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MY NEW YORK LIFE

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

MY NEW YORK LIFE

BY

SMIMASA IDICHI

PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH IN WASEDA UNIVERSITY
AUTHOR OF "MY LONDON YEAR"

KENKYUSHA
KOJIMACHI, TOKYO
1923

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TO

MRS. ELLA CATE

AND

MRS. LILLIAN KITASHIMA

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

MY LONDON YEAR

ENGLAND REVISITED

AMERICA REVISITED

Tokyo, Sept. 11, 1916.

Dear Mr. Idichi:

I am very much obliged to you for letting me read the manuscript of your book entitled "My New York Life"; and I feel honored by your request to write an introduction to the book. I may say, in the beginning, that I am very glad that you have written such a book, which gives a good idea of American life in the large cities. I am specially gratified that you have written in such a calm, sane and fair manner. An Oriental might naturally have exaggerated and ridiculed the vast differences noticeable. I am not sure that I might not myself criticize some phases of American life even more severely than you do. But I am glad that you could enter into sympathy with what you saw there and that even your criticisms are reasonable. I am trying in Japan as much as possible to get the Japanese point of view and to explain it to my friends and countrymen; but I do not hesitate to criticize certain features of Japanese

life. I am, therefore, very glad that you have shown in this book the spirit of kindly criticism mingled with appreciation and sympathy. I congraturate you upon your success.

Sincerely yours

E. W. Clement

PREFACE TO NEW EDITION

Five years have elapsed since the first appearance of this book; and in the interval I have visited New York for a second time. My second visit has naturally reminded me of the fact that the great city, which is the best representative of progressive American city life, has changed since the time when I wrote this book. But the value of the book is little affected by the change; for the main features of American life as I have attempted to describe them here remain the same as before. Moreover, results of my second visit are recorded in my new book entitled, *America Revisited*. I have, therefore, consented to the publisher's proposal for a new edition.

The main purpose of this new edition is to offer the book in a better typographical form, for the original edition has suffered much in successive printing. A feature of the present edition is a com-

plete change of illustrations with some additions from the photographs which I have taken myself during my second visit.

I was in New York from November 1912 to the following May; in Paris from August to November 1912. To follow the chronological order, therefore, *My Parisian Days* ought to come before *My New York Life;* but I have placed the latter in the first part of the book as it forms the principal part of it.

E. D. T.

Waseda University, Tokyo.
September 1921.

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MY NEW YORK LIFE

I

THE LAND OF LIBERTY

An accident to our ship and stormy weather kept us at sea longer than the scheduled time. We had now been ten days at sea; and everybody was anxious to get to shore—to New York; for we were coming to New York from Havre by a French boat.

It was in November; the voyage in the Atlantic at that time of the year is not very comfortable, with cold and wind, sometimes accompanied by a snowstorm. Almost all the passengers were emigrants, seeking a better life in the Land of Liberty; I was perhaps the only one who was coming to the New World without any ambition. Some expectations, however, I had. I wanted to be inspired by the sight of the Statue of Liberty and to see the skyscrapers, of which I had heard so much; I was

curious to be in the "largest city in the world." Moreover, the principles upon which the United States has been founded always appealed to me: the Land of Liberty was an inspiration to me.

We were sitting at table for lunch, when someone gave the cry of "La terre! La terre!" We all stood up at the exclamation; and we could see, through the portholes, a hazy line of land on the horizon. None but those who have experienced it can form any idea of the thrill which one feels at the sight of land after a long voyage. Some of the women could not eat their lunch: they were too much excited. I went on deck as soon as I finished my lunch; and was looking for the Statue of Liberty.

A heavy snowstorm had raged; and we could not see far ahead. By and by, however, I could discern the outline of the statue at a distance. I was a bit disappointed; for the sight did not give me any thrilling sensation. For one thing, I could not obtain a good view of the statue because of the storm. Nevertheless, I did see the statue; and tried to be satisfied.

STATUE OF LIBERTY

The statue stands on an islet, called Bedloe's Island; and was designed by a French sculptor, Auguste Bartholdi. It was presented by the French people in 1884 to the United States in commemoration of the long-established good-will between the two nations. The height from the base to the torch is 151 ft., the pedestal being 155 ft. high. Some idea of the dimensions of this colossus may be obtained from the fact that forty persons can stand comfortably in the head of the figure and that the torch will hold twelve people. It symbolises Liberty Enlightening The World; and it is said that the sculptor modelled the figure from his mother. Here at the threshold of America, Liberty is uplifting her lighted torch to welcome the newcomers.

