

Chapter Nine

THE VOICE WITH THE SMILE WINS

§ 1

DANCE orchestras were blaring forth "The Music Goes 'Round and 'Round" and one could hardly turn a radio dial without hearing the ubiquitous refrain. Major Bowes was the current radio sensation, so warmly did he inquire into the life histories of the yodelers and jews-harp-players on his Amateur Hour, and so spontaneous and unexpected seemed the well-rehearsed programs. At the movie houses Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers were dancing nimbly in "Follow the Fleet." Gary Cooper was about to introduce his audiences to the word "pixillated" in the hilarious courtroom scene of "Mr. Deeds Goes to Town." Seven-year-old Shirley Temple was becoming the rising star of Hollywood. She had no such income-tax troubles as had Mae West, whose salary of \$480,833 for the preceding year had been second only, in all the United States, to that of William Randolph Hearst; nor could any Shirley Temple picture attract at its opening such crowds as greeted Charlie Chaplin's "Modern Times"; but her curls and her childish smile made the great American heart throb with sentiment. (She was about to appear in "Captain January.")

To scores of thousands of readers, *Life with Father* was still offering an acquaintance with the rambunctious Clarence Day, senior; *North to the Orient*, an air ride with the Lindberghs. Among best-selling novels, *Vein of Iron* and *It Can't Happen Here* were yielding their leadership to *The Last Puritan*, and people who believed in the finer things of

life were expressing pleasure that a genuine hundred-percent philosopher like George Santayana should have been able to hit commercial success on the nose. In the fastnesses of the publishing house of Macmillan the editors were wondering whether a forthcoming novel of theirs, Margaret Mitchell's *Gone with the Wind*, might possibly sell as well as *Anthony Adverse*. (It would not only do that but within its first six months would sell over a million copies—a prodigious record—and would set ladies' luncheon tables from coast to coast buzzing with the question whether Scarlett O'Hara really got Rhett Butler back—and who ought to play Scarlett on the screen.)

It was a cold winter in the North, with heavy drifts of snow. Sales of skiing equipment were noteworthy, and the snow trains bore away to the uplands innumerable incipient experts in the slalom—or in the lesser art of teetering safely down a very small hill. Over in Germany the Olympic winter sports were being held, as a prelude to that monstrous summer carnival of athletics in which it was to be revealed to the eyes even of Adolf Hitler that Nordics, whatever their transcendent virtues, could not run as fast as black Jesse Owens. (The Germans, however, would have their reply ready: had not their Max Schmeling confounded the sports writers by defeating Joe Louis at the Yankee Stadium by a technical knockout in the twelfth round?)

If the zest of ladies and gentlemen for corporate finance was being circumscribed by the SEC, they at least could undertake imaginary feats of financial daring in the parlor game of "Monopoly." The time was approaching when a popular if short-lived diversion among otherwise reasonable Americans would be the exchange of such curious pleasantries as these: "Knock, knock." "Who's there?" "Eskimo, Christian, and Italian." "Eskimo, Christian, and Italian who?" "Eskimo, Christian, and Italian no lies."

In short, the year 1936 was getting under way—the year when President Roosevelt's New Deal would have to face the voters.

How much water had gone under the bridge since 1932, when Roosevelt had first been a candidate for the White House! Gone was the prospect of imminent financial catastrophe. Gone was popular distrust of the solvency of the banks: bank failures now were few and far between. Gone was any real hope of collecting the war debts (except from Finland); was it possible that only five years previously, Herbert Hoover had tried to halt the Depression by proposing a year's delay in payments? Gone was any hope of early return to the traditional international gold standard: managed currencies had become the order of the day. Waning at least, if not gone, was the fear of immediate headlong inflation of the currency. (Although the huge Federal deficits—larger than any in Hoover's time—caused grave headshakings, nevertheless people went right on buying government bonds.) Yet waning also was any real expectation of an abrupt economic upsurge which would eliminate speedily the unemployment problem. Although people still talked of "the emergency" or "the crisis," clearly they were no longer thinking of any "sudden juncture," any "moment of danger," such as dictionary definitions of those terms would imply; this "emergency" had become semi-permanent. The economic system had pulled out of its sinking spell of 1929-33 only to become a chronic invalid, whose temperature was lower now in the mornings but showed no signs of returning quickly to normal. Americans were getting used to the fact that nine or ten million of their fellow-countrymen were out of work.

No longer was there any question, in the minds of most Americans capable of realistic thought, that the government must carry a heavy responsibility for the successful or un-

successful working of the economic system. Having once intervened, it could not extricate itself even if it would. The debate was only about the extent to which the intervention should go. The economic headquarters of the country had not only moved from Wall Street to Washington, but apparently had settled down there for an indefinite stay. If, as we have seen, economic authority still tended to gravitate from the countryside to the cities and from the lesser cities to New York, until great tracts of land in the Mississippi Valley were subject to the dictates of New York executives, no longer did those executives issue their dictates as they pleased; when Washington spoke, they knew they heard their master's voice. Even the great House of Morgan—head, front, and symbol of the one-time sovereignty of Wall Street—had been forced to divide itself into two concerns, one for commercial banking, the other for investment banking. No major decision could any longer be made in Wall Street without the question being asked, "What will Washington say to this?"

The government was growing in size and complexity as well as in power. Whenever a new fever attacked the body politic, new Federal agencies multiplied—like white corpuscles in the blood—to fight it. The custom of the time decreed that each agency must be known by the initials of its title, but soon there were so many that only an expert could identify them by these alphabetical designations. RFC, NRA, and WPA might be easy even for the elementary class in governmental nomenclature; AAA, CCC, SEC, and TVA for the intermediate class; but what did HOLC stand for, and FHA, and FCA and NYA—to mention only a few?

Because the riddles which the New Deal faced were beyond its ability (or, probably, anybody's ability) to solve with real success, and because anyhow it was easier to hand

out subsidies to the victims of a maladjustment than to bring the maladjustment to an end, this swelling government establishment had become a huge subsidizing machine—handing out Federal relief payments, farm allotment payments, and other “emergency” benefits innumerable, to say nothing of war bonuses and such venerable subsidies as kept the color in the wan cheeks of the merchant marine; until by 1936 an appropriation of a hundred million dollars looked like small change, and even a billion seemed no bigger than a light-year seems to an astronomer.

