

Harding?—"Not Bad! Not Bad!—But—!"



WHATEVER time and the action of the Democrats at San Francisco may do to soften the shock occasioned by the nomination at Chicago of Senator Warren G. Harding, of Ohio, as the standard bearer of the Republican party for 1920, a review of the comments of the nation's press would seem to show that the New York Times (Democrat) was a true prophet when it declared, the morning following the close of the convention, that the nomination of Senator Harding would be "received with astonishment and dismay by the party whose suffrage he invites."

Some of the sturdiest of the leading Republican journals do not quite conceal their disappointment. The New York Tribune does not try, and says editorially, "It would be hypocritical for the Tribune to pretend that it is satisfied with this result." The Detroit Free Press finds some comfort in the fact that Senator Harding "is a gentleman, somewhat of the McKinley type" and that if elected "may be depended upon to give the country a thoroughly American administration, so far as his capabilities go."

The Chicago Daily News thinks "The choice of Senator Warren G. Harding, of Ohio, as the Republican

After the hullabaloo, the convention settled down and nominated the most colorless man named by the Republican party in 40 years.—Milwaukee Journal (Independent).

candidate for President proved a happy solution of the deadlock that had threatened to reduce to chaos the great assembly of delegates," but calls attention to the fact that the party's choice was not the people's choice, and declares, "If the people do not like it they should awaken to their duty and their opportunity in coming presidential years, should select their candidates with care and should then proceed to put an unmistakable knock-out punch into the preferential primaries."

The Minneapolis Journal frankly acknowledges "the nomination of Senator Harding produced at first a sense of disappointment."

The Chicago Tribune, however, thinks the nomination well suited to the times and adds that it shows "the deep desire of the party and the American people to return to sound conservatism," and in this it is supported by Senator Capper's paper, the Topeka Capital, which applauds the nomination and says, "Republican Senators and Congressmen supported the Harding candidacy because of their knowledge that with his election there would be harmonious co-operation at the two ends of Pennsylvania avenue."

But the Independent and the Independent Republican papers seem to find few crumbs of comfort in the

We had hoped that a man of undoubted courage, vision and executive ability would be chosen, but we have instead Warren Gamaliel Harding, one of the Senate group which controlled the convention . . . It would be hypocritical for the Tribune to pretend that it is satisfied with this result.—New York Tribune (Republican).

nomination of Harding. They see in the nomination of the Ohioan the absolute repudiation of the people's wishes, as expressed at the primaries and the growing determination of a senatorial cabal to administer the executive as well as the legislative functions of government.

"Senator Harding couldn't carry his own state against General Wood," declares the Hartford Post (Independent). "He couldn't even get the Ohio Wood delegates when the tide began to drift away. . . . As a candidate in the primaries and before conventions Harding couldn't have gotten a respectable showing of delegates."

The Milwaukee Journal (Independent) thinks that "all talk of naming a big man for a most important

This vigorous follow through was not posed for the battery of cameras which were taking every move of the Republican presidential nominee. It is the real thing.

four years is at an end—all talk of a business man or any man of leadership or exceptional ability," and goes on to state, "Mr. Harding has been five years in the Senate and not one Republican in 5,000 can remember a page, a paragraph or even a sentence of his record. He has been consistently a standpatter, reactionary or ultra-conservative, whatever word one prefers. One instinctively thinks of the phrase 'eminently respectable' . . . It is hard to think of him in anything but a Prince Albert coat, benign, statuesque, with no expression lighter than a faint smile or more serious than the trace of a frown. If elected Mr. Harding will serve well the leaders of the party machine. He has not been a leader and even as President will not be."

The Detroit News agrees with this view and sees no promise of a strong hand at the tiller of the ship of state. "A convention directed and guided away from the expressed desire of voters by a dominating in-

No member of the United States Senate ever has been elected President of the United States. Those who believe custom and prejudice govern our affairs will take due note of this.—Hartford Post (Independent).

ner circle containing Thomas W. Lamont and Colonel George Harvey requires a nominee content with things as they are and not one continually and restlessly striving to make them as they ought to be," says the News. In Senator Harding the Republicans have a nominee with an unbroken record in support of the established order. The convention, the platform and the nominee are in harmony. It is a clean-cut job. If the people want that kind of a president and that kind of a national program, the opportunity is before them. There is no hypocrisy about the proposition. The voter is not being deceived.