In the meantime, our ship was stopped,—and immigration officers came on board. We were all called down to the dining saloon; and were examined one by one. I could pass the health examination without any trouble; but when the immigration officers began to examine me, I was put to a rather unpleasant treatment. They asked me for my

passport; but I had not it with me, and told them that I had left it in my bag, as I never had had occasion to show it before. And I was just going to run up to my cabin to bring it; but they would not let me go by myself. At first I could not understand what was their idea; but they told me that they were afraid I might escape while their eye was not upon me. I laughed at the idea; they would not, however, trust me so much as to let me go to my cabin by myself. Under the watch of an officer, therefore, I was allowed to go to my cabin to bring my passport. When they saw my passport and knew that I was not a coolie, they passed me without subjecting me to any further humiliation. But the humiliation I received at the hands of the American immigration officers made me curse my lot of being a subject of His Majesty the Emperor of Japan. Such was the way I was allowed to enter this Land of Liberty.

It was on the morning of Thanksgiving Day in the year of Grace 1912 that I found myself for the first time in the "largest city in the world." Two of my friends in New York had promised to

meet me at the pier. I looked for them, when our ship got to shore; but could not find them. I went over to the office of our ship's company to make inquiry, and was told that our ship came in so suddenly that even the people at the office did not expect her. I concluded, therefore, that my friends did not know of the arrival of my ship; and decided to go round by myself to the house of the one whose address I had.

There was a heavy snowstorm, and it was a holiday; so that there were no cabs to be had. I was, therefore, compelled to rely upon tram and subway. By the way, the difference between the King's English and the President's English gave me some trouble. When I was asking a man the way to my friend's, I inquired if I could get a "tram." He seemed not to understand what I meant; and instantly it occurred to me that I should not employ the word "tram" in America. I said, therefore, a "street car," and he understood me at once. This incident strongly reminded me of the fact that I was now in a land where people spoke English, but in a different way from the English.

There were few people about (owing to the snow, I think); and the streets presented a rather desolate aspect. No holiday spirit was seen; people seemed to be all indoors. And I could not obtain any vivid impressions of New York life; for there was but little traffic, and the skyscrapers, veiled by the blizzard, did not present any inspiring sight. Indeed, the din and hurlyburly with which New York life is always associated were not to be met with. I had expected more rush and crush; my first impression of New York was rather that of a cold and deserted city.

My friend lived uptown, somewhere in West 105th Street. I was able, without much trouble, to find my way there, making the best use of street cars and subway. But New York is a very simple place to move about; you never get lost. In the first place, the streets run cross-town in an almost straight line; and what are called avenues which are broad thoroughfares extend uptown very regularly; the whole plan, therefore, looks like a chessboard; and these streets and avenues, with a few exceptions, are numbered, instead of being named.

Passenger traffic is efficient; there are subways, elevated railroads, and street cars. House numbers are so arranged that you have even numbers on one side of the street, and odd numbers on the other. Moreover, the city is narrow cross-town, and extends only uptown. It will thus be seen that New York is not a complicated place. The Londoner may boast of his irregular streets; while the New Yorker would be proud of his regular ones.

II

ON THE FIFTEENTH FLOOR

By a curious combination of circumstances, I began, soon after my arrival in New York, to work at an office downtown; and I was brought into direct contact with the actual life of this busy city. Mine was a sort of journalistic work; it did not, however, involve me in that restless routine which is the common lot of New York newspaper men: I was only to do some scribbling, sitting at desk in my office.

My office was on the fifteenth floor—in an office building. It was near the famous Wall Street; and I went down there every morning. The fifteenth floor is nothing extraordinary in New York (the Japanese Consulate is situated on the seventeenth floor); but it was a far cry for me. Of course, one does not walk up to such a height; one is

simply shot up by elevators (you mustn't call them lifts in America). These elevators really do fine service; they are going up and down almost incessantly, so that to work on the fifteenth floor in New York does not mean more than to be on the first floor in other places. But I had a horror of elevators at first; they shot up and down so fast that I was in a perpetual fear they might take my breath away.

One day, therefore, I tried to climb up to my office on the fifteenth floor by staircases (for there were staircases, too); but the experience was not very encouraging. It took me nearly half an hour; and I could hardly keep on my feet when I got to my office; I felt my feet aching for some days. I had now to depend upon elevators; and my first training at the office was how to get along with them. By and by, however, I got my nerves hardened enough to stand the ride in them.

