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Will History Repeat

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WILL HISTORY REPEAT?

February 19th there appeared in many daily newspapers the special statement of Senator Robert M. LaFollette, "the opening gun in another historic struggle." Its first salute was, "In the future no nominee to this high court (U. S. Supreme Court) will ever again be considered by the Senate until there has been an investigation of his acknowledged position"; and the final shot thundered forth with the hope, "that what took place in the Senate will have a salutary effect on the future deliberations of the Supreme Court."

"Big Bertha's" missiles landed. Awestruck, many people wondered if the United States would soon see government of the Senate, by the Senate and for the Senate inaugurated. We, ourselves, can hardly believe, however, that the Senator means there is to be standardized Senate inquisition in every case of judicial appointment, or that he seriously believes that the people of this country will acquiesce in a selection of its judiciary predicated upon advance delegation of all judicial prerogatives to the Senate.

Should we be wrong, there appears to be something of tremendous portent in the record of those dark days of 1862, when the Senate, intent, as usual, upon the security of its incumbency, and seemingly sustained by the adverse vote-verdicts of New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and even the President's own Illinois, sent its ultimatum to the sad-eyed occupant of the Presidency, demanding, among other things, that Senator Wade become the real power in the administration. Though Lincoln, himself, could "see hardly a ray of hope," he very firmly told the gentlemen of the Senate "that he was master," that HE had been entrusted with the Executive Power.

And so today it is just barely possible that "what took place in the Senate may have a salutary effect on the future" composition of that august body. 1863 may follow 1862 again.