All this development of the Federal power the Republicans viewed with loud alarm; yet with such an air of inevitability did the growth take place that one wondered whether the Republicans, should they come to power, would be able to reverse the trend. It seemed likely that the difference between the two parties would be that one of them, in moving toward the concentration of power in Washington, would move with the throttle open; the other, with the brakes on.

In the world outside the United States the changes between 1932 and 1936 were even more striking. No longer could France be thought of as the pre-eminent power on the Continent. British diplomacy was beginning that series of surrenders and evasions which was presently to reduce sharply the prestige of the Empire. The League of Nations, which had failed to make Japan regret its invasion of Manchuria in 1931, and was now failing to make Mussolini regret his invasion of Ethiopia in 1935, was in its death throes. The Nazi government of Germany, though only three years old, was already alarming the Continent; and was about to begin, with its march into the Rhineland, that series of bold territorial moves which were to keep all Europe in fear of immediate general war. Mussolini, the father of fascism, was shifting from opposition to Hitler

to alliance with this younger and more furious disciple of the totalitarian idea. The European center of gravity was moving definitely toward Berlin.

No longer were vital economic decisions made at international conferences of bankers; now they were made only by the political leaders of states. That trend toward concentration of national authority in the government which was noticeable in Washington was noticeable almost everywhere else—even in Britain and France. Russia was becoming less and less the exponent of a revolutionary form of economic and social organization and more and more a nation whose dictatorial government pursued nationalist ends in a world of national rivalries. In Germany, the central power was now absolute. National Socialism had become the most dynamic religion of the day, and the head of the state was rapidly becoming an object of worship. Watching the German spectacle, American observers were wondering whether the world was irresistibly due for an era of political, racial, religious, and intellectual intolerance.

It had been expected that the economic barriers between nations would gradually be lifted after the worst of the Depression was over. But now these barriers were stronger than ever. In Germany the objective of the Nazi government was no longer primarily to solve the insoluble economic problems which confronted every government in the nineteen-thirties, but to give its people the thrill and pride of conquest; and to achieve prosperity incidentally by putting the unemployed to work (as in a vast public-works campaign) at armament-making, and by controlling its inflated currency and well-nigh every other economic activity through the exercise of central authority. The Nazis were defying half the economic axioms of the days of free business enterprise and—at least temporarily—getting away with it. They were in fact abolishing economics entirely,

in the sense that the word implies an organization of the decisions of free men, and were substituting for it an organization of compulsions and conquests.

As Germany re-armed, so did the other governments. By 1936 an international armaments boom was in full swing. Indeed, so dependent were the various national economies becoming upon arms manufacturing that some observers were beginning to wonder which would be worse, the general war which so many people dreaded, or the true peace which so many people longed for and which would put out the fires in hundreds of factories and might light the fires of rebellion in millions of hungry men.

Whenever people thought of "the danger of war," they thought of such a general headlong conflict as had broken out in 1914. Experts on foreign affairs had been predicting at intervals ever since the early nineteen-twenties that such a conflict would surely break out next month or next year or within two or three years at the most; and now their predictions were more urgent than ever. Yet the pattern of international relations which was being established in Europe was a pattern neither of general war nor of true peace. It was a pattern of continuous half-war: of nations remaining partially mobilized, partially on a war footing; making quick sallies to grab this territory or that, knowing that the dread of another 1914 would prevent anybody from stopping them until it was too late; of nations gaining new spheres of influence by subsidizing revolts in other countries (or even aiding these revolts by force of arms) as the Italians and Germans were shortly to aid Franco's revolt in Spain. In short, it was a pattern of shifting, localized, undeclared, unceasing conflict. War? Peace? This was neither, by the vocabulary even of 1932: it was something in between, to which the words of an earlier day no longer applied.

Truly it was a new world upon which Americans were looking in 1936: a world full of the wreckage of the verities not merely of 1929 but even of 1932.

## § 2

At last business conditions in the United States were definitely improving. The Federal Reserve Board's Adjusted Index of Industrial Production (which as you may recall had sunk as low as 58 and 59 in the crises of 1932 and early 1933, had leaped to 100 during the New Deal Honeymoon, had then slipped back to 72 by November, 1933, and had obstinately hung in the seventies and eighties throughout 1934) had now begun to show a pretty definite upward trend. By the beginning of 1935 it had risen as far as 90. By the end of 1935 it had reached 101. And after a brief relapse into the nineties, it swept on during 1936 to 104 in June, 108 in July and August, 109 in September, 110 in October, 114 in November, and 121 in December—within striking distance of the record figure of 125 which had been set in 1929.

A very pretty picture indeed—yet one could not appraise it rightly without noting several disquieting facts. One was that the production figure would have to rise much higher than 125 to absorb the bulk of the unemployed. Labor-saving machinery, speed-up methods of work, and executive efficiency had now made it possible to produce more goods with less workers. Perhaps there was significance also in the fact that as a result of the drop in the birth rate and the closing down of immigration, a larger proportion of the people of the country than ever before were of working age. Another disquieting fact was that the improvement was being secured at a price—the price of a rising Federal debt. The net deficits of the United States government had been running as follows:—

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|--|-----------------|
| Fiscal year ending June 30, 1933 (which straddled the Hoover and Roosevelt Administrations): | \$2,602,000,000 |
| Fiscal year ending June 30, 1934:  | \$3,630,000,000 |
| Fiscal year ending June 30, 1935:  | \$3,002,000,000 |
| To which was now being added the 1936 figure of  | \$4,361,000,000 |

This latter enormous figure for 1936 was by no means attributable solely to New Deal policies; for it was not only affected by the destruction by the Supreme Court of the processing taxes levied by the AAA, but was also very gravely enlarged by Congress's voting of the Bonus over Roosevelt's veto. On June 15, 1936, the postmen sallied forth to distribute over a billion and a half dollars in bonds and checks. Most of these were cashed within the next three months. What wonder that the deficit was larger than ever before—and that, with these new funds being spent all over the country, the business index was rising?

Throughout these early years of the New Deal the levels of prices and wages and the structure of corporate and private debt were being artificially supported by government spending—or, to put it another way, by the failure of the government to levy high enough taxes to take care of the spending. If it had been possible for the law of supply and demand to work unhindered, prices and wages—and the volume of corporate and private debt—would theoretically have fallen to a "natural" level and activity could have been resumed again. But it was not possible for the law of supply and demand to work unhindered. In a complex twentieth-century economy, deflation was too painful to be endured. Hoover had set up the RFC because the banks couldn't take it; Roosevelt had set up the Federal relief system because human beings couldn't take it. Some of Roosevelt's advisers, embracing the theory of John Maynard Keynes (and also making a virtue of necessity), had

been arguing for some time that when the government, by over-spending, poured new money into the economic bloodstream, business would be stimulated and a new adjustment would be reached at a higher level, thus rendering the anguish of deflation unnecessary. The new money would "prime the pump" of business; presently all sorts of new businesses would be undertaken, there would be a boom, the unemployed would be absorbed in industry, and all would be well. Roosevelt hoped that this would happen, and so far the process seemed to be beginning. Business was picking up. But where, oh, where, were the new enterprises?

