what I elsewhere term the "spring-board" habit. In extemporaneous speech one might take this practice to signify that the orator needed a running start for his jump. But here we have a written manuscript corrected in leisure; and it seems that Mr. Wilson considers it improper to begin to say what he is about to say without a graceful flourish:

"(*It may even be that*) your invention may be . . ."

"(*It is true that*) . . ."

Gratuitous grace-notes are introduced into the middle of the written score:

". . . (*if you please,*) . . ."

". . . (*singularly enough,*) . . ."

"And inasmuch (*therefore*) as I hope . . ."

There are few additions of entire sentences. The lengthiest insertion begins in this characteristic fashion:

A TYPICAL MANUSCRIPT

“(As a matter of fact, their thought does not cover all the processes of their own undertakings. Do these men, etc.?)”

The more important interpolations fall, for the most part, into two classes, of strongly contrasting characters. Many are intensifications of the original sense; almost as many are qualifications of it.

The intensifications are sometimes interjected adjectives or adverbs, sometimes added phrases or expatiatory clauses; they generally reveal a lack of confidence in the ability of the simple statement to carry its due message, an enthusiasm for superlatives and absolutes, and sometimes over-anxiety for an effect of sincerity. Corrections of this class are seen in the bracketed and italicized words that follow:

“And yet that is [*exactly*] the principle of . . .”

“The younger member had [*all along*] been running the business.”

“The strength of America is proportioned [*only*] to . . .”

“. . . cry out [*most loudly*] against . . .”

“. . . [*seriously*] set about the accomplishment of . . .”

“. . . declared [*and declared in unmistakable terms*] that they . . .”

“. . . believe [*firmly*] in the essential doctrines of . . .”

“You had thought you had obscured [*and buried*] the ideals.”

THE STORY OF A STYLE

“. . . to alter it at their pleasure [*and to alter it to any degree*].”

“I knew [*and could find*] . . .”

“. . . the Petition of Rights, or the Declaration of Rights, [*those great fundamental documents*].”

“. . . over and over, again and again, advocated [*with all the earnestness that is in them*].”

“. . . the watchful interference [*the resolute interference*] . . .”

“. . . human interests [*and human activities and human energies*].”

“. . . irreverence for the Constitution [*itself*].”

“. . . roused [*refreshed and renewed*] the spirit . . .”

“. . . [*effectively*] takes control.”

“. . . That is the [*very*] central doctrine . . .”

“. . . the [*liberating*] light of liberty . . .”

“. . . [*actual*] necessity . . .”

“. . . [*really*] studied . . .”

“America is [*securely*] great.”

“. . . [*genuinely*] concerned.”

“. . . the [*extraordinary*] results.”

“. . . the [*bitter*] sort of subserviency.”

“. . . reap the [*full*] fruits.”

“. . . closer [*even*] than . . .”

“. . . the burden of [*long*] exile.”

“. . . extraordinary [*and very sinister*] thing.”

“. . . this inside [*and selfish*] determination.”

“. . . without [*vigorous and*] intelligent men.”

“The hope [*and elasticity*] of the race . . .”

The sentence “It is a fundamental, spiritual dif-

A TYPICAL MANUSCRIPT

ference . . ." is made to read: " *This is the fundamental spiritual difference.*" The sentence " Though they seem to be effective, . . ." is made to read: " Though they *be never so* effective, . . ." It is said of Mr. Roosevelt that it was no wonder he was not again elected " and allowed to patent the processes of industry and [*personally*] direct them." The statement " We are seeing men stand up " is intensified into " We are seeing *a whole people* stand up." " Only slightly less " became " *no less.*" " The great danger " was made " the *dominating danger in this land.*"

On the other hand, it is curious to see, alternating with these confident enlargements, penned in a fine hand between the lines, cautious reservations, nervous abatments, depleting the thought often to extinction:

probably
doubtless
perhaps
presumably
largely
virtually
practically
morally
no doubt
apparently

THE STORY OF A STYLE

often
merely
too often
to all intents and purposes
I believe
It may be that
now at least
in some circumstances

“They are prospering [*freely*] only in those fields.”

“. . . based [*when rightfully conceived*] on justice.”

“The life of the country will be sustained [*or at least supplemented*] by . . .”

“. . . provided the result was (*indeed*) obtained by the process of (*wholesome*) growth.”

One alarmed effort at qualification results in this: “I am bound to them by a tacit *implication* of honor.” The original sentence had read: “I am bound to them by a tacit pledge of honor.” A tacit pledge *is* an implication; but “a *tacit* implication” is — a pleonasm.

The locution is singularly clear in its betrayal of the incorrigibility of Mr. Wilson’s Janus-faced disposition. He must repeat, double and seem to strengthen, even when he means to diminish and mitigate.

Perhaps these two contradictory tendencies — on the one hand to intensify, on the other hand to abate — the contending impulses, *i.e.*, of courage and of timidity — are not as incompatible as they may seem.

A TYPICAL MANUSCRIPT

Compounds of elements apparently the most irreconcilable are constantly blended in the mysterious alembic of the human soul. Freud has taught us to recognize the ambivalence of our emotions as one of the cardinal principles essential to a just account of life. Love includes hate, and implies it, even as to the object itself; courage and fear derives each its character from conflict with its opposing emotion; the loftiest and holiest, just as the basest, impulses of action, harbor their indestructible contradictions in their own very heart. Often the power of the predominating instinct is measurable by the vehemence with which, in its momentary or its confirmed ascendancy, it tramples its rival. And the repressed desire is not extinguished; it survives even in defeat to warn its conqueror that it only awaits its day.

There is nothing extraordinary or unnatural in the coëxistence and conflict of opposing tendencies in the same mind. The saints are holy just because they triumph over temptation; the ungodly recognize the righteousness which they refuse; the self-centered man and the humanitarian, the literalist and the dreamer; the hero and the cad — they all know the power of the instinct; of the survival of the congenial, educational or enviroing influence; of the physical conditions of fatigue or stimulation, which have to be sternly resisted by the resolved character,

THE STORY OF A STYLE

and which, nevertheless, do not expire — which, indeed, survive, always, even in defeated quiescence, waiting their revenge.

In the significant manuscript just now under consideration, there present themselves some extremely interesting cases in which the ambivalent tendencies to intensification and to abatement associate themselves *in the same sentence*. The finely penned interlinear “improvements” made by Mr. Wilson on his agent’s text include the following:

The sentence, “They have always been the stout opponents of organized labor” is amended so as to read: “They have . . . been the stout (*est and most successful*) opponents of organized labor.” The correction strikes out the absolute “always” but makes instant atonement by throwing in two superlatives. It is impossible to say whether this was the actual order in which the alterations were made; it is at least equally possible that the strengthening was done first, and the abatement made afterward. That is to say, the reviser, unsatisfied with “stout,” lifted it to “stoutest”; then, carried on by further enthusiasm and in obedience to his addiction to couplets, added “*and most successful!*” The sentence then read: “They have always been the stoutest and most successful opponents,” etc. But

A TYPICAL MANUSCRIPT

then a doubt spoke, courage cooled, and the encraved pen struck out the "always." This is probably what actually occurred; but whether this or the other were the order of alteration, we have here a graphic picture of courage wrestling with fear.

(If we should pause to take consideration of the facts, we should find that the original sentence conformed to them, and was a pertinent and fully expressed step in an advancing argument; but that the amended sentence is questionable; in fact, that its superlatives introduce a doubt into the argument, and tend to distract from attention to it.)

Another sentence originally read: "They bought him out at a price three or four times the value . . ." As revised by Mr. Wilson, the matter is stated: "They bought him out at a price three or four times (*I believe actually five times*) the value, etc." What could be more unfortunately revealing than this sentence? The author is talking about the purchase of the Carnegie Works by the United States Steel Corporation, a notorious and important transaction, the facts of which were easily ascertainable. Mr. Wilson had originally mentioned the rather hazy but impressive price of three or four times the property's value. When he came to think of it again, he felt he hadn't done the subject justice: it must have been more; at any rate, one must put things rather larger than life in order to impart

THE STORY OF A STYLE

the thrill which one enjoys himself. Make it "five times"—"*actually* five times." Ah! that's better. But, wait a moment; we must be a little careful about this: make it, "*I believe* actually five times." But I don't believe it strongly enough to strike out the three times or the four times, which I no longer believe.

Would it be possible to invent, to order, for the purpose, an act of the pen more symptomatic of psychic instability than that of an author, who, reading over sentences awaiting his final signature, finds a statement that a price was three or four times what it ought to be, and who satisfies his sense of truth, indulges his propensity for fervid expression and his instinct of self-doubt, by refraining from correction, certainly, but by interpolating a half-bold, half-timid gloss, which represents nothing but an emotion and a hesitation?

Another sentence had read: "Do you know that you can get rebates without calling them such at all?" It was given the qualification, "*unless our American commissioners are absolutely sleepless.*" Of course no commissioners can be absolutely sleepless, so that the easement is merely rhetorical, not actual.

"Certain monopolies in this country have gained control of the raw material" did not satisfy Mr. Wilson. He made it read, "*almost complete con-*

A TYPICAL MANUSCRIPT

trol," introducing an absolute, but a qualified absolute. The original sentence had in fact contained all that was necessary to the argument; the exact degree of control was not a matter of special significance. The intensification was in the nature of a slightly disturbing and distracting nonessential. These are both instances of an emotional impulse to heighten and enlarge, in conflict with a paralyzing doubt.

A paragraph (page 77) of Mr. Wilson's best considered and most carefully written book, *Constitutional Government in the United States*, dramatically exhibits the conflict between the contradictory impulses: to intensity and to quality. Here, as usually, the intensifying impulse prevails; but it is haunted by the doubt — one is inclined to say the intensification of expression is made necessary for protection against the doubt, which is concealed in the qualifying adjectives. The passage reads:

"One of the greatest of the President's powers I have not yet spoken of at all: his control which is very absolute, of the foreign relations of the nation. The initiative in foreign affairs, which the President possesses without any restriction whatever, is virtually the power to control them absolutely."

