

*August 13, 1920.*—A pleasant time last evening at our dinner—the ———s, the Sloanes, and Totten, consul-general at large; much talk with Sloane and then with Mr. ——— after dinner.... As to the League of Nations, and the treaty, Mr. ——— said that the treaty might easily have been confirmed if the President had employed the slightest tact with the Senate. But the President had flouted and insulted the Senators in every way. For instance, directly the President returned to Washington from Paris, he received the visit, quite casual, of an Englishman, who said to him:

“Mr. President, do you not anticipate trouble with the Senators over Shantung?”

“Yes,” replied the President, “I do, just as soon as the Senators find out where Shantung is. At present they think it is a county in Ireland.”

Clever as this was, it and other remarks like it were disastrous in their effect on the Senate. But even so, the treaty could have been confirmed if it had not been for the President's trip to the West, the most idiotic thing, Mr. ——— said, imaginable, since no election was in progress and there was no way in which the people, even if convinced, could influence the Senate against its will.

Mr. ——— had written a letter of advice to the President, suggesting that he enter into no conflict with the Senate; that instead of making his own personality and his own deeds the issue, he make

the Allied cause the issue, so that if the Senators hit any one, they would hit the Allies; that he lay the treaty before the Senate with the simple remark that it was a compromise, the best that could be obtained in the circumstances and that then he allow the Democratic Senators to secure the best settlement they could, and then lay the result before the Allies, placing the responsibility for the amendments or reservations on the Senators. The Allies would have accepted it and we should have had peace today. He showed the letter to Gregory and to Baker, and to one other—I forget whom—and they approved it, all of them. It was then sent to the White House, but Mrs. Wilson did not allow it to reach the President, or, if she did, no answer ever came.

Mr. ——— told me that Davis is to resign; he goes home on the 18th, to take two months' leave, and will then resign. Mrs. Davis wishes him to go back to London to say good-bye, and he may do so, but at any rate he will be out in October. His reason for resigning is his lack of means. He took the place (as Lansing told me last autumn) intending to spend his principal as an advertisement. He will go to New York and practice law.

Sloane and I talked of Howells, of Academy matters (he said that my election was due to my novels as much as anything, which I could not believe, but he insisted that it was so; that Howells had used that argument), of Sloane's book on Napoleon, and of the French propaganda in Belgium, of which he had a thorough knowledge. I spoke too of the decay of the English language in America, and he asked me to write a paper on the subject, which I may do if I have time and strength....

I had my morning walk with the dogs in the Parc Léopold, and then we had the ———s to luncheon. Afterward we talked—about Hoover for one thing. Mr. ——— said that Hoover had maintained—as he constantly does—a bureau of publicity; in fact had turned the C.R.B. into that kind of agency. But the young civilians who composed that organization were mere babes, of course, at the game of politics. Hoover had announced that he would support that party which would do the most for the League of Nations, and then had asked Mr. ———'s advice, saying—and I could just hear him saying it!—that he didn't wish the nomination, and shrank from it, and so on. To which Mr. ——— replied: "Hoover, in the first place, stop talking that way. For six months you have been putting out statements on all matters of public interest with a view to obtaining the nomination, and nobody believes you when

you say that you don't want it." Then he advised him to keep still, and to rest on his statement, but Hoover announced that he would be a Republican, and that eliminated him from Democratic consideration. At Chicago he, or his managers—who were the merest tyros in politics—allowed him to go into the Chicago convention with only five votes, which was ridiculous. Then, when Harding was named, and announced his entire opposition to the League of Nations, Hoover at once agreed to support him! It is rumoured that Hoover is to be Secretary of State, and Mr. ——— says that some such trade may have been made by Hoover and Harding.

Tonight we dined at the palace at Laeken. Their Majesties, Prince Léopold, Prince Charles, the Princess Marie-José, that is the whole family, were there; and besides, the ———s and Nell and I. . . . After dinner the Queen set Mr. ——— to talking on Bolshevism, and the King and I drew up our chairs and listened, while Nell and Mrs. ——— sat on a sofa in a corner, talking in low tones, and in the great salon outside, the others played with a little black cocker spaniel puppy which Prince Charles had just brought from England with him. The Prince had been talking to Nell about the puppy and she had said that she would like to see it; so, after dinner it was brought in, a little mite of glossy black fur, with a great bow of pink ribbon, reposing on a silken cushion, and borne in on a silver salver, quite royally. We had all admired it and discussed it, and petted it, and then His Royal Highness had taken off its bow and fastened it to the puppy's tail, and so teased it, until, as we were settled to hear Mr. ——— talk about the Bolsheviks, the puppy had rushed in, and begun biting the Queen's ankles, and then the King had sternly ordered His Royal Highness to take it out and send it away. Thus, exit poor cocker—and the Queen saying: "He was biting my feet."

And Mr. ——— in his soft voice resumed his monologue. We put in a word now and then, the King, the Queen, or I, and got to talking after a while about the present situation. I said that the sensible thing and the only thing to do now was to make peace, any kind of peace, with the Bolsheviks, and to help build up Germany anew, and to this the King heartily agreed, and so did Mr. ———.

As to the situation at home, the King, expressing his regret that the treaty had not been ratified, asked Mr. ——— if he thought the treaty would eventually be ratified or not, and Mr. ——— said that he thought it would. Then we talked of the unfortunate quar-



rel between the Senate and the President (for which, by the way, Mr. ——— considers the President responsible, though he did not say precisely that before their Majesties) and I said that it was to be regretted that we had not the parliamentary form of government; and I added that we should have some sort of brief amendment to the Constitution, the effect of which would be to require the President to choose his Cabinet from the Congress, and to be able at all times to command a majority there, or, on a vote of no confidence, to call in the leader of the opposition to form a new government, the deplorable fact being that under our present system, we had now had for three years a government crisis. And then Mr. ——— told this interesting tale: In 1916 the President had decided that, if he were defeated, he would take the following steps: (1) Ask Marshall to resign the Vice-Presidency, or appoint him to a judgeship; then (2) have Lansing resign; then (3) appoint Hughes Secretary of State, and (4) resign himself. This would have made Hughes President during the interim between the elections and the inauguration on March 4th. On election night, when they all thought that Hughes was successful, Gregory was . . . examining the law as to what steps, what notice, would be necessary for the President to take and give in convening the Senate in extraordinary session to confirm Hughes' nomination. If this was indicated in 1916, how much more in 1918, when the Democrats lost the Congressional elections!