During the preceding year there had been a considerable volume of capital flotations, but chiefly these flotations had been undertaken merely to refund old issues of securities at lower interest rates: interest rates having gone down, corporations had been seizing the happy opportunity to substitute  $3\frac{3}{4}$  per cent bonds for 5 per cent bonds. Few of the flotations had represented the investment of money in the expansion of old businesses or in the inauguration of new ones. Uninvested money was piling up in the banks instead of being spent in building and equipping new factories. In short, the pump was not working right.

Of course it was not working right, argued most business men. The trouble was that investors were frightened. Naturally they were distrustful of the New Deal's reformist zeal and of the very spending policy which was supposed to entice their money into the capital markets. Surely the pump would work really well before long, replied the New Dealers; and how could they cut expenses without destroying buying power and perhaps starving their fellow-citizens? Eagerly they continued to prime the pump. Year after year, in his Budget messages, the President who had berated Hoover in 1932 for failing to balance the Budget expressed the hope that next year, or the year after, the balance would at last be achieved; but like the man who

swears that this little drink is positively his last one, presently he began to sound as if he did not convince even himself.

There were other somewhat unsettling facts about this recovery, too. The Lynds noticed, for example, that in "Middletown" it was harder now for a man to start a small business than it had been even a decade before. "The Middletown tradition is all in favor of an enterprising man with an idea and a shoestring of capital," they noted. "But it is this type of small enterprise that has gone under in Middletown in the Depression." Personal savings had been eaten up, bankers were cautious, the trend in manufacturing was toward such large and expensively equipped shops that the small manufacturer was at a disadvantage, and the going concerns in many lines of business were inclined, with or without the aid of their trade associations, to make things hot for a newcomer. It was the big corporations, by and large, which were making the profits; small ones were lucky indeed to break even. Here was a barrier to new investment (which will be noted more fully in the last chapter of this book): the odds were against making money in fledgling enterprises.

Even inside going businesses, as the Lynds also pointed out, the ladder of opportunity was not so readily climbed as it once had been. The skilled laborer was finding that the higher-paid and more important positions were going to a different class of specially trained men. "In other words," said the Lynds, "Andrew Carnegie's advice to enterprising young men to begin at the bottom no longer appears to be sound advice. Men of his type are advising young men today to get a toehold in one of the managerial or technical departments halfway up the ladder."

Was this a sign of a gradual crystallization of class structure in American society? Certainly it was hard for relievers to get themselves out of the relief class. It was hard for

dispossessed farmers to get back on the land. If it was also harder than it had been for the man without a higher education or influential friends to get a job in the upper ranks of business, how would fare the American dream of a classless democracy in which anyone could go to the top?

### § 3

But how welcome was even this modest and dubiously founded recovery of 1936! The railroads, to be sure, were not getting much of it; but the automobile companies were selling more cars than in any previous season save 1928 and 1929, the steel industry was operating close to capacity at last, the consumers' goods industries and chain stores were mostly going strong, and even the building industry—which had come to a prolonged and almost complete halt during the worst of the Depression—was climbing briskly (with government aid) up the lower foothills of recovery. (No longer was it inevitably embarrassing to ask an architect what he was doing these days.) There seemed to be plenty of free-and-easy spending among the prosperous: Miami was having its best season since the collapse of the Florida boom in the distant days of Calvin Coolidge, there were lavish *débutante* parties in the big cities, the race tracks were crowded, the cash registers were tinkling in the night clubs. Apparently the men of means, looking ruefully back on what had happened to their investments under Hoover and meditating fearfully on what might happen to them under Roosevelt, were putting their money where they could enjoy it right away.

There were visible promises, too, if one looked about one, of what might prove to be a new industrial age. A few of the more progressively managed railroads, shaking themselves out of their long technological nap, were running

slick new streamlined trains made of duralumin, stainless steel, or corten. The Union Pacific had started the new movement by completing a dural train early in 1934, the Burlington had followed with a stainless steel Zephyr, and by the end of 1936 there were 358 cars made of these new materials in operation or under construction for the Class I railroads of the country. Whenever one of the fancy new trains was put on exhibition, crowds surged through it, entranced: here was a symbol of the new America they wanted. Air-conditioning was coming in fast, too, not only in the movie theatres and railroad trains but in restaurants and shops and offices as well. As for streamlining, it had become a briefly overworked fad. In 1934 and 1935 some of the automobile companies had produced cars so bulbous, so obesely curved as to defy the natural preference of the eye for horizontal lines; the city streets were being invaded by new busses streamlined against the terrific air resistance built up while edging through urban traffic at ten miles an hour; and the streamline idea was being applied by designers even to quite stationary buildings and to objects of furniture which would never have to confront a stronger draft than that of an electric fan.

New ocean liners were breaking records for size and speed. In June, 1935, the New York waterfront had been lined with crowds and the harbor had resounded with tootings of welcome as the *Normandie* arrived; a year later the reception was to be repeated as the *Queen Mary* swept in from England. As for airplanes, one had only to compare the great silvery Douglas DC3 of June, 1936, which had a cruising speed of 200 miles an hour, with the 110-mile-an-hour transport planes of 1932. Coast-to-coast travel in overnight air sleepers had become a matter of routine. In October, 1936, the China Clipper finished its first scheduled round-trip passenger flight across the Pacific to Manila and

back. Not yet was there any passenger service across the Atlantic by plane, but there was service by air nonetheless: Germany's newest dirigible, the *Hindenburg*, began in 1936 a regular series of flights—nor did any one then guess what would happen to that graceful ship of the air on May 6, 1937.

The motorist too could get, here and there, a glimpse of the promise of a new world when he found himself cruising at 60 miles an hour on a huge well-banked highway, with underpasses and majestic clover-leaf intersections—a highway which smoothly skirted the towns in which, a few years before, his car would have been clogged in local traffic. It was all new and exciting, this world of beautiful speed, as exciting as it was to follow a guide about Rockefeller Center, New York, the one and only skyscraper group to rise in the United States during the nineteen-thirties, and to see how a combination of cool design and gay planting and shining new materials could brighten the metropolitan scene.