THE STORY OF A STYLE

The author here says that the President's powers include his control (not his dictation, so far as we go now, but his "control") of the nation's foreign affairs. This "control" however, we proceed, is absolute; nay, it is "*very* absolute." The President possesses the initiative in foreign affairs and possesses it without restriction, without *any* restriction, without *any* restriction **WHATEVER**; therefore he possesses the power to control foreign affairs, yes, to control foreign affairs **ABSOLUTELY**. Yet, wait a minute, please — "this is **VIRTUALLY** the power to control them absolutely." Only *virtually*.

I have not seen the manuscript of this book, but, on the basis of Wilson manuscripts which I have seen, I undertake to say that it would show that the passage was originally written thus:

"One of the greatest of the President's powers I have not yet spoken of at all: his control which is absolute, of the foreign relations of the nation. The initiative in foreign affairs, which the President possesses without any restriction is the power to control them absolutely"

and that, in revision, the word "*very*" was inserted before "absolute," and "*whatever*" after "restriction"; that the reënforced sentence was murmured aloud by the reviser, with initial satisfaction — immediately followed by depressing doubt, and that, under the influence of this doubt, and of the

A TYPICAL MANUSCRIPT

shrewdly suggested compensating satisfaction of repeating the vibrated intonation to which he is addicted, Mr. Wilson stuck in the sterilizing qualification, “*virtually.*”¹

I will wager that inspection of the manuscript of *Constitutional Government in the United States* will prove this surmise correct.

¹The utterance of the sound of *v* involves a somewhat complicated struggle. *V* is a partially inhibited *f*, which is allowed to escape only after modification. The compression of the lower teeth against the upper lip may correspond to an inner mental impulse of obstruction. It gives time, it covers hesitation; while the breath is contending for release, the mind has opportunity to resolve its conflicts or to compromise them, and perhaps to turn an incipient “veritable” (*exempli gratia*) into “virtual” or “vital,” “virile,” “vigorous,” “vocal,” “vivid,” “vast,” or “various,” or one of the other vibrated vocables.

VIII

CONCERNING POPULAR REPUTE

MR. WILSON is a Christian gentleman of correct and industrious habits; it has never been suggested that the slightest peculiarity beyond what any "normal" individual may exhibit without attracting attention, could be detected in any act or item of behavior, appearance, gesture, carriage or manner, observable in this dignified, courteous, generally amiable, often charming, personality.

On the other hand, it must be said frankly and with conscientious seriousness, that a study of Mr. Wilson's writings and speeches does not permit the conclusion that his is a high grade of mentality. It is impossible to ignore the fact that his writings are marked conspicuously and obstinately by some of the signs often associated with sub-normal intellectuation. It is equally impossible to discern in them any evidences of compensating genius, such as often accompanies idiosyncrasy. The conclusion enforced is that among writers he ranks as one of inferior mental power.

Such are the results of our study. But how can

CONCERNING POPULAR REPUTE

we reconcile them with the position which Mr. Wilson has achieved among men — and achieved by words?

His fame it would be foolish to deny. His repute for wisdom, genius and eloquence has gone into all lands. Not once, but many times, the world has paused until he spoke. How can we trust our conclusions?

If (especially in a Republic, where popular success is by most people accepted as convincing proof of superiority) — if it should seem astonishing to doubt the greatness of Woodrow Wilson, it may seem pertinent to remark that none of his books has, or has the prospect of having, the circulation of *Science and Health*, the *Book of Mormon*, or *The Koran*. The beautiful stone temples which testify the admiration of thousands for Mrs. Eddy; the prosperous State carved out of the desert, and the great organization, which reflect the belief of hundreds of thousands in Joseph Smith; the hundreds of millions who have lived and died in faith that Mahomet was the prophet of God — do not really establish the intellectual claims of these founders of faiths. Of course, to those properly educated to adore these respective semi-divinities, it would seem a blasphemy to question the greatness of an ignorant female quack, a half-deceived and half-deceiving fanatic, or of an Oriental epileptic.

THE STORY OF A STYLE

These extreme illustrations have, of course, no bearing whatsoever on the question of Mr. Wilson's intelligence, other than this: that they challenge the idea that popular success is proof of mental superiority. Marie Corelli, Gene Stratton Porter, and Harold Bell Wright possess no doubt perfectly normal minds — but that they have superior minds will hardly be argued by readers of this book — written about the time Mr. Wright is publishing a first edition of 700,000 copies.

Anybody can "succeed." There is nothing so indecisive as "success." Intellect is often a hindrance to it.

The reconciliation of inferiority with practical results ordinarily attributed to superiority is really a very common exercise. We constantly have occasion to exclaim over the surprising attainments of acquaintances whom we know to be very modestly endowed. It is, however, always a playful exercise — that is, it can never expect to arrive at anything more than a plausible, speculative answer.

In the case of Mr. Wilson, there are perhaps discoverable several elements looking toward an explanation. Some of the very qualities which we have discerned as intellectual weaknesses may help to account for popular success.

Assurance, for instance, is almost invariably a

CONCERNING POPULAR REPUTE

concomitant of popular success. It may almost be said to go a long way toward achieving success, even in the absence of more solid merits. It is a truism which experience amply vindicates that a man is apt to be taken at the valuation he places upon himself. The maxim needs correction; it should say, at the valuation which he seems to place upon himself. Because, as we have had occasion to notice, self-assertion does not always spring from self-confidence; it quite often and naturally masks timidity, and is born of the necessity of masking it and of the desire to conquer it and demonstrate that it does not exist. Fear is in terror of nothing so much as of itself. The timid man is precisely he who must be bold. He *dare* not tremble; he is *afraid* to be a coward.

It is probable that there is very often an inverse relation between the degree of self-assertion, the outward habit of assurance, and the measure of inner doubt. At all events, such a relation is possible; and when the self-confidence is noticeably extraordinary, the ego palpably exaggerated, it is difficult to avoid a suspicion that chronic self-distrust is involved. This is clearly manifest in cases of real paranoia, marked by delusions of greatness and nevertheless obsessed with groundless fears. But the origin of the apparent assurance has ordinarily no bearing on its result. The world sees only

THE STORY OF A STYLE

the egotist's sublime self-confidence, admires his courage, admits his claims. It seldom suspects how often the hero to whom it yields homage is himself puzzled at the success of his presumption, and, still doubtful, is spurred to further arrogances. The time may come when doubt will vanquish him, but till it does, the very sternness of his battle against it imparts to his acts an intensity of aggressiveness which events can not easily resist.

Again, besides displaying the psychic power of assurance in extraordinary measure, Mr. Wilson is fortunately circumstanced for popular success in the quality of his mental equipment. His learning is precisely of the degree and the kind best calculated to impress the populace. He bears all the outward decorous marks of the scholar, fulfills the popular idea of a philosopher who confers honor upon the sordid concerns of political life by bringing to them the high thoughts and ideals amidst which he lived so long in cloistered contemplation above that which the vulgar are permitted or are fit to enjoy. On the other hand, his philosophy is not too high for human understanding, and is not withheld from the admiring multitude.

If this book has not already conveyed the impression that Mr. Wilson's mental attainments and authority are of the peculiar grade which, if they served

CONCERNING POPULAR REPUTE

any purpose, would serve that of winning popular reputation, it would be too late to insist upon that now. And it would be too late to argue in more explicit detail how uniquely adjusted to the impressing of a none-too-thoughtful public are Mr. Wilson's methods of expression, if foregoing chapters have not allowed that suspicion to escape.

If this study has not been all wrong, a large factor in the explanation of Mr. Wilson lies in the astonishing measure in which he indulges his few tricks of style — the extraordinary length to which he allows his addictions to run, the unparalleled audacity with which he endlessly repeats his verbal feats, drones his generalities, reëchoes his mystic phrases, learning nothing and forgetting nothing through the years, but working on with the tireless, unabashed monotony of a machine, unweeting whether what it weaves is precious or worthless, but compelled by some fatal inner necessity. There is an impressiveness in monotony — not a high form of impressiveness, maybe, not altogether rational, but magical — nothing less — in its effect upon those (most of us) who cannot always take the trouble to be attentive to reason alone. Vagueness and reiteration, symbolism and incantation, I take to be the chief secrets of Mr. Wilson's verbal power.

We have found that Mr. Wilson does not employ words because of any definite meaning they carry.

THE STORY OF A STYLE

He asks them only to possess a vague emotional content. He is not concerned to impart explicit ideas; his care is for emotional effect. Therefore his fondness for large phrases dimly understood of the people, but carrying for them mystic suggestions of profound wisdom. He desires only to have his half-formed thoughts vaguely glow through nebulous phrases, subconsciously knowing that only so can they be impressive.

But the employment of large and nebulous speech has this advantage: it does not convey explicit ideas, but it suggests many large ones. And to each listener it suggests naturally ideas which are already in his mind. You cannot ordinarily give a man new ideas except by means of explicit speech; but you can confirm him in familiar ideas; you can flatter him with the belief that he is thinking, and likewise gain much admiration for yourself as a clear expositor of thought. The emotional method allows each listener to interpret the liberal language in whatever sense he may desire. It is thus peculiarly adapted to gratify many, and very differently disposed, minds, and each mind according to its passing mood and to its reaction to the passion of the hour.

Furthermore, symbolic language enables the auditor, as well as the speaker, to evade those most troublesome things in the world — facts; it emancipates from the repressive thralldom of reality (from

CONCERNING POPULAR REPUTE

which the soul and mind of man is forever struggling to escape), and generates in every breast the virtuous satisfaction of winging unfettered flight in the realm of pure and happy idea.

I have seen, in other days, in a European capital, a crowd uncover at the passage of a carriage bearing the crest and trappings of royalty. The carriage was empty. A word is a kingly thing and deserving of homage when it carries a kingly thought. But it is the way of the crowd to bare its head at the pompous passing of a phrase, equally and with as sincere a thrill of reverence, whether the vehicle be occupied or empty.

