

# Michigan Law Review

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Volume 46 | Issue 3

---

1948

## Link: WILSON: THE ROAD TO THE WHITE HOUSE

Michigan Law Review

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### Recommended Citation

Michigan Law Review, *Link: WILSON: THE ROAD TO THE WHITE HOUSE*, 46 MICH. L. REV. 441 (1948).  
Available at: <https://repository.law.umich.edu/mlr/vol46/iss3/21>

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WILSON: THE ROAD TO THE WHITE HOUSE. By *Arthur S. Link*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press. 1947. Pp. xiii, 570. \$5.

This volume is first in a series intended eventually to constitute an historical and biographical study of Wilson and his time until his death in 1924. Aside from an interpretive background chapter it is confined entirely to the period 1902-1912. Administrative struggles as president of Princeton, advent into New Jersey politics under machine and "big business" sponsorship, repudiation of these antecedents and emergence on the national scene as apostle of the New Freedom, the bitter fight for nomination ending in the amazing climax of the 1912 Covention, the vicious, turbulent, "Wilson versus Wall Street" cam-

paign—all are treated in conscientious detail. Emphasis is on events; Wilson's personal life is kept well in the background and any discussion of his complex and contradictory character or of his intellectual metamorphosis from conservative-reactionary to progressive is purely incidental to the main purpose—a straightforward factual account. The author, a member of the department of history at Princeton University, has a vigorous, thoroughly readable style and an approach refreshingly objective and impartial. He can characterize Wilson's conduct as on occasion fawning and insincere, can accuse him of being often motivated solely by political expediency, yet can state that at the end of the 1912 campaign "no man could now doubt that his concern for the general welfare was profound, and that regardless of how he came by his progressive principles he would see them through as leader of the American people."<sup>1</sup> The concluding five chapters, dealing with the nomination battle, the convention itself, and the election campaign, afford a fascinating insight into the operations of American politics and politicians.

<sup>1</sup> P. 527.