New materials? Why, it was beginning to seem as if the chemists and metallurgists could produce any sort of substance that was needed. Lighter, tougher steels, made with nickel, chromium, tungsten, vanadium, molybdenum. Plastics suited to the making of anything from automobile steering wheels to tableware, from radio cabinets to dice. New artificial fibers made from cellulose, and new processes for extracting cellulose from Southern pines. Plywood with absurdly un-woodlike qualities. Certainly the technical men were making ready the materials for the world of tomorrow, however discouragingly the production of these marvels lagged. What boundless possibilities might be locked in the development of tray agriculture? What marvels of efficiency might not the photo-electric cell make possible? What would television do to entertainment and news distribution in the

future? Would the two-cycle Diesel engine revolutionize the production and transmission of power? And how would people live when the pre-fabricated house moved out of the phase of experiment into the phase of mass production? Questions like these were running through people's minds; the American imagination was beginning to break loose again.

Was there, perhaps, some new machine, some new gadget the furious demand for which would set in motion a new boom—something like the automobile or the radio? In the spring and summer of 1936 a great many people thought they had found one. Way back in the summer of 1929, just before the Panic, a bacteriologist named Arthur G. Sherman had built for his family a little house on wheels which could be towed behind his car on vacations. It attracted so much favorable attention wherever he went that he built a few more, and exhibited one of them at the Detroit Automobile Show in 1930. Presently he was manufacturing them on an expanding scale, other manufacturers were leaping in, householders with a knack for tools were building their own trailers in their backyards. By 1936 the number of house trailers on the road was estimated by *Automotive Daily News* at 160,000. On New Year's Day, 1937, Florida observers reported that these contrivances were crossing the state line at the rate of 25 an hour. Roger Babson declared that within twenty years half the population of the United States would be living in them. What more lovely vision could there be—provided one did not focus one's attention on real-estate values, taxes, steady jobs, schooling for the children, sanitation problems, and other such prosy details—than the vision of the coming of a carefree era when the restless American could sell his house, climb into his trailer, and go forth to live the life of the open road?

## § 4

The amount of money which was going into new things like the trailer industry, however, was but a fraction of what was needed. What was holding back the rest?

However economists might disagree upon this point, there was very little disagreement among the potential investors themselves, the possessors of capital, the well-to-do, and especially the very rich. What was wrong, they were sure, was "lack of confidence"—and this lack of confidence was caused by the arbitrary rule of an Administration which spent money recklessly, followed unsound and inflationary principles of public finance, yielded to the advice of semi-communist brain-trusters, burdened business with grievous taxes, wasted the tax money on crazy boondoggling schemes for the pampering and political bribing of the unenterprising poor, harassed business men with hasty and unpredictable and paralyzing reforms and with government competition, slaughtered little pigs to win votes from the farmers, encouraged labor agitators to tie up industry, generally opposed the "profit system," and threatened American freedom by dictating to Congress, discrediting the Supreme Court, and undermining the Constitution.

On these and other charges against the Administration endless changes were rung in the conservative press, in the speeches of conservative business men and political leaders, in the circulars of such varied organizations as the Liberty League, the Crusaders, the Defenders, and the American Nationalists, Inc., and above all in the private conversation of the well-to-do.

That the large property owners and the managers of large businesses should have become indignant was not at all surprising. Buffeted and frightened by the Depression, they had at first hailed Roosevelt as a deliverer. Presently

they had discovered that he did not intend the "recovery" for which he was working to be a recovery of things as they had been in 1929; he wanted things changed. He not only continued to press for reforms, he tore to bits the fiscal promises of the 1932 Democratic platform and of his own campaign speeches. He set out to champion the less fortunate, to denounce such financiers and big business men as stood in his way; and as their opposition to him hardened, so also did his opposition to them. Raymond Moley has told how Roosevelt, sitting with a group of men discussing the tenor of an impending Presidential speech, would listen to their accounts of the derogatory Roosevelt stories that were going the rounds of Wall Street and State Street and Chestnut Street and La Salle Street, and how his face would stiffen, till it became clear that the speech would be—as Moley said—"more like a thistle than an olive branch."

It was natural, then, that men and women of means should feel that the President had changed his course and singled them out as objects of the enmity of the government. It was natural that they should have become confirmed in this feeling when, with half an eye to undermining Huey Long's "Share Our Wealth" offensive, he backed in the summer of 1935 a revenue bill which stepped up taxes on the rich. It was even natural that they should have felt so strongly about what had happened since 1933 as to seem to forget that there had been anything wrong with the country before 1933.

Yet the lengths to which some of them went in their opposition, and the extent to which this opposition became concentrated, among a great many of them, into a direct and flaming hatred of Roosevelt himself, constituted one of the memorable curiosities of the nineteen-thirties.

All the fumbblings of a government seeking to extricate the country from the world-wide Depression which had fol-

lowed the slackening of nineteenth-century expansion; all the maneuvers of an Administration trying to set right what seemed to have gone wrong in the financial world during the previous decade, to redress the disadvantages under which the common man labored, and simultaneously to maintain its political appeal to this common man—all these things were reduced, in the minds of thousands of America's "best people," to the simple proposition that Franklin D. Roosevelt was intent upon becoming a dictator at their expense. Much that Roosevelt did lent a color of justification to this version of history; yet in reducing so much to so little these people performed one of the most majestic feats of simplification in all American history.

This hatred of Roosevelt was strong, though far from unanimous, among the well-to-do in all sections of the country. It was strongest and most nearly unanimous among the very rich and in those favored suburbs and resorts where people of means were best insulated against uncomfortable facts and unorthodox opinions. (To live in Locust Valley or Greenwich, let us say, to work in Wall Street, and to read only the *New York Herald Tribune* in the morning and the *New York Sun* at night, offered excellent insulation, especially if one concentrated devotedly upon the daily lamentations of Mark Sullivan and the uniformly sour interpretations of Administration policies in the financial columns of the *Sun*.) In general, the hatred was most intense in the cities along the Atlantic seaboard, with the exception of Washington, where there were moderating opportunities to see New Dealers in the flesh and to discover that they were human after all. It flared higher and higher during 1934 and 1935 and continued at a high temperature until about 1938, when it appeared to weaken somewhat, if only through exhaustion.