Lest it be fancied that this book lays an over-emphasis on the popular effect of symbolic language, I am going to insert here a couple of paragraphs from *The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind*, by Gustave Le Bon. I insert them, at a late moment (having just run across them, browsing over a neglected book-shelf, for something to go with my evening cigar), not because they contribute to the argument, but because there may be those in America who will fail to recognize the importance of an American book unless it is fortified by a French work now in a twelfth English edition. M. Le Bon is speaking:

“The imagination of crowds is particularly open to the impressions produced by images. . . . Words and formulas,

THE STORY OF A STYLE

handled with art, possess in sober truth the mysterious power formerly attributed to them by the adepts of magic. . . . The power of words is quite independent of their real significance. Words whose sense is the most ill-defined are sometimes those that possess 'the most influence. . . . They evoke grandiose and vague images in men's minds, but this very vagueness that wraps them in obscurity augments their mysterious power.

“A leader should be aware, in particular, of the fascinating influence of words, phrases and images. . . . On occasion, the leader may be intelligent and highly educated, but the possession of intelligence and education does him, as a rule, more harm than good. The great leaders of crowds, in all ages, have been of lamentably narrow intellect; those whose intelligence has been the most restricted have exercised the greatest influences.”

The other element of popular emotional success is unashamed reiteration. (Half of Le Bon's book is given up to this, I find.) Napoleon said that there was only one rhetorical figure of serious importance, and that was Repetition. The refrain is Mr. Wilson's most triumphant artifice.

“Use not vain repetitions as the heathen do,” advised a Galilean teacher. But the Church founded on the bones of his philosophy was worldly-wise enough to disdain his injunction. The Nazarene philosopher had not studied the psychology of

CONCERNING POPULAR REPUTE

attention, had not taken proper account of the hypnotic value of repetition. Any modern advertising man could have advised the Saviour to advantage. His own sayings are not as popular as those of his chief publicity agent, Paul of Tarsus. Jesus, so far as we know, never wrote more than a single line — and that was in the sand. His general conception of success was on a level with his disapproval of repetitions. The common-sense of Christianity has flouted Christ's pretensions to wisdom. The plain people want vain repetitions; they cry for them as children on the bill-boards used to cry for Castoria. The whole modern art of advertising is built upon knowledge of the fact that nothing so impresses the common mind as iteration and reiteration. Centuries ago wise priests recognized the hypnotic effect of the repetend in their endless litanies, ostensibly addressed to God, but effectual chiefly on the auto-intoxicated suppliants.

If a philosopher were to seek a scientific explanation for the impressiveness of iteration, it would probably be found in the very interesting phenomena of fatigue. Some years ago I spent part of a summer at Wood's Hole, Massachusetts, where Jacques Loeb was investigating the metabolism which takes place in living bodies under the stress of such stimulation as that presented by objects of ordinary attention. I cannot recount — I don't, in fact, re-

THE STORY OF A STYLE

member — the details of the fascinating experiments made by this biologist and his assistants; but it remains impressed upon my mind that the toxic poisons released by the human mechanism under the stimulation of an idea are measurable; and that the ability of the human organism, for instance, to focus its energies attentively upon an idea externally suggested, is strictly limited in time. As I remember it, what with dissected frog-legs and with delicate meters on the wrists and temples, and what not, some such conclusion was arrived at as that a fraction of a minute was enough to exhaust the energy of human attention until a new impulse came to its reënforcement. I do not pretend to speak of all this in anything but a way vaguely, yet I believe truthfully representative of the great physiological fact. Very likely I make a scientific fool of myself in the above explanation, but I speak with the full wisdom of all science when I assert that the attention of the hearer or the reader needs stimulation two or three times every minute of sixty seconds.

Now, an obvious device for stimulating and reclaiming the attention is the repetition of a sound from which the attention has slacked. To assail the ear too frequently with a new sound, and the brain with a new idea, is to tax them unduly. To summon them to merely renewed interest in an old and already familiar sound and idea is to flatter

CONCERNING POPULAR REPUTE

them into an easier task. The ear again half listens, and the dulled mind fancies it apprehends, and the listener takes to his soul the delightful comfort that he is following a mental exercise of conspicuous merit.

That may be the explanation — or a part of it — of the effect of the repetend.

Yet, on the other hand, repetition too often repeated has an effect the opposite of stimulating. It induces sleep. Even the long-listened-to booming of cannon is soothing. I have myself wakened, in France and Flanders, uneasy in the night because the drum-fire had slackened. The ticking of a clock, the passing of foot-steps, the pulse of waves, the flicker of the fire-light, the rustle of leaves, are soporific; and when verbal repetition becomes monotonous, it is brain-lulling, rather than stimulating.

An incompetent layman in science should not attempt the resolution of the paradox; yet it seems pretty much to the point to remember that any stimulant in excess becomes somnific. Too many cocktails drowse the consumer whose eye the first one brightened, and whose tongue it loosened. However, we are assured by competent authority that the relaxing satisfaction engendered by the repeated cocktail is no less agreeable than was the stimulation begotten by the first one.

Is it possible that Mr. Wilson's habit of falling

THE STORY OF A STYLE

into a litany-like recitative is indulged just often enough, and in such degree, that it happens to lull and dull the mind (the auditors' and his own), while yet it rouses it to a self-satisfying stimulation of attention?

For it must be considered that the refrain not only originates in sluggish cerebration, but that it ministers to sluggishness; the monotone soothes the speaker himself, as it does his audience. The soporific sacrament was shared between preacher and congregation. The priest had partaken of the wine before he gave the cup to the laity. Before he mesmerized them he had auto-hypnotized himself. The insistent domination of laborious thought had been by mutual consent suspended, and the orator had uttered his somniloquy before the hushed audience sensuously gratified and mentally flattered under the rhythmic, but unexacting, murmur of his chant.

There is just one more consideration which this book must entertain before it comes to its conclusion:

Is Mr. Wilson, maybe, having a lot of fun over it, himself? Esteem, almost affection, for the many human qualities of the man, again and again command this student of his style to pause and ponder: Is Mr. Wilson joking?

There is something heart-warming in the thought.

CONCERNING POPULAR REPUTE

We would forgive almost anything to one who, understanding his own limitations, but early having discovered the gullibility of the multitude, set his mind upon place and power, industriously working with full faith in the magic of hocus-pocus, soberly unpacking his bag of tricks, and, tongue in his cheek, conjuring the prize out of the air before the bewildered and admiring crowd!

Mental mediocrity often enjoys the protective coloring of soaring conceit; less often, but still frequently, that of a certain humor which delights in imposing its pompous platitudes upon minds equally commonplace, but less shrewd. The literature of charlatanry is full of illustrations of this happy gift. Is it possible that the Southern parson's son, who learned his alphabet at the age of nine; the briefless barrister who starved in his garret at Atlanta; the Princeton professor who (following the example confessed by Rousseau as to his music-teaching) learned a modicum of political economy by the well-accredited method of teaching it; the disappointed applicant for a Carnegie pension — is it possible that, posing as a sage, but knowing himself to be a wise man,— he is having a huge joke with the world?

Unhappily, except as a moment's relieving conceit, it is not possible to entertain the hypothesis that Mr.

THE STORY OF A STYLE

Wilson is having fun. Only the grimness of the conclusion we are forced to confront could have suggested thought of escape that way. The man whom we have been studying in his writings is no jester. He is a very tired and a sadly puzzled man, amazed doubtless at his own position, trembling at his own problems — and at himself.

We have a way of saying that great epochs produce great men. This, the greatest day of human history, has provided none. Beneath the blast of the mad anger of the Immortals, amidst the débâcle of civilization, many a reputation has expired. Did anybody expect that the come-by-chance leader of the great western nation would rise, at least in some degree, to the call of an unequalled hour? How could one who all his life has fled realities and hid his head in phrases, face such a test as this? The supreme agony of history, the tragedy unequalled in the immensity of its ruth since the world has rolled and men have lived and loved and bred and bled, the cataclysmic passion which makes all the literature of human woe read like a nursery tale — how could even its anguish wring a single great word from his lips? Amidst the tortures of a world, he can only alliterate, and generalize, and marshal still his ragged array of learned locutions. Perhaps he is condemned even to be unaware how he has failed. More likely, he is woe-weary, and bewildered, and heart-sick.

IX

THE STORY OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SPEECHES

A STUDENT of Mr. Wilson's literary style could not ignore the duty of considering such testimony as might be afforded by the series of speeches which he was to make during the month of September, 1919; and, accordingly, the closing of this little book was postponed for the purpose of incorporating into it any points either confirmatory of the conclusions already reached, or corrective of them, which these, the latest, the most extended, and (as he would himself consider) the most important utterances of his career, should yield.

On September 4th, at Columbus, in his first speech, presumably well prepared, inaugurating his tour to reconcile the American people to the Paris Treaty and the League of Nations, Mr. Wilson said:

“ I have been bred and am proud to have been bred, of the old Revolutionary stock which set this government up, when

THE STORY OF A STYLE

America was set up as a friend of mankind, and I know — if they do not — that America has never lost that vision, or . . .”

Of the stock of which Mr. Wilson was bred, his father was the only representative born in America. Mr. Wilson's father, however, was hardly Revolutionary, in the ordinary sense; the American Revolution having been accomplished, so it is understood, before Woodrow Wilson's father was born, February 28, 1822. But the Rev. Joseph Ruggles Wilson did what he could to atone for not having been present in 1776, by supporting the leaders of the Confederacy in 1861, and by the feat of helping set up the Southern Presbyterian Church in a convention held in the edifice in Augusta where he was preaching eloquent sermons in advocacy of slavery and secession.

Apart from this participation in “ Revolutionary ” affairs, the stock from which Woodrow Wilson was bred and is proud to have been bred, had slight “ Revolutionary ” opportunities, seeing that his mother was born in England, reaching Canada in 1833, and that all four of his grandparents were Britons, and all eight of his great-grand-parents of Revolutionary time were born, lived and died in Britain.