"Somebody," continues the News, "has to be President. Without doubt some of the directing influences of the convention would prefer Mr. J. P. Morgan for the office if they could have just exactly their hearts' desire. And as Mr. Morgan either is too busy to take the nomination or possibly feels a delicacy about submitting himself to the voters, what more natural step could the convention take than to nominate an agreeable, competent, debt-paying, law-abiding but rather colorless gentleman, who will run the presidential office nicely, who can be trusted not to start an Ananias Club, who will not brand some of our most potent citizens as Malefactors of Great Wealth, and who, above all other things, will listen to reason?"

He is a political product and a representative of the Senatorial interests that took it unto themselves to formulate the policy and name the candidates of the party.—Indianapolis News (Independent).

The Indianapolis News (Independent) thinks the "senate cabal" won just as it had planned. "The cabal also dictated the platform," says the News, "and from the beginning to the end was in undisputed control of the convention." The News wonders just how

the Republican voters will accept "this method of naming a candidate and the rather striking ignoring of the voice of the people—even of the people of Ohio—as expressed at the primaries." In conclusion, the News observes that the candidate fits the platform, "since both are entirely colorless." But it is the danger that the Senate may grow too powerful in administering the affairs of the country that is first in the thought of the News.

It recalls the fact that while Mr. Wilson has had considerable trouble with the Senate he is not the first President who has had such difficulty and it declares that the Senate has not always been guiltless in the matter of encroaching on the chief executive's prerogatives. "On the whole," argues this paper, "it is better that the two branches should not be over-friendly. When Senators force the nomination of one of their colleagues as a presidential candidate, there will at least be a question as to whether there may not be a danger that the Senate will grow too powerful, as to whether the White House itself may not be a mere appendage of the Senate."

While it is not to be expected that any man the Republican party could name would receive the indorsement of the Democratic press, memory does not serve

Beyond question the nomination of Senator Harding produced at first a sense of disappointment.—Minneapolis Journal (Republican).

to recall another instance in recent campaigns in which the announcement of the Republican choice has met with so much derision at the hands of the opposition.

The best they say of Senator Harding is that his virtues are all negative, and to this they add unanimously the statement that the Republican senatorial clique, in forcing his selection, has pledged the party to a reactionary rôle in American politics.

The platform, especially with reference to the League of Nations, they find, in the language of the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, "cowardly, evasive and meaningless stuff," with the peace plank "the crowning evasion."

"When a plank delights Hiram Johnson, on the one hand, and on the other is 'perfectly satisfactory' to Murray Crane, somebody is being cheated and the attempt to humbug the public is plain," says the New York Times, which adds that the issue cannot be put aside so easily and that Mr. Harding "will have to make his own plank about the Treaty. He cannot go on all through the canvass facing both ways—even if there is a winning smile on both faces."

The Dayton News sums up the entire Chicago convention as "a colossal piece of effrontery" while to the

As our Presidents have averaged, Senator Harding, if elected, will not be the worst. . . . But he will not open the road for any Panama Canals; he will not lead the way to any great national reforms; he will not give us the Roosevelt picture of a great heart beating constantly in sympathy with mankind.—Detroit News (Independent).

mind of the New York World, "With a standpat candidate and a standpat platform the Republican party has undertaken to turn the political clock back to 1900 . . . the ancient partnership between Republican politics and special privilege is re-established."

The Louisville Courier-Journal thinks the Republicans have learned nothing since 1913 except hatred of Wilson.

The nomination of Governor Calvin Coolidge for the vice presidency is met with a very different note. Newspapers of both political faiths acknowledge that the nominee will bring strength to the ticket and many express a belief that the Republicans have recalled the office from the weak position it has occupied of late years.