Sometimes the anti-Roosevelt mood was humorous. On the commuting trains and at the downtown lunch clubs

there was an epidemic of Roosevelt stories, like that of the psychiatrist who died and arrived in Heaven to be whisked off to attend God Himself: "You see, He has delusions of grandeur— He thinks He's Franklin D. Roosevelt." But there was nothing humorous in the attitude of the gentlemen sitting in the big easy chairs at their wide-windowed clubs when they agreed vehemently that Roosevelt was not only a demagogue but a communist. "Just another Stalin—only worse." "We might as well be living in Russia right now." At the well-butlered dinner party the company agreed, with rising indignation, that Roosevelt was "a traitor to his class." In the smoking compartment of the Pullman car the traveling executives compared contemptuous notes on the President's utter ignorance of business. "He's never earned a nickel in his life—what has he ever done but live off his mother's income?" In the cabañas at Miami Beach the sun-tanned winter visitors said their business would be doing pretty well if it weren't for THAT MAN. In the country-club locker room the golfers talked about the slow pace of the stock market as they took off their golf shoes; and when, out of a clear sky, one man said, "Well, let's hope somebody shoots him," the burst of agreement made it clear that everybody knew who was meant.

There was an epidemic, too, of scurrilous Roosevelt gossip. Educated and ordinarily responsible people not only insisted, but sincerely believed, that "everybody in Washington knew" the whole Roosevelt family was drunk most of the time; that the reason why Mrs. Roosevelt was "so all over the place" was that she was planning to succeed her husband in the Presidency "until it's time for the sons to take over"; and that Roosevelt was insane. Hadn't a caller recently sat with him and tried to talk public affairs, only to be greeted with prolonged and maniacal laughter? From this point the gossip ran well over the line into the unprintable.

A good deal of the bitter anti-Roosevelt talk could not, of course, be taken at its face value. Often it was a form of conscious self-indulgence in the emotional satisfaction of blaming a personal scapegoat for everything that went wrong. When, as in a *New Yorker* cartoon, a group of ladies and gentlemen sallied forth to the trans-lux theatre "to hiss Roosevelt," they enjoyed the sort of release that many liberals had enjoyed when they blamed all the ills of the economic system on the personal wickedness of bankers, or that Nazis enjoyed when they blamed all the ills of Germany on the Jews. To find a scapegoat is to be spared, for the moment, any necessity for further examination of the facts or for further thought.

Yet to the extent that it stopped factual inquiry and thought, the Roosevelt-hating was costly, not only to recovery, but to the haters themselves. Because as a group (there were many exceptions) the well-to-do regarded the presence of Roosevelt in the White House as a sufficient explanation for all that was amiss and as a sufficient excuse for not taking a more active part in new investment, they inevitably lost prestige among the less fortunate. For the rich and powerful could maintain their prestige only by giving the general public what it wanted. It wanted prosperity, economic expansion. It had always been ready to forgive all manner of deficiencies in the Henry Fords who actually produced the goods, whether or not they made millions in the process. But it was not disposed to sympathize unduly with people who failed to produce the goods, no matter how heart-rending their explanations for their failure. Roosevelt-hating thrust the owners and managers of business into inaction—into trying to resist the tide of affairs, to set back the clock. It made them conservatives in the sense that they were trying to hold on to old things, whereas before 1929 they had been, in their own way, innovators, bringers of new things. It made them, as a group, sterile.

And they were soon to learn that sterility does not stir public applause.

## § 5

The Presidential campaign of 1936 was approaching. Whom would the Republicans nominate to embody and galvanize the widespread indignation against the New Deal, not only among the rich but also among the majority of business men, and a host of others who regarded Roosevelt as dangerously radical, extravagant, or untrustworthy?

Hoover? No, his name recalled too many bitter memories of economic and political defeat. Borah? He had strong popular backing, especially in the West, but he was fiscally unorthodox and too old and too much of a maverick. Frank Knox of Chicago? Senator Vandenberg of Michigan? All were passed over. As the time for the Cleveland convention drew near, the Republican choice settled upon a candidate who had been virtually unknown to the country before 1936 but who seemed supremely "available"—Governor Alfred Mossman Landon of Kansas.

A successful independent oil producer, Landon should appeal, the Republican leaders felt, to business men. A Governor who had balanced his State budget in trying times, he should be a fitting standard-bearer in a fight against Federal spending (though his opponents pointed out that he had had to balance the budget anyhow because the Kansas Constitution decreed it; and also that Kansas had leaned heavily on the Federal government for relief funds). A former Bull Mooser, a man of generally liberal views, Landon should invite the support of men and women in the middle of the political road. (The conservative die-hards were his anyhow: they would vote for the Devil himself to beat Roosevelt.) An adroit political adjuster, Landon should be amenable to the suggestions of men on the Hill

who thought Roosevelt too dictatorial toward Congress. A friendly, likable person, with an attractive family, he should personally be a good vote-getter. If his record contained little evidence of brilliance, he could be presented as an unassuming average man, a regular fellow who didn't set himself up to be a superman but possessed plain common sense and would stick to "the American way." As the delegates assembled in Cleveland, Landon was clearly so far in the lead that no other name was even placed in nomination. Landon was nominated with a whoop. The "Kansas Coolidge," "the Careful Kansan," with a Kansas sunflower as his emblem, was sent forth to do battle with Roosevelt.

Landon was provided with a platform likewise intended to appeal to those in the middle of the road. Though it bristled with denunciations of the New Deal, in certain respects it wore a surprisingly liberal aspect. It did not utterly decry Federal participation in relief, though it advocated the "return of responsibility for relief administration to non-political local agencies." It did not utterly decry Federal participation in agricultural regulation, but proposed a national land-use plan not wholly different from the Democratic scheme—with, however, a greater reliance upon the state governments. It did not call for the repeal of the Securities Act, the Stock Exchange Act, or the Public Utility Holding Company Act, upon which the men of Wall Street had poured such vitriol, but called for "Federal regulation, within the Constitution, of the marketing of securities to protect investors," and added, "We favor also Federal regulation of the interstate activities of public utilities." Indeed, if a visitor from Mars had compared the two party platforms of 1936, concentrating his attention not on the denunciations and pointings-with-pride but merely upon the positive recommendations which they contained, he might have wondered why feeling ran so high in this campaign.