Mr. Wilson's emancipation from slavish subser-

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SPEECHES

viency to fact, his perception of the essential superiority of the *word* to the *thing*, is freshly illustrated in the above excerpt.

This was at Columbus, in the morning. In the evening, at Indianapolis, the President repeated his reference to his Revolutionary ancestry; hoped that his hearers were of Revolutionary stock as he was: "There were only three millions of us then," he said.¹

The President opened his Indianapolis speech with what he said would be an account of the "circumstances of the war." The account began:

"You will remember that a prince of the House of Austria was slain in one of the cities of Serbia."

The city of Serajevo, where Franz Ferdinand was slain, is the capital of Bosnia — then a province of Austria.

The report of the first day of the tour was gratifying in its demonstration of Mr. Wilson's loyalty

¹ There are other (of course unconscious) deviations from the biographical facts in several of Mr. Wilson's speeches, and, in consequence, the details given in the ordinary books of reference are not in all respects correct. The brief biographies printed in the *Congressional Directory* and in *Who's Who* assert that the President's mother was born in Scotland. She was born in Carlisle, England. Both of these sketches affirm that Mr. Wilson was graduated from the University of Virginia in 1881. He would have been graduated from the University of Virginia in 1881, but fell sick in the autumn of 1880, and left the University without his degree.

THE STORY OF A STYLE

to *the heart*. On September 4th, he mentioned this organ nineteen times. The following were among his characteristic locutions:

“. . . that great throbbing *heart* which was so depressed, so forlorn, so sad.”

“. . . the loving *hearts* who suffered” . . .

“I think I know the *heart* of this great people.”

“The *heart* of this treaty, then, my fellow citizens, is . . .”

“The *heart* of the League of Nations does not lie in any of the portions which have been discussed in public debate.”

“The *heart* of the covenant of the League is that the Nations solemnly covenant not to go to war for nine months.”

“Article X is the article which goes to the *heart* of this whole bad business.”

“One of the things which I have most at *heart* . . .”

“Why, those clauses, my fellow citizens, draw the *hearts* of the world into the League, draw the noble impulses of the world together, and — make a poem of them.”

“If you will just regard that as the *heart* of the treaty — for it is the *heart* of the treaty — then everything else about it is put in a different light. If we want to stand by that principle, then we can justify the history of America as we can in no other way, for that is the history and principle of America. That is at the *heart* of it.”

Indulging his well-understood predilection for the refrain, on this, the first day of his tour, the President broke out into only two or three dozens of sentences like these:

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SPEECHES

“ Compared with *the importance* of America, *the importance* of the Democratic party, *the importance* of the Republican party, *the importance* of every other party, is absolutely negligible.”

“ *You wonder* why it is a boggy to anybody; *you wonder* what influences have made gentlemen afraid of it; *you wonder* why it is not obvious to everybody.”

“ Let us never forget the *purpose*, the *high purpose*, the *disinterested purpose*, which . . . ”

“ *Revolutions* don't spring up over night; *revolutions* gather through the ages; *revolutions* come from the suppression of the human spirit; *revolutions* come because . . . ”

“ We had taken by *process* of law the flower of our youth from every countryside, from every household, and we told those mothers and fathers and sisters and wives and sweethearts . . . to *end* business of that sort, and if we do not *end* it and if we do not do the best that *human concert of action* can do to *end* it, we are of all men the *most unfaithful*, the *most unfaithful* to the loving *hearts* who suffered in this war, the *most unfaithful* to those households bowed in grief, yet lifted up with the feeling that the lad had lain down his life for *great things*, among other *things* in order that other lads might not have to do *the same thing*.”

“ . . . we were governed by a great representative assembly made up of the human *passions*, and that the best we could manage was that the high and fine *passions* should be in a majority, so that they could control the face of *passion*; so that they could check the things that were wrong; and this treaty seeks something like that. In drawing the humane endeavors together, it makes a mirror of the fine *pas-*

THE STORY OF A STYLE

sions of the world, of the philanthropic *passions*, and of its *passion* of human friendliness and helpfulness, for there is such a *passion*. It is the *passion* that has lifted us along the slow road of civilization; it is the *passion* that has made ordered government possible; it is the *passion* that has made justice and established the *thing* in some happy part of the world."

In the course of some 136 running words, of which more than three-fourths should be discounted as mere grammatical assistants ("and," "be," "was," "is," "it is," "the," "of") the word "passion" occurs ten times; — in the course of some thirty-four necessary verbal representations of thought, Mr. Wilson's mind attaches itself to a single word, namely, "passion," every third word.

We get, in this first day's deliverances, such characteristic accentuations as: "*very profound pleasure*" (not merely pleasure, not merely *profound* pleasure; but VERY PROFOUND pleasure); "*violently improbable*," (not merely improbable); "*absolute good faith*"; "*absolutely ignorant*"; "*absolutely negligible*." "I want to say to you *in all seriousness and soberness that . . .*"

We get "visions" three times, and "voices" five times, ("tell them so in a voice as authentic as any voice in history," etc.). We get "face to face"; "a method of adjustment"; "in the last analysis"; "shot through with . . ."

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SPEECHES

Those good old nags, "processes" and "counsel," were not, on the first day, over-ridden. We get "the processes of history" and we learn that: "It was a matter of common counsel that strategic conditions were not in our thoughts." This sentence is peculiarly Wilsonian; it may have been a matter of common *knowledge* that strategic conditions were not in their thoughts; or a matter of common *agreement* that strategic conditions should not be in their thoughts; but only the Wilsonian mind can find meaning in the sentence, "It was a matter of common *counsel* that strategic conditions were not in our thoughts."

On the first day of his tour, the President repeatedly declared he had not come to debate; he had come to instruct; he must frankly admit that nobody had said anything about the treaty from which any conception of it could be formed; he was repeatedly astonished and amazed and filled with wonder that anybody could misunderstand so plain a document as the Treaty and Covenant; he would not argue about it; he would state it. He seems to have entered upon the tour in a spirit even unusually impatient with the senators of "pygmy minds" with "their eyes on the ground," and with all and sundry whose mental inferiority prevented their instant agreement with the result of his own lucid mental processes.

THE STORY OF A STYLE

"I am trying to tell the people what is in the treaty. You would not know what was in it to read some of the speeches I read, and if you will be generous enough to me to read some of the things I say, I hope it will help to clarify a great many matters which have been very much obscured by some of the things which have been said."

"I am astounded at some of the statements I see made about this treaty, and the truth is that they are made by persons who have not read the treaty, or who if they have read it, have not comprehended its meaning."

"That is the treaty. Did you ever hear of it before? Did you ever know before what was in the treaty? Did anybody ever before tell you what the treaty was intended to do?"

"I just wanted to have the pleasure of pointing out to you how absolutely ignorant of the treaty, and of the covenant, some of the men are who have been opposing. If they do read the English language, they do not understand the English language as I understand it."

"If they read this treaty and this covenant, they only amaze me by their inability to understand what is plainly expressed."

"Let them put up, or shut up."

Yet, although he served notice that he was not going to debate with anybody, he asked himself, on this first day, some thirty argumentative questions, and answered them triumphantly every one.

On this day he gave twelve different statements of the objects of the war, and six varieties of state-

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SPEECHES

ment as to what "the heart of the treaty" was and was not, besides as many more as to what "the center" and "the essence" of the treaty was. He eight times declared that he entertained no doubt whatever that the people were overwhelmingly for the unamended treaty.

The first day's report does not promise well for a month's performance free from the failings noted in former speeches. The repetitions, the impatience, the carelessness of fact, the over-emphasized confidence, coupled with the constant practice of mock debate, are disturbing.

A second day of travel seems to have done nothing towards softening the asperities of the President's language. At St. Louis on September 5th, those who were unable to see eye to eye with him he denounced as "contemptible quitters." Their "ignorance" and their "aberrations" amazed him. As for himself, he was a plain American who wanted to hear plain talk and fill his lungs with wholesome air, such as he couldn't get in Washington — that's the kind of a man he was! Among his compliments to being of inferior mind and his boasts of his own mind were these:

"I have come here to-night to ask permission to discuss

THE STORY OF A STYLE

with you some of the very curious aberrations of thinking that have taken place in this country of late."

"I hear some gentlemen, themselves incapable of altruistic purposes, say: 'Ah, but that is altruistic.'"

"I am just trying to be what some men do not seem to be able to be—a simple, plain-thinking, plain-speaking American citizen."

"Let them show me how they will prove that having gone into an enterprise, they are not absolutely contemptible quitters if they don't see the game through."

"That is not the kind of American I am."

"Well, I am not a quitter, for one!"

"I have come away from Washington to discuss them, because apparently it is difficult to discuss them in Washington."

"I wanted to come out and hear some plain American, hear the kind of talk that I am accustomed to talk, the only kind of talk that I can understand, get the only kind of atmosphere with which I can fill my lungs wholesomely, and, then, incidentally, convey a hint in some quarters that the American people had not forgotten how to think."

"Can any sane man hesitate . . . can any sane man ask the question?"

"I have heard some men say with an amazing ignorance . . ."

"I wonder if some of the gentlemen who are commenting upon this treaty ever read it! If anybody will tell me which of them has not, I will send him a copy. It is written in two languages. On this side is the English and on that side is the French, and since it is evident that some men

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SPEECHES

do not understand English, I hope that they understand French. There are excellent French dictionaries by which they can dig out the meaning, if they can not understand English. It is the plainest English that you could desire, particularly the covenant of the league of nations. There is not a phrase of doubtful meaning in the whole document."

"The real *voice* of the great people of America" spoke again in the President's ear, on September 5th; but if he had any *visions* that day, he neglected to tell about them. He again proved his devotion to the "throbbing heart of the world."

". . . cuts at *the very heart* and is the only instrument that will cut to *the very heart*."

". . . and if we say that we are in this world to live by ourselves and get what we can get out of it by any selfish *process*, then the reaction will change the whole *heart* of the world. . . ."