If the Republicans demanded a balanced budget and "a sound currency to be preserved at all hazards," the Democrats also spoke of their "determination to achieve a balanced budget" and "approved the objective of a permanently sound currency." Both platforms inveighed against monopolies, approved collective bargaining, promised to protect civil liberties, approved the merit system in the civil service, and spoke friendly words about old-age security (though the Republicans proposed an altered Social Security system). And if the Republicans hammered at the Democrats for "flaunting" the "integrity and authority of the Supreme Court" and for "insisting on passage of laws contrary to the Constitution," if they pledged themselves to "resist all attempts to impair the authority of the Supreme Court of the United States," the Democrats also proposed "to maintain the letter and spirit of the Constitution," explaining that if national problems could not be "effectively solved by legislation within the Constitution, we shall seek such clarifying amendment as will assure to the Legislatures of the several states and the Congress of the United States, each within its proper jurisdiction, the power to enact those laws which the State and Federal Legislatures, within their respective spheres, shall find necessary. . . ." Surely, the visitor from Mars would have said, these parties which so denounce each other are virtually as Tweedledum and Tweedledee.

The reference in the Democratic platform to the possible need of a "clarifying" amendment to the Constitution was a master-stroke of rhetorical precision. For during the preceding year the Supreme Court had emerged as the one conservative force able and ready to withstand the New Deal offensive. Not only had it thrown out the NRA, unanimously; in January, 1936, it had thrown out the AAA too, by a vote of 6 to 3; it had also vetoed the Farm Mortgage Moratorium Act, the Guffey Coal Act, and several other

measures; and in these decisions it had interpreted so narrowly the interstate commerce clause of the Constitution that almost every important New Deal law seemed likely in due course to fall before its scythe. Only two of the Court's decisions thus far had favored the Administration—a 5 to 4 Gold Clause verdict and an 8 to 1 verdict on certain limited phases of the TVA. Under the circumstances the New Dealers' opinion of the "nine old men" of the Court—or, more particularly, of the right-wing justices—was blistering; and by contrast the Court had become to conservatives an object of unprecedented veneration. (Above the rear number plate of the conservative's Cadillac was now affixed a plate reading SAVE THE CONSTITUTION, in the very place where, four years before, had been affixed a plate reading REPEAL THE EIGHTEENTH AMENDMENT.)

Roosevelt was deeply indignant at the Court and longed to checkmate it, but had not yet decided how to attempt to do this. He did not want to propose during the campaign to amend the Constitution, for it would have been difficult to frame any amendment of the interstate-commerce clause which might not be represented by the Republicans as a wide-open door to complete government regimentation of business. He wanted to dodge the issue of the Court for the time being. That word "clarifying"—so innocent-looking, so suggestive of a mere attempt to prevent misinterpretation—helped in the dodging.

Luck helped Roosevelt, too, and in ironical fashion. For just as the elder Republicans were packing their bags to go to Cleveland for the convention, the Supreme Court did a strange thing. Previously it had thrown out Federal wages-and-hours legislation. Now, taking the bit in its teeth, it threw out *State* wages-and-hours legislation by ruling against a New York State minimum wage law for women. The result was staggering: *nobody* could legislate on wages and

hours! Not even the Republican leaders could swallow that and remain smiling. As a result, after the Republicans had declared in their platform that they would "protect women and children with respect to maximum hours, minimum wages, and working conditions" by state laws, adding somewhat lamely, "We believe that this can be done within the Constitution as it now stands," Governor Landon felt it necessary to inform the convention that if necessary he would seek an amendment to make this possible. Somehow this took the edge off the Republican championship of the Court. Unwittingly the nine gentlemen in black had scored a point for the embarrassed President.

In other ways fortune favored Roosevelt. One of Landon's earliest discoverers had been William Randolph Hearst, and by 1936 the support of Hearst was less than an asset. At the beginning of 1936 Al Smith, once Roosevelt's good friend and mentor, had threatened to "take a walk" and had urged other Democrats to join him in leaving the New Dealers; but the threat had been made at a dinner of the Liberty League, an organization so studded with millionaire industrialists as to become a political liability for the Republicans. (Even in Republican politics, millionaires are customarily kept in the background, behind a convincing front of small business men and "plain people.") Adroitly seizing the opportunity thus offered, the Democratic strategists conducted their campaign as though they were opposed merely by the millionaire Liberty League, not the Republican party. When at the close of the Democratic convention in Philadelphia—a rubber-stamp, Roosevelt-controlled convention which was dragged out for five days to make the merchants and hotel-keepers of Philadelphia happy and to fill the ears of radio listeners with triumphant if vacuous New Deal oratory—Roosevelt went to Franklin Field to accept renomination, he made a ringing speech in which the Republicans were not even once mentioned. The

enemy, according to this speech, was the "economic royalists," who "complain that we seek to overthrow the institutions of America" when "what they really complain of is that we seek to take away their power." Whether one calls such a phrase good demagoguery or good politics, it scored with the voters. The phrase became as popular as an earlier Roosevelt's reference to "malefactors of great wealth."

Even the elements favored the President. During the summer of the campaign he made an ostensibly non-political tour of inspection of the drought-stricken Great Plains—and as he went he was preceded by such torrents of rain that one of the reporters on the Presidential special, waking one morning to look out a streaming train window at a soaking countryside, remarked, "What's this? A flood-control trip?"

But the President's greatest advantage lay in his superior personal appeal to the voters. Whether or not the Republicans, succumbing to old habit, had selected an available candidate when they needed a crusader, the fact was that Landon did not throw out sparks. He spoke sensibly, thoughtfully, moderately, including among his campaign speeches a fine defense of freedom; but his voice was harsh compared to Roosevelt's, especially over the radio, where Roosevelt could swing thrillingly from apparently confidential persuasion to sharp-edged exhortation; and though Landon had an amiable smile, it lacked the contagious expansiveness of Roosevelt's. Whatever may have been Landon's potential abilities, as a campaigner—in opposition to one of the master politicians of American history—he was hardly a man to encourage the van or to harass the foe from the rear.

## § 6

Roosevelt, by contrast, was in his element as the battle cries began to resound.

The group of aides which surrounded him during this campaign was different from the Brain Trust which had surrounded him in 1932. Sam Rosenman, to be sure, was still unobtrusively at his side in policy-making discussions. Raymond Moley, although supposedly he had left the New Deal as well as his office in the State Department in the fall of 1933, had remained a confidential Presidential adviser, though with waning influence and growing exasperation at the President's offensive against big business. Throughout 1934 and 1935 Moley had been a constant back-door visitor to the White House, and he remained in close touch with Roosevelt until the time of the Democratic convention of 1936. But the divergence between their views had become so patent that after the "economic royalists" speech Moley was definitely through. Tugwell was no longer so close to the throne as he had been; nor was Berle. And although Jim Farley was still on hand to direct the political management of the campaign, the devoted and astute Louis Howe was not. After a lingering illness in the White House, Howe had died in April, 1936.