As for "progress" and "processes," the wires this day were burdened with them only ten times, in such passages as:

"War is a *process* of heat. Exposure is a *process* of cooling."

"This is the beginning, not of a war, but of the *processes* which are going to make war like this impossible. There are no other *processes* than these that . . ."

". . . believe that the *processes* of peace can be *processes*

THE STORY OF A STYLE

of domination and antagonism, instead of *processes* of co-operation."

Three things were technically "handsome"; nineteen questions were asked and answered; the sporting blood of the speaker was put into evidence by references to "a losing game," "quitters," "an open and shut game," "pawns," "playing a lone hand," a "freeze-out," etc. The refrain was chanted, as usual:

"If you are *China's friend*, don't go into the counsel where you can act as *China's friend*. If you are *China's friend*, then put her in a position where these concessions, which have been made, need not be carried out. If you are *China's friend*, scuttle and run."

". . . if *we must* stand apart and be the hostile rivals of the rest of the world, then *we must* do something else, *we must* be physically ready for anything to come. *We must* have a great standing army. *We must* see to it that . . ."

"If the world is going bankrupt, if credit is going to be destroyed, if the industry of the races of the world is going to be . . ."

Again at St. Louis on the 5th, during his after-luncheon speech, the President demonstrated his contempt for the commonplace virtue of accuracy, historical or geographical:

"What was the old formula of Pan-Germanism? From Bremen to Bagdad, wasn't it? Well, look at the map.

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SPEECHES

What lies between Bremen and Bagdad? After you get past the German territory, there is Poland. There is Bohemia, which we have made into Czecho-Slovakia. There is Hungary, which is divided from Austria and does not share Austria's strength. There is Roumania. There is Jugo-Slavia. There is broken Turkey; and then Persia and Bagdad."

Well, look at the map. The Bremen to Bagdad Railroad does not pass within some hundred miles of Poland, does not touch Roumania, and does not enter Persia.

In this evening speech, the President still once more refused to stoop to pander to the popular prejudice in favor of truthfulness. He said:

"Great Britain and another nation, as everybody knows, in order to make it more certain that Japan would come into the war to assist to clear the Pacific of the German fleet, had promised that any rights Germany had in China should, in case of victory by the Allies, pass to Japan."

The fact is that everybody knows — at least, everybody who knows anything about the matter — that the secret treaties between Great Britian, France and Japan were made in March, 1918, long after Japan had entered the war, and not in 1914, as inducement to Japan to enter it.¹

¹ This note is written October 14th; the text above was written on September 6th.

On September 6th, Senator Norris of Nebraska made in the Sen-

THE STORY OF A STYLE

The President began the next day's speaking (September 6th) at Kansas City, with a claim of having "substituted for the brutal *processes* of war the friendly *processes* of consultation." The world took "counsel" twice in the press report of the day; there were only two "visions"; the heart beat but twice, the face was looked into five times; only three things were done "absolutely"; "adjustments," "impulses," "enterprises," made but a bow or two apiece.

There were three verbal errors, the worst being: "Into which scale shall we throw that magnificent *equipoise* that will be ours?" People do not throw *equipoises* into scales. Mr. Wilson began to fall back upon the habit of introducing statements with "I want to say to you that"—a prologomenous commonplace which he would have scorned in recollected writing.

There were many other evidences of an increased care at a speech calling attention to the error; Mr. Norris telegraphed the President his remarks on this point. A few days later he received the following telegram:

"Garrison, Mon., Sept. 12.

"Hon. G. W. Norris, U. S. Senate, Washington.

"I thank you for correcting an unintentional inaccuracy in one of my recent speeches.

"WOODROW WILSON."

Nevertheless, at Los Angeles on September 20th, at Reno on the 22nd, and at Cheyenne on the 24th, the President repeated the unintentional inaccuracy. See *Senate Document* 120, pages 296, 316, 343.

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SPEECHES

hesitancy of delivery; the appellation "Fellow-citizens" was used twenty-three times.

His temper rose to heights unusual even for a man always easily irritated by ignorant dissent:

". . . and yet there are men who approach the question with *passion*, with *private passion*, with *party passion*, who think only of some immediate advantage to themselves, or to a group of their fellow countrymen, and who look at the thing with the jaundiced eyes of those who have some *private purpose* of their own. When at last in the annals of mankind they are *gibbeted*, they will regret that the *gibbet* is so high."

"There are men who are conscientiously opposed to it, but they will pardon me if I say, ignorantly opposed."

"I have been a student of the English language all my life and I do not see a single obscure sentence in the whole document. Some gentlemen either have not read it or do not understand the English language; but, fortunately, on the right-hand page it is printed in English and on the left-hand page it is printed in French. Now, if they do not understand English, I hope they will get a French dictionary and dig out the meaning on that side."

"Opposition is the specialty of those who are Bolshevistically inclined."

"I have been very much amazed and very much amused to see that the statesmanship of some gentlemen consists in . . ."

"Let them put up, or shut up."

The refrain was intoned in such examples as these:

THE STORY OF A STYLE

“. . . say they are for *that sort of revolution*, when *that sort of revolution* means *government by terror, government by force, not government by vote.*”

“Is there any *business man* here who would be willing to see the *world* go bankrupt and the *business* of the *world* stop? I do not like to argue this thing on this basis but if you want to talk *business* I am ready to talk *business*. It is a matter of how much you *are going to get* for your money. You are not *going to get* one-half as much as antagonists as you *will get* as partners.”

“There was no *assembly chosen* to frame a *constitution for them*, or rather there was an *Assembly chosen* to choose a *constitution for them*, and it was suppressed and dispersed, and a little group of men *just as selfish, just as ruthless, just as pitiless . . .* And in other parts of Europe the *poison* spread, the *poison* of disorder, the *poison* of revolt, the *poison* of chaos.”

“The *processes* of frank discussion are the *processes* of peace not only, but the *processes* of settlement, and those are the *processes* which are set up for all the powerful nations of the world.”

The *s* addiction seems to appear in the peroration with which the day closed at Des Moines:

“. . . that slow and toilsome march, toilsome and full of the kind of agony that brings bloody sweat, but nevertheless going up a slow incline to those distant heights upon which will shine at last the serene light of justice, suffusing a whole world in blissful peace.”

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SPEECHES

In the course of his two speeches this day, the President asked himself thirty-one questions — all of which he satisfactorily answered. At Des Moines he repeated the mistake of placing Bagdad in Persia:

“The formula of Pan-Germanism, you remember, was Bremen to Bagdad — Bremen on the North Sea to Bagdad in Persia.”¹

The President made no speech on Sunday, September 7th. On the 8th he spoke at Omaha and at Sioux Falls. The big medicine was duly appealed to: “processes” and “counsel” exerted their accustomed magic. The President heard his “voices” and told of a “vision” which had so impressed him that he said, in a sentence quite startlingly morbid, “If I felt that I personally stood in any way in the way of the settlement, I would gladly die that it might be consummated.” He spoke feelingly, and more than a dozen times, of “hearts.”

“The *heart* of this people is sure. The *heart* of this people is true.”

“Why, my fellow citizens, the *heart* of that covenant is

¹ According to press reports, the President, speaking in Des Moines, alluded to Prague as the capital of Poland. This error, however, does not appear in the authorized official report, which (*Senate Document 120, 66th Congress, First Session, page 65*) correctly gives Warsaw as the Polish capital).

THE STORY OF A STYLE

that there shall be no war. To listen to some of the speeches that you may have listened to or read, you would think that the *heart* of it was that it was an arrangement for war. On the contrary, this is the *heart* of that treaty. . . .”

“The *heart* of America *beats* in these great prairies and on these hillsides. The *voices* that are most audible in Washington are not *voices* that anybody cares to listen to . . .”

Moreover he gave two other quite different statements as to what the heart of the treaty was, making nine accounts of the matter up to date. He was pretty peevish again with senators and other inferior minds:

“Some gentlemen who doubt the meaning of English words have thought that advice did not mean advice, but I do not know anything else that it does mean, and I have studied English most of my life and speak it with reasonable correctness.”

“That puzzles me, my fellow citizens. The English language seems to have got some new meaning since I studied it that bothers these gentlemen. I do not know what dictionaries they resort to. I do not know what manuals of conscience they can possibly resort to.”

“I suggested the other night that if they do not like that language there is another language in here. That page is English [illustrating]; this page is French [illustrating] — the same thing. If the English does not suit them, let them engage the interest of some French scholar and see if they like the French better.”

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SPEECHES

“No man, even in the secrets of Providence, can tell how long it will take the United States Senate to do anything.”

The refrain was again insistent.

“. . . the man that *picks flaws* in it, or rather that *picks out the flaws* that are in it — for there are *flaws* in it — *because of the magnitude of the thing* and *because of the majesty of the interests involved*, forgets *the magnitude of the thing* and forgets *the majesty of the . . .*”

“Germany had been preparing *every* resource and perfecting *every* skill, developing *every* invention. . . : *Everybody* had been looking on. *Everybody* had known. It was known in *every* war office.”

“*Well, you say, why not? Well, why not, why not, my fellow citizens?*”

A characteristic protestation interrupted the President's rhetoric; it was an assurance that he cared for nothing but facts, and an exhortation to his hearers to be like him; it contained also the naïve and significant admission that a denial was suspicious:

“There is an old saying accredited to a rather cynical politician of what I hope I may regard as the older school, who said to his son, ‘John, do not bother your head about lies; they will take care of themselves; but if you ever hear me denying anything, you may be sure it is so.’ The only thing we are afraid of, the only thing we dodge, is the truth. If we see facts coming our way, it is just as well to get out

THE STORY OF A STYLE

of the way. Always take this attitude, my friends, toward facts; always try to see them coming first, so that they will not catch you at unawares."

The next day, the 9th, at St. Paul, the protestation of devotion to facts took the following form:

"There is one thing that I respect more than any other, and that is a fact. I remember, when I was governor of the State of New Jersey, I was very urgently pressing some measures which a particular member of the senate of the State, whom I knew and liked very much, was opposed to. His constituents were very much in favor of it, and they sent an influential committee down personally to conduct his vote; and after he had voted for the measure they brought him, looking a little sheepish, into my office to be congratulated. Well, he and I kept as straight faces as we could, and I congratulated him very warmly, and then with a very heavy wink he said to me behind his hand, 'Governor, they never get me if I see 'em coming first.' Now, that is not a very high political principle, but I commend that principle to you with regards to facts. Never let them get you if you see them."

And, almost immediately, Mr. Wilson proved that his own respect and affection for a fact, his stern sense of the duty of fastidious loyalty to truth, was second to nothing except his love of a good rhetorical turn. Eulogizing the American soldier, he exclaimed:

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SPEECHES

“It is based upon long experience that in every part of the world I can recognize an American the minute I see him.”

Mr. Wilson has been in England, France, Belgium, Italy, Bermuda and the United States. There are several other parts of the world.

The school-master said to the people of the Twin Cities: “I am not arguing with you; I am merely telling you.” He lectured his far-away refractory scholars at Washington:

“The gentlemen who are *making* this *mistake* are *making* a *mistake* they will reflect upon in obscurity for the rest of their lives.”

“I see gentlemen burying their heads in something and *thinking* that nobody sees that they have submerged their *thinking* apparatus. That is what I mean by being ostriches.”

On this date, the partial report of Mr. Wilson's remarks contained the following characteristic sentences:

“*Did you think they were seeking to aggrandize America some way? Did you think they were going to take something for America that had belonged to somebody else? Did you think that they were going. . . .*”

“In every other country there is *some* class that dominates: or *some* governmental authority that determines the course of policy, or *some* ancient system of land laws that

THE STORY OF A STYLE

limits the freedom of land tenure, or *some* ancient custom which . . .”

“*Liberty is a thing* of slow construction. *Liberty is a thing* of universal coöperation. *Liberty is a thing* which you must build up by habit. *Liberty is a thing* which is rooted and grounded in character.

“. . . by a *five years' war*, particularly by a *five years' war* in which they are not yet conscious of the *wrong* they did or the *wrong* way in which they did it; and they are expecting the time of the *revival of their power*, and, along with the *revival of their power*. . . . The *German* bankers, the *German* merchants, and the *German* manufacturers did not want this war. . . .”

“I saw *many* fine sights in Paris, *many* gallant sights, *many* sights that quickened the *pulse*, but my *pulse* never . . .”

“I do not mean to say that *dissatisfaction* is universal *dissatisfaction*, because there are situations in many instances of *satisfaction*.”

“We have got to *play* our part and we have got to *play* it either as boards of directors or as outside spectators. We can *play* it inside or on the *curb*, and you know how inconvenient it is to *play* it on the *curb*. ‘The facts are *marching* upon us and the world is *marching* with them.’”

“I am far from *intimating* that, but I am *intimating* this: that the people of the world are tired of every other kind of *experiment* except the one we are going to try [he means, tired of every kind of experiment but the one we are going to make]. I have called it an *experiment*; I frankly admit

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SPEECHES

that it is an *experiment*, but it is a very promising *experiment*."

". . . the *faces* of our soldiers, that incomparable American spirit which you do not see the like of anywhere; that universal brightness of expression, as if every man knew there was a future and that he had something to do with molding it, instead of that dull, expressionless *face* which means that there is nothing but a past and a burdensome present. You do not see that in the American *face*. The American *face* mirrors the future, and, my fellow citizens, the American purpose mirrors the future of the world."

Here the President denounced opposition to the treaty as born of German-American intrigue, likened the "hyphen" to a serpent and gave an imitation of its hiss. He ridiculed the Senate for debating so long — God Almighty did not know when it would get through — held three debates with himself, in one of which he asked and answered eighteen questions; and proclaimed his "unbounded confidence" and his "absolute, unclouded confidence" in the result.

"It seems very strange . . . it seems very strange . . . it seems very strange. . . . The mind of the world. . . . The mind of the world . . . likely at any time to blaze out in the world and which did blaze out and set the world on fire. The trouble was at the heart of Europe. At the heart of Europe there were suffering people with hearts on fire.

THE STORY OF A STYLE

That is the principle that is at the heart of this treaty, and if that principle cannot be maintained, then there will ensue upon it the passion that dwelt in the hearts of those peoples, a despair that will bring about universal unrest. Men in despair do not construct governments. Men in despair destroy governments."

So it ran at Bismarck on September 10th. Among the eleven hearts mentioned, one was that of the treaty, which now was disclosed to be Article X.

The address at Billings, Montana, on the 11th, was extraordinarily interesting. No previous one had been quite so highly charged with emotion. The President declared that one of the hardest things he had to do during the war was to refrain from taking a gun and going. From the context it is clear Mr. Wilson meant to be understood literally and seriously. He talked of poison again, and of dark and dreadful things: "There are apostles of Lenine in our midst. I cannot imagine what it means to be an apostle of Lenine. It means to be an apostle of the night, of chaos." Death came and tears fell and graves yawned. The liturgic drone of the refrain became a lacrymose chant: "There are hot tears upon every cheek and those tears are tears of — sorrow!" "I wonder when we speak of the whole world whether we have any conception that the *human heart beats everywhere the same!*"

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SPEECHES

What grade of thought is being organized by a brain that functions like this?

. . . “accept this treaty or *play a lone hand*. To *play a lone hand* means we must be ready to *play* by ourselves. . . . If you are going to *play a lone hand*, the *hand* you *play* must be upon the *hand-le* of the sword. You cannot *play a lone hand* and do your civil business except with the other *hand* — one *hand* incidental for the business of peace, the other *hand* constantly for the assertion of force. It is either this treaty or the *lone hand*, and the *lone hand* . . .”

[Senate Document, 66th Congress, No. 120, pp. 131-2.]

The President was anxious that the people of Montana should bear in mind that the war began because the Archduke Franz Ferdinand was slain in Serbia. “Don’t you remember,” he asked (he himself “remembered” distinctly), “that the Crown Prince of Austria was assassinated in Serbia?”

It would, of course, be easy to entertain ourselves with reflections on the special qualifications for remaking maps displayed by one who persists in deviations, like these of Mr. Wilson, from geographical and historical fact. But their interest for us is not one of entertainment; they impel us to a scrutiny of the mental conditions under which they are possible.

It is of course incredible that Mr. Wilson had never been informed correctly, for example, of the

THE STORY OF A STYLE

scene of Franz Ferdinand's murder. The fact that in several speeches he laid emphasis upon it as a chief element in the Austrian crime, that the Apostolic and Catholic Government was dealing with a murder done in Serbia, shows how much importance he placed upon the scene of the deed. How, then, came he to retain a recollection so far from the fact that it was the reverse of the fact? Did his cognition refuse to register the fact when it was originally made known? Did it continue in that refusal during all the weeks of international agitation that prefaced the war? Or had he even originally reversed the fact as it entered his apprehension? Or did his mind originally and during those weeks merely neglect the circumstance of place as negligible, and only five years later awaken to its importance? And by what process did he persuade himself that the capital of Bosnia was in Serbia, and that not the assassin, but the victims, were on foreign soil?

The psychoanalysts have opened our eyes to the truth that there is nothing fortuitous in "forgettings" and errors of memory. The mechanism of "forgetfulness" and "mistakes" has been so far explored as to make it clear that there is a practical reason underneath every error of memory. It might be interesting to have this lapse analyzed by competent psychopathological authority. It is incredible that some time or other in his studious

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SPEECHES

days (say, when he was reading *The Arabian Nights*), Mr. Wilson did not learn that Bagdad is in Mesopotamia; was not taught that Prague is the proud and ancient capital of Bohemia; difficult to believe that their location was not again and again recalled to his mind by events of the war.

The astonishing unreliability of Mr. Wilson's most often repeated statements concerning highly important facts find their explanation in the principle announced by Freud (*Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, 256): "Of all the faulty actions the mechanism of the error seems to be the most superficial. That is, the occurrence of the error invariably indicates that the mental activity concerned had to struggle with some disturbing influences."

At Helena that evening the President's long speech, delivered "with the utmost candor," "very solemnly" and "with great openness of mind," was largely concerned with "hearts" (fourteen of them), "visions," "voices," "venom," "advantages," and "adjustments." He said he would "venture to think that" (twice), "take the liberty of saying that" (twice), and "take occasion to say that"; and he babbled echoes by the hour. He talked of "very *unsettled* unrest" and was afraid that "men like these would have to die *again*." He paid his respects to "spiders" and "traitors" and "liars"; he was "amazed at the forgetfulness" of certain

THE STORY OF A STYLE

gentlemen in Washington, and he wondered "where some gentlemen have been." He himself did not forget to remind his auditors that "the Crown Prince of Austria was assassinated in Serbia." And in an outburst of rage he turned upon trusted friends who, he declared, had tried to mislead him about Mexico. "I learned what I know about Mexico," he proclaimed, "by hearing a large number of liars tell me all about it." He confessed the liars had confused him, but then he "had a lucid interval" and recognized the true character of their reports. There were "regions into which their lying capacity did not extend. They had not had time to make up any lies about that." So his calm penetration ascertained the truth after all; "lies never match" before the superior eye of discerning reason. "So I learned the truth about Mexico by listening to a sufficiently large number of liars!"

This interesting passage, in which the President rung the changes on the gentle word, "liar," throughout the octave, concluded with a morbid peon of truth, hymned as his own peculiar possession:

"You may trample it under foot, you may blind its eyes with blood — but you cannot kill it, and sooner or later it rises up, it seeks, it gets, its revenge!"

This, then, is the end of the first week of the President's tour.

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SPEECHES

We have had six days of incorrigible echolalia; confidently reiterated misstatements of fact, irritated denunciations of opponents, amazement at their "aberrations," ridicule of their pretense to be able even to read; boasts of his own superiority and confidence; allusions to his "lucid moments"; assertions that there is nothing to debate, and scorn of those who won't debate it, accompanying a continuous performance of self-debate; hesitating delivery, finding freedom chiefly in explosions of rage or picturings of serpents, poison, corpses, ghouls, and chaos; with hourly exhibitions of unreasonable dislike for Washington, which he pretends to condemn, but which obsesses his imagination, and from which he has — shall we say? — fled.