The leading newcomer to the ranks of Presidential aides and intimate advisers was a young man named Tom Corcoran, an Irishman from Pawtucket, Rhode Island, who had been a protégé of Felix Frankfurter's since his Harvard Law School days, had been recommended by Frankfurter to Moley to draft the Securities Act of 1933, along with James M. Landis and Benjamin Cohen, and had subsequently, with Cohen, drafted both the Stock Exchange Act and the Public Utility Holding Company Act. Corcoran's skill in bill-drafting, his indefatigable energy, his devotion to the New Deal and to a high ideal of public service, his gay brilliance, and his knack for playing the accordion had all endeared him to Roosevelt, and now within a year he had become one of the innermost circle. His acquaintance among the liberals in the Administration was large; he became a

natural leader of the young liberal lawyers and a sort of unofficial employment officer for them inside the government; and already he and his close ally, the shy, ruffled, unobtrusive, clear-headed Ben Cohen, who lived with Corcoran and other young New Dealers at a little red house on R Street, were men of mark in the new Washington.

They were by no means the extreme radicals which current conservative opinion made them out to be (their draft of the Public Utility Holding Company Act, for example, was the mildest of three submitted to the President). They wanted the government to hold big business in check, to discipline it, and if necessary to take over some of its functions, but largely in order to clear the way for small business, which, they believed, was being crowded out of the economic race by big business. Corcoran and Cohen were closer to the elder La Follette in their economic philosophy, or to Woodrow Wilson, than to Moscow. This philosophy, however, involved them in hostility to the great corporations and great financial interests; and they readily stimulated a similar hostility in Roosevelt, who—though he had never formulated a consistent economic policy—was angry at the rich men's hatred for him and also believed that only by inveighing against "economic royalists" could he hold in his own ranks the disaffected millions who had followed leaders like Huey Long. Moley, on the contrary, wanted no continuing onslaught upon the power of concentrated wealth, wanted collaboration between it and the government. There was real significance in the fact that during the campaign of 1936 Corcoran succeeded Moley as one of the chief Presidential speech-drafters (along with Stanley High, Ben Cohen, William C. Bullitt, and others) and as an intimate (along with Relief Administrator Harry Hopkins, Secretaries Morgenthau and Ickes, Judge Rosenman, and others). The apostles of ever-strict business regulation (and also of

spending for recovery) had definitely gained the Presidential ear.

During the campaign, one or more of the inner group would prepare drafts of a speech for Roosevelt. At a White House conference a number of them would argue out with him questions of policy and epigram. Then the President would dictate his own draft from the others, utilizing an idea here, a telling phrase there. The copy would be revised, perhaps again and again, and then Roosevelt would sally forth to deliver it. The main themes of his speeches were that the whole country was bound together and what benefited one interest, one locality, benefited all; that only a beginning had been made in the work of national conservation, not only of physical but of human resources; that if the public debt was rising, so also was the national income; that things were demonstrably better in 1936 than in 1932. On awkward points such as budget-balancing Roosevelt was agile if not actually slippery in his logic. On past government measures he was explicit; on future ones, vague—for the truth was that his legislative program, so far as it had been thought out, had been completed. He had no future program but only a sense of direction. His demeanor was generally friendly; only in the Madison Square Garden speech at the end of the campaign—when he had been enraged by some misguided Republican propaganda about Social Security—did he turn to bitterness (with no Moley or Louis Howe at hand to tone down his wrath). It was in that philippic that he cried, "I should like to have it said of my first Administration that in it the forces of selfishness and of lust for power met their match. I should like to have it said of my second Administration that in it these forces met their master." During the rest of the campaign he appeared a happy man reporting encouraging progress and almost completely neglecting to take notice of Landon or the Republican party.

Nor did the long, exhausting journeys of the campaign—the sleeping-car nights, the goldfish-bowl publicity, the incessant speechmaking, the hand-shaking, the hurried conferences, the incessant uproar of cheering—seem to tire Roosevelt in the least, cripple though he was, unable to walk alone. On the contrary, he wore out his companions and emerged from every day of his ordeal fresher than ever, like an Antaeus renewed in strength by every contact with the political element. Smiling, always smiling, the silver voice ringing, he swung through the country in a triumph.

Where were the rivals on the left who a year or two before had looked so menacing? Huey Long was dead. Father Coughlin and the Townsendites, together with a remnant of the Huey Long following, had joined in backing for the Presidency Representative Lemke of North Dakota; but it was early apparent that the Lemke opposition would be weak. Governor Olson of Minnesota was dead. The socialists, nominating Norman Thomas as was their habit, were weak. And as for the communists, though they nominated Earl Browder for the Presidency, so anxious were they to be true to the Popular Front principle dictated by Moscow, and so anxious to defeat Landon, whom they called the "fascist" candidate, that one could hardly be sure whether they were really revolutionary Marxians or just another group of New Dealers. The contest had become Roosevelt against Landon, with no important third-party opposition.

Bitterly the campaign progressed. Not since 1896, certainly, had public feeling run so high over an election. To hear angry Republicans and angry Democrats talking, one would have supposed the contest was between a tyrant determined to destroy private property, ambition, the Constitution, democracy, and civilization itself, and a dupe of Wall Street who would introduce a fascist dictatorship.

Who would win? The *Literary Digest*, which for years had been conducting election straw votes on a huge scale,

predicted a Landon victory, with Roosevelt getting only 161 electoral votes as against Landon's 320. Dr. George Gallup, whose American Institute of Public Opinion had been reporting the results of its more scientific polls since October 20, 1935—thereby inaugurating a new kind of political measurement, with unguessable possibilities for the future—showed Roosevelt in the lead throughout the campaign, and gaining through most of it: Gallup predicted that Roosevelt would get 477 electoral votes, that Landon would get 42 (with two states left in the doubtful column). Jim Farley predicted that Roosevelt would get 523 electoral votes, carrying every state but Maine and Vermont—but who ever believes a campaign manager's prophecies? Doggedly, the Republicans held to their hope that Landon would carry the country.

Then came Election Day, and as they gathered by their radios that evening to hear the returns, they were thunderstruck. For Jim Farley had been right. The Roosevelt landslide was overwhelming. The old political adage had to be altered to "As Maine goes, so goes Vermont." The Democrats won every state but those two. Roosevelt's popular vote was  $27\frac{3}{4}$  millions to Landon's  $16\frac{2}{3}$  millions. Congress was now to be more than three-quarters Democratic in both Houses—a terrific majority. The New Deal had been upheld by the great electorate, and in no uncertain terms.

Why did this happen? Some reasons have already been suggested. But there were two which have not hitherto been mentioned in this account. One was that the New Deal was a vast dispenser of pecuniary aid to individuals, chiefly in the form of relief. In some areas these payments were crassly used for political advantage. In most, they were not. To argue that the billions spent for relief were in essence a vast Democratic campaign fund, paid for by the taxpayers, was to exaggerate cynically. Nevertheless the argument for the

New Deal was implicit in every payment, whether spoken or not: "We are looking after you. Maybe these other people won't. Better vote for us." The momentum of governmental subsidies is tremendous; anybody who suggests reducing them does so at his political peril.

The other reason was that although Roosevelt was bitterly hated by most of the well-to-do, he was genuinely admired and trusted by most of the poorer people of the country. Between the lines of his speeches as well as of the legislation which he sponsored they read a genuine friendliness toward them, a genuine desire to help them. Part of the failure of the press (which, in the cities, was overwhelmingly pro-Landon) either to sway the small voters or to predict their vote undoubtedly lay in the failure of editors to understand the impress on these people's minds of the New Deal relief policy and of Roosevelt's own personality. Newspaper articles about the scandalous waste of relief funds or about nonsensical boondoggling were discounted by these small voters, not simply because some of them were getting money themselves and wanted the flow of cash to continue, but because they saw in the New Deal a badly needed angel of mercy which stood sincerely ready to help them. Above all, they saw in Roosevelt himself a friend who did not talk down to them, did not patronize them, but respected them as American citizens and wanted his Administration to serve them. What did they care what the papers said? They knew what the McGarritys in the next block, what the Nelsons on the next farm, had been up against, and what the Federal government had done for them; they had heard Roosevelt's friendly voice themselves, over the radio, again and again. They felt that they *knew*, and they voted accordingly.

## § 7

Gradually Europe was drawing nearer.

During 1936 Hitler's armies had marched unopposed into

the Rhineland. Mussolini's armies, completing their Ethiopian campaign, had marched into Addis Ababa. Civil war had broken out in Spain, and by the time of Roosevelt's re-election the forces of Francisco Franco, backed by German and Italian support, were drawing close to Madrid. With more and more disquiet the American people were taking note of an outside world whose orderly foundations were crumbling as the aggressors of the new German-Italian Axis moved step by threatening step toward domination.

But the event which was presently to bring the average American man and woman closer to the European theatre than they had been since Versailles, and which for days on end was to overshadow in interest anything that was happening on the American continent, leaping into the American headlines and becoming the predominant topic of American conversation, was no affair of armies or conquests. Though this event might be regarded as a sign of the weakness of the British Empire—or, conversely, of the ability of that Empire to adjust its weaknesses, close ranks, and carry on—to most observers it was simply a personal drama on an imperial stage: the drama of a king forced to choose between his kingdom and a woman. That the king should be Edward VIII of Great Britain and Ireland and of the British Dominions Beyond the Seas, King, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India, and that the woman should be a Baltimore girl, Wallis Warfield Simpson, heightened the drama into what H. L. Mencken called "the greatest news story since the Resurrection."

All through the summer and fall of 1936, while Roosevelt and Landon had been stumping the United States, the American press had been conspicuously aware of the royal romance. Americans had seen photographs of Edward and Wallis together on a Mediterranean cruise, he (in swimming trunks) paddling in a rubber boat, she (in a bathing suit) sitting on a pier-end above him. When on October 27

she was granted a divorce from Ernest Simpson, the news from the Ipswich Assizes made the front pages in the United States. Not for weeks thereafter were the great mass of the English people even to learn of the existence of Mrs. Simpson, so strict was the unofficial censorship on news uncomfortable to royalty; not, in fact, until after the Bishop of Bradford, on December 1, spoke (at a diocesan convention) of the King's need of God's grace, said he hoped the King was aware of this need, and added sadly, "some of us wish he gave more positive signs of such awareness." This sentence, indirect and discreet as it was, opened the way to the revelation in England. But in America the way did not need to be opened. Americans had been asking one another for weeks whether the King and Mrs. Simpson were really to be married; and as the drama unfolded to its climax, the dispatches from Downing Street and Westminster and Fort Belvedere let loose a tumult of argument from one end of the United States to the other.

"Good for him. Best thing he's ever done. Let him marry her. Can't a king be a human being?" "No, no, no. He accepted a responsibility and now he's chucking it. If he was going to welsh on his job, why did he ever take it in the first place?" "Well, he never was good for much but nightclub work anyhow. Did you see the bawling-out Westbrook Pegler gave him in his column?" "Kind of a sock for Wallis, I guess. She was all set to be Queen—and now where is she?" "I'll bet it was the Archbishop of Canterbury that spoiled the thing. Those divorces of hers, you know." "Nonsense—they'd have swallowed the divorces all right if she hadn't been an American. Now if she'd been a duchess . . ." "You have to hand it to her at that—a Baltimore girl who can bring about an imperial crisis single-handed."

Endlessly the talk buzzed, till Wallis Warfield Simpson had fled England for the seclusion of the Rogers' villa at Cannes, and Stanley Baldwin had told the House of Com-

mons the long story of his activities as a match-breaker, and the headlines had shrieked, THE KING QUILTS, and millions of Americans had gathered at their radios on the afternoon of December 11, 1936, to hear, above the crackle of static, the slow, measured words of Edward himself:

"At long last I am able to say a few words of my own. I never wanted to withhold anything, but until now it has not been constitutionally possible for me to speak. . . . (*Try another station—I can't hear. What was that he said?*) . . . I have found it impossible to carry the heavy burden of responsibility and to discharge my duties as King as I should wish to do, without the help and support of the woman I love. . . . (*There, that's better. No, try the other one again.*) . . . And now we all have a new King. I wish him and you, his people, happiness and prosperity with all my heart. God bless you all! God save the King!"

With this last speech of Edward's, so perfect in its eloquent simplicity, the curtain fell upon the drama of British royalty. Now Americans could turn their minds again to what was happening at home. Their own chief of state, re-elected, had been given virtually a blank check. What would he write upon it?