More and more the journey takes on the character of a flight — a flight from his critics, from Washington, loathed as a localization of disturbances, from his problems, from himself. Will it win escape?

So far as it has progressed, the tour does not seem to manifest a happy influence upon the President. He entered upon it under an emotional load. Its scenes have been kaleidoscopic, its physical exertions fatiguing. But it is not incongruous that a restless mind should seek rest in restless scenes. Other environments would doubtless have been more happily chosen, if the inner conflict had not compelled to these; but, while excitement, with its attendant

THE STORY OF A STYLE

fatigued reactions, may furnish occasion for, may even cause, exhibitions which otherwise would not have been made, it cannot, after all, bring into activity forces which were not already static; cannot reveal conditions which were not already existing.

Those conditions — a week of peculiar revelation leaves no excuse for longer hesitating to say — are those attendant upon constitutional doubt.

All the addictions, covering affectations, habits, refuges in symbolism, personifications, and magical invocations of words, discerned in earlier chapters, have, during this week, blossomed into greater luxuriance. The irradiations of mysticism have become more pronounced.

Especially intensified during this week has been the addiction to repetition of sounds and words. If the phonetic phenomena described in foregoing pages of this book written months ago seemed then by any possibility mere fancies of an over-ingenuous analysis, any scruple as to their reality has now been erased. Illustrations of echolalia so crowd the columns of the press reports of the President's Western addresses that it seems idle to cumber these pages with further proofs of a propensity so patent.

Apart from its significance as a symptom of fatigue and abdication of thought control, repetition may on just ground be regarded as a projection of doubt. An uncertain mind seeks to escape from its

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SPEECHES

indecision by reiteration; seeks to persuade itself that it is positive. But it is just because it is tormented by unconscious uncertainty, that it cannot release the idea the necessity of a decision on which is agitating it. It is held fascinated by the image of its own distress; it haunts the scene of its tragic struggle. The wavering intellect tends to dwell, tends to over-emphasize, and yet is anxious to escape. This it often is able to do by a trick; it slips away under cover of an alliteration or a phonetic antanaclasis; passing, blandly, from the word which represents the conflict, to another quite innocent word of similar sound. While it is being permitted to resound, repetition is echoing an inner conflict; it is the effect of, and the picture of, a brake on the progress of thought; the result of struggles within a psychic complex which tends to paralyze the brain.

The intensification of the echolalic addiction, therefore, is a symptom easily to be understood and naturally to be expected, among the other phenomena of this somewhat disturbing week.

The remarks of the President at Cœur D'Alene, on the 12th, were, not unnaturally, even unusually full of "heart." Here he twice professed to be "amazed" that anybody could oppose the treaty. He charged that Germany was working against it;

THE STORY OF A STYLE

German propaganda had dared to raise its head again. He wanted to tell them that now and here; he wanted to tell it in tones so loud that they would reach the world; he knew what he was talking about. He himself was an American, had saturated himself since a boy with the traditions of America. But — with a singular turn of impulse — he cried: “Do not let anybody delude you, my fellow-citizens, with the pose of being an American. If I am an American I want at least to be an intelligent American. If I am a true American I will study the true interests of America. If I am a true American I will have the world vision that America has always had, drawing her blood, drawing her genius, as she has drawn her people, out of all the great constructive peoples of the world. A true American conceives America”

In the evening at Spokane, the President complained: “I want to tell you, my fellow-citizens, that there is one element in this whole discussion which ought not to be in it. There is, though I say it myself, an element of personal bitterness. One would suppose that this covenant of the League of Nations was first thought of and first invented and first written by a man named Wilson.” If they wanted to make it a personal matter, they could. “I am ready to fight from now until all the fight has been taken out of me by death!”

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SPEECHES

The narcissistic complex came to light again in the lack of modesty with which the President described the part he had played at Versailles in persuading the Supreme Council to put recognition of the Monroe doctrine into the treaty. This was the most wonderful treaty in the world's history and "that is the most extraordinary sentence in the treaty. I have made a great many speeches in my life, perhaps too many, but I do not think that I ever put so much of what I hope was the best in me as I put in the speech in the conference on the League of Nations in favor of the Monroe doctrine, and it was upon that occasion that it was embodied. And we have this extraordinary spectacle, of the world recognizing the validity of the Monroe doctrine." Yet there were gentlemen who actually asked for more! He submitted that to ask for more than he had achieved was "absolutely irrational."

When thought hesitated, automatic vocalization did not fail:

"Men do not *hope* in Europe as they *hope* in America. They *hope* tremblingly. They *hope* fearfully. They do not *hope* with confidence."

"Where are your *programs*? How can you carry a *program* out when every man is taking what he can get? How can you carry a *program* out when there is no authority upon which to base it? How can you carry a *program* out . . .

"Out upon these quiet hills and in these great valleys *it*

THE STORY OF A STYLE

is difficult sometimes for me to remember the turmoil of the world in which I have been mixing on the other side of the sea; it is difficult for me to remember the surging passions which moved upon the face of the other continents of the world; it is difficult for me to remember the infinite suffering that happened even in this beloved country; it is difficult for me to remember the delegations from weak peoples that came to me in Paris, figuratively speaking, with outstretched hands, pleading that America should lead the way out of the darkness into the light; it is difficult out here to remember . . .”

The two addresses of Saturday, the 13th, at Tacoma and Seattle, were those of a tired man at the end of a hard week. The President was still alert enough to be “amazed” at the irrationality and untruthfulness of his adversaries, and he did not forget again to assassinate the Austrian Crown Prince in Serbia. The fetishes of the medicine-bag must have been pretty tired too, by night; the drone of the incantation ran sometimes to this extreme:

“We must see that the processes of peace, the processes of discussion, the processes of fairness, the processes of equity, the processes of sympathy penetrate all our affairs.”

He talked about attempts to “qualify the process which is inevitable” and “the process of Germany’s Constitution.” He drew a touching picture of the lonely farmer, without even a boy to help him at

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SPEECHES

his chores, yearning to "underwrite civilization" because "he realizes that the world is hungry, that the world is naked, that the world is suffering."

Sunday could hardly have been a day of reassuring rest. On Monday, the 15th, at Portland, the President began by boasting of his Scottish blood (his mother was English, his father Irish-American) and his ancestors, who, as Covenanters, raised Cain in despite of man or devil. Like them, he was going to see this job through. "Let gentlemen beware, therefore, how they disappoint the world. Let gentlemen beware how they betray the immemorial principles of the United States. Let men not make the mistake . . ." He declared he was aware that all over the country pro-German propaganda was beginning to be active again. "And the poison of failure is being injected into the fine body politics of the world, a sort of paralysis, a sort of fear." . . . "a sob" . . . "a tear brushed hastily off the cheek" . . . "a flood of tears" . . . But there is "one thing you cannot kill" . . . He had been telling some friends this very day a legendary story of the Middle Ages: A certain chieftain of a half-civilized tribe commanded his unwilling subjects to violate a sacred tradition. "He blazed out upon them: 'Don't you know that I can put you to death?'"

THE STORY OF A STYLE

‘ Yes,’ they said, ‘ and don’t you know that we can die cursing you!’ ”

The President had been telling that story to some friends to-day, he said, and now he told it to the world. Yes, they might try, but they could not kill the spirit. Unjustly slain, “ the whole spirit of the tribe could CURSE . . . Out of the spilt blood, would spring up, as it were, armed men, like dragon’s teeth, to overwhelm! ”

Decidedly, what with Covenanters on tombstones, poison, paralysis, tears, murder, curses and dragon’s teeth, all on Monday, this is not going to be a calm week. Even the mellifluous refrain is affected: “ America is a homogeneous people, after all; homogeneous in its ideals, homogeneous in its purpose, homogeneous in the (in the, in the) in-fectious which it had caught from a common light:”

The San Francisco speeches, on the 17th, were of noticeably decreased vigor. With the extreme attenuation of thought now manifest, dependence upon verbal automatism became, if possible, even more glaring. The first address, indeed, opened with a new phrase: “ moral compulsion ”; it was echoed twelve times in the course of two minutes, and then forgotten. In a single address, four different virtues were each declared to be “ the heart of the treaty.” Many errors of fact, including the fa-

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SPEECHES

miliar ones in relation to Poland, Roumania and Persia, were made.

There was an abandonment of the vilipend, however. The President's mood had changed. He was, or he declared he was, supremely confident of himself and his cause. But he was no longer "amazed" at the stupidity of senators. He was merely "puzzled"—of course, "very much puzzled," "profoundly puzzled." He confessed that as he had crossed the continent, he had "feared at times that there were those who did not realize just what the heart of the question" was. But of course the treaty and covenant were going through. "I am arguing the matter only because I am a very patient man. . . . The only thing that makes the world inhabitable is that it is sometimes ruled by its purest spirits." There was no profession of purity or wisdom that Mr. Wilson deemed it immodest to make. He could not understand how a man who had conceived wrong — even conceived wrong, could ever go to sleep. "The Versailles Congress had inaugurated a new world of beauty and order. *An illumination of profound understanding of human affairs shines upon the deliberations of that conference that never shone upon the deliberations of any other international conference in history.*" But even in that place of celestial light, there had to be an inner circle of specially endowed *illuminati*. "I

THE STORY OF A STYLE

was glad after I had inaugurated it, that I drew together the little body which was called the Big Four."

Still, he humbly admitted his dependence upon the even superior wisdom of an Almighty God. He confessed that the disordered world could not be guided by finite intelligence; "if I thought so," he wearily said, "I should not know how to reason my way to sanity." "I believe in Divine providence," he concluded. "If I did not, *I would go crazy.*"

In his brief address at Berkeley on the 18th, the President said: "A remark was repeated to me that was made after the address I made in San Francisco last night. Some man said that after hearing an exposition of what was really in the treaty, he was puzzled; he wondered what the debate was about; it all seemed so simple." Mr. Wilson again repeated this remark at Oakland a few hours later, this time remembering that the gentleman quoted was "a very thoughtful man, I was told," and that he had said "he wondered what the debate was about; it all seemed so simple, *so obvious, so natural.*"

Indications that all is indeed not serene confidence in Mr. Wilson's mind are furnished by the importance he attaches to a single testimony like that twice to-day recounted.

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SPEECHES

At San Diego, September 20, the President described five different and distinct things as each "the heart" or in the "heart of the treaty." The day was apparently one of much fog.

On the 21st at Los Angeles, the President again grew bitter. Something, he said, had happened. When he arrived home with the Treaty, there was no sort of doubt the whole nation would have accepted it without a single change either in wording or punctuation. But something had intervened; he would not say what; he would not judge what. He did not understand it. But he understood a part of it. Something had "raised its hideous head." "I hear the hiss of it on every side."

The trouble was, he said, in another droop of spirits, that there was little use in trying to reason against unreason. Twice to-day the President referred to a lesson he had received from his father. This was it:

"My good father used to teach me that you cannot reason out of a man what reason did not put in him."

It is significant that as his difficulties seem to daunt him, Mr. Wilson's mind takes refuge in a saying used by his father — the chief formative influence upon his mental character. And significant also

THE STORY OF A STYLE

that the consoling apothegm should be a depreciation of reason.

It is with this despairing note upon his lips that the President prepares to-morrow to turn his face homeward.

Thoughts of tides, pulses, reactions gave at Reno, on September 23rd, a slightly new color to what has become Mr. Wilson's set speech. He professed an exhilaration in the frontier environment. The movement of our adventurous population had always been one way — onward. There had never been any returning tides. The American army, too, knew how to go only one way — didn't know how to retreat. That was a fine thing. If certain gentlemen who were criticizing him were ever to

“feel the impulse of courage instead of the impulse of cowardice, they will realize how much better it feels. Your blood is at least warm and comfortable, and the red corpuscles are in command, when you have got some spunk in you; but when you have not, when you are afraid somebody is going to put over something on you, you are furtive and go about looking out for things, and your blood is cold and you shiver as you turn a dark corner.”

Quite clearly, there is here not a mere literary description of the psychic condition of funk; too vivid for that, it is, beyond question, a naïve confes-

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SPEECHES

sion of personal experience of it. Even more than that: it is suspiciously like unconscious evidence that the described condition is, at the present moment, precisely that against which the orator is fighting.

They have a big organ, and, by repute, an extraordinarily fine choir at the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City. But never, until September 23, 1920, surely, here, or anywhere since Music, heavenly maid, was young, have the echoes of symbolic sound thus, in the spent retirement of articulated reason, chanted the magic cadence of reverberant phrase:

“ I have come to present a theme . . . in presenting this theme, because the theme . . . is a theme. . . . We sent our boys across the sea to defeat the purpose of Germany, but after we had defeated the purpose of Germany . . . One by one the objections have melted away. One by one it has become evident that the objections were without sufficient foundation. One by one it has become impossible to support them as objections, and at last we come to the very heart of the matter. ✓

“ It was easier to train an army in America than anywhere else because you have to train them to go only one way. They went only one way . . . and the people of the United States go only one way.

“ Does the United States want . . .? Does the United States want . . .? If you want to put out a fire in Utah, you do not send to Oklahoma for the engine. If you want

THE STORY OF A STYLE

to put out a fire in the Balkans, if you want to stamp out the flame, you do not send to the United States . . .

“That is not what this resolution says. This resolution says . . . We do not want . . . we do not want . . . but we want . . . I appeal, and I appeal with confidence . . . I appeal . . . I know them to be highminded, and I know them to be men whose character and judgment I respect and whose motives I respect as much as I respect . . . Are they willing . . . are they willing . . . The world knows . . . it knows . . . it knows . . . it knows . . . It is inconceivable . . . it is inconceivable . . . The taproot of war is still sunk in the soil of passion. I am for cutting the taproot of war . . . I am for . . . It is pretty hard to stay crazy mad for nine months. If you stay crazy mad, or crazy anything else, for nine months, it will be wise to segregate you. The heart of this covenant is . . . My heart goes out to China, that great people, that learned people, that accomplished people, that honest people. . . . It is a test, an acid test . . . If you are timid, I can tell you . . . If you are squeamish, I will tell you. . . . The only thing you are afraid of is the truth. The only thing you dare not face is the truth. The only thing that will get you is the truth, and the only thing that will conquer is the truth. I ask your assistance . . . I ask you to make it felt . . . We want to be friends of each other as well as friends of mankind. We want America to be united. We want America to be a body of brethren, and if America is a body of brethren . . .”

But there was a surprisingly irrational misapprehension on the part of the enchanted auditors in the

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SPEECHES

Tabernacle. The President read a reservation which (he somehow failed to make it clear) it was impiously proposed to make upon the sacred language of the Treaty. The vast and stupid audience applauded the blasphemy! And the recitative of the orator rose, for a moment, to the note of battle:

“ If you have a knife in your hands with which you intend to cut out the heart of this covenant, applaud, but if you want this covenant to have a heart in it, and want it to have a purpose in it, consider what I am saying. This is cutting out the heart of the covenant. Do you want to do that? Do you want to join those processes of paralysis which are attacking the heart of the treaty itself?”¹

Cheyenne, September 24th.

And still the philosophic jaw
Doth triturate the patient straw.

The President began the 25th at Denver with an elaborate reply to the objection that his League of Nations plan gave six votes to Great Britain against the single vote allowed the United States. Our interest here is not at all in the merits or vices of the League of Nations Covenant, but solely in the state of the President's logical powers. His statement ran:

¹The interruption, and the rejoinder from the platform are suppressed in the official rescript of the President's Western addresses.

THE STORY OF A STYLE

✓ “You are constantly being told that Great Britain has six votes and we have one. They have six votes in the Assembly and the Assembly don't vote. So that bubble is exploded. There are several matters in which the vote of the Assembly must coöperate with the vote of the Council, but in every such case a unanimous vote of the Council is necessary.”

The above sentences were consecutive. They set forth that:

There are several matters in which the vote of the Assembly must coöperate with that of the Council, but the Assembly does not vote. Also Great Britain has six votes in the Assembly, which doesn't vote. So that bubble is exploded.

Five hours later it was exploded again. At Pueblo the President said:

✓ “You have heard of six votes belonging to Great Britain. Those six votes are not in the Council. They are in the Assembly, and the interesting thing is that *the Assembly does not vote. I must modify that statement a little but essentially it is absolutely true.* In every matter in which the Assembly is given a vote (and there are only four or five) its votes does not count unless concurred in by the representatives of all the nations represented on the Council, so there is no validity to the vote of the Assembly unless approved by the United States, so the vote of the United States is as big as the six votes of the British Empire.”

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SPEECHES

Less agile minds may be perplexed as to how a statement which requires to be modified a little can still remain essentially absolutely true; also how an Assembly, the interesting thing about which is that it does not vote, is given a vote in only four or five matters; likewise, why the vote of an Assembly which does not vote needs to be concurred in; furthermore, why, to give validity to the vote of an Assembly which does not vote, the approval of the United States is necessary; and eke how it therefore follows, as the night the day, that the one vote of the United States is as big as the six votes of the British Empire.

“It is essentially absolutely true.”

How naturally it comes in 1920, from the author of the identical construction a quarter of a century ago: . . . “flat rebellion, little less.” (Rebellion, yes, flat rebellion — at least, little less than flat rebellion); . . . “in the very presence almost of the French themselves” (in the presence of the French, the French *themselves*, the VERY presence of the French themselves — that is, at least, in the very presence ALMOST of the French themselves). “It is true — it is *absolutely* true — that is to say, it is ESSENTIALLY absolutely true. I must modify that statement a little, but *essentially* it is *absolutely* true.”

Is this crippling of the faculty of decision

THE STORY OF A STYLE

the revenge of the unsatisfied inner conflict which during so many years has clamored for resolution, which has disturbed the soul and beleaguered the throne of reason, and which still pursues its object, as if endowed with a fatal necessity of self-fulfillment?

Apart from the essay at argument recounted above, the President's protestations were to-day notably peevish:

"I do not understand delays. I do not understand covert processes of opposition. . . . I do not wish to draw doubtful conclusions. I do not wish to do injustice to the process of any honest mind. . . . I do not carry any purpose of my own to Paris. I did not carry any purpose that I did not know from the action of public opinion in the United States was the purpose of the United States. It was not the purpose of a party. It was not the purpose of any section of our fellow-citizens. It was a purpose, etc."

"Do you think it unjust that there should be some opportunity of debate given to that little country in the South, New Zealand? Do you think it unjust that Australia should be allowed to take part in the debate? Do you think it unjust that that little country in the south of Africa should be represented? . . . Is not Canada a good neighbor? Is not Canada . . ."

He seemed to-day to be particularly beset by visions. What for several days he has been calling

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SPEECHES

“ the dear ghosts ” of the dead at Suresnes, emerged again from among “ the serried ranks of the boys in khaki ”; and an obsession of unhappy ideas, symbolized (as in *Macbeth*) by daggers, marked his utterances:

“ Hyphens are the knives that are being stuck in this document.”

“ I want to say — I cannot say too often — any man who carries a hyphen about with him carries a dagger that he is ready to plunge into the vitals of this Republic.”

Following the speeches of September 25th, Mr. Wilson's fatigue became so pronounced that his physician ordered the tour abandoned.

[*The above sentence was written on September 26th, and with it this story concludes.*]

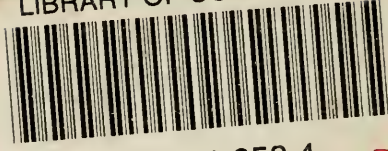
Decidified using the Bookkeeper process.
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