Another difficulty I had, and that was with regard to the entrance doors of the building in which my office was. A building which has more than fifteen floors must necessarily stand upon a

solid foundation; and it was not surprising that our building should have been fitted with massive entrance doors. There were two main entrances: the one was provided with swing doors, and the other with a revolving one. These gigantic doors overawed me; my heart sank within me when I stood before them, and I had to strain my muscles to the utmost to open the swing doors. The revolving door was not also easy to manage. It really requires a good deal of practice to get through a revolving door with ease (especially when it is such a heavy one as is found in New York). Sometimes it goes round too fast, and you cannot find a chance to get in; at other times, it stops abruptly before you have got through.

I had some bitter experiences with the one at our office. Once I could not get out after having jumped in, as it began to revolve too fast; I don't know how many times I went round. At another time, it stopped while I was only half way through; and I had to wait for other people to come in, for it was too heavy for me to start it going. In New York where everything is on the biggest scale in

the world, one must also be big in physical construction. Indeed, you may be the biggest fool in the world, but you must not be a small man in New York.

Thus I had much ado before I could settle down to my work. Our office had a small staff; and we were like one family. I was the only Japanese; the rest were all American. The publication of a monthly magazine, called Oriental Review, was our business; and I was to write articles for it concerning Far Eastern questions. We had a stenographer who was a girl of about sixteen. As she had not much work to do, she spent most of her time in looking into the mirror on the wall and asking the telephone office the time. At short intervals, she would call up the exchange office and inquire: "Time, please"; or she would come up to me and ask: "What time have you got?" Our boss was sometimes cross because she talked too much with her sweetheart through telephone. But, to tell the truth, everybody was doing it. You cannot realise how much of love-making is performed through telephone in New York unless you

have been at an office there. This is quite natural, though; for you cannot serenade your girl perched on the fifteenth floor at her window.

Life in an office building is quite self-sufficient, with its means of communication in the elevators, its water system, light, heat and power plants; there are post and telegraph offices, uniformed police force, and various kinds of shops. You have at command messenger service; you post your letters in the mail chute which runs through all the floors, carrying the letters to the mail box at the bottom, where the mail is collected by postmen. As for telephone service, a machine is installed on every desk. Your shoeblack comes round every morning, inquiring "Shine?"

At lunch time, you just run down to the basement where you can have your "quick lunch" in ten minutes. At a shop in the hall, you buy a cigar for yourself and a box of candy for your girl (if you have got one). When you want to write a letter, you call your stenographer and dictate to her. She will type your letter in a few minutes, although you cannot always rely upon her spelling.

AN OFFICE BUILDING

But speed is the soul of New York life, so that you must put up with anything and everything which is done quickly. Speaking of speed, the elevators in high buildings are divided into local and express: the former stop at every floor and the latter stop only above certain floors. The downtown New Yorker cannot have the patience to wait for a five-second elevator stop.

The prevailing rent for an office in downtown buildings is, I am told, $ 2 per square foot per year above the fifth floor, and for the lower floors it goes as high as $ 11 a square foot. The rent includes light, heat, and janitor service. The fearfully high price of land in this downtown business centre is beyond the flight of our imagination. We speak of the high price of land in our business centres as "one bushel of gold for one bushel of earth"; but in New York this figurative expression is almost carried into practice. A plot of land near Wall Street was sold in 1906 at the price of $ 576 a square foot. So far this seems to be the record price.

This frightfully high price of land must have

been an imperative raison d'être of the skyscrapers. When you walk along downtown streets, you feel as if you were passing through cañons, for these high buildings tower over the streets like mountains. In London you can't see much of the blue sky because of the famous fogs; and in New York you have equally little chance to get a glimpse of the azure vault of heaven as the skyscrapers screen your ken.

At present the Woolworth Building is claimed to be the tallest office building in the world. It is of 55 storeys, measuring 793 ft. in height; the cost, including the site, is estimated at $ 14,000,000. There are two other skyscrapers which have each been the tallest building in the world in their own day: the one is the Singer Building, and the other the Metropolitan Life Insurance Building. The former which has 47 storeys and is 612 ft. high, was completed in the spring of 1908, the then highest office building in the world. The latter superseded the former as the world's tallest office building in 1910, with its 52 storeys and a height of 700 ft. But it has now ceded its proud position

to the Woolworth Building which was completed in 1913.

III

THE DEPARTMENT STORE

The wonderful activity of commercial life was a thing which struck me first in New York. Indeed, I wondered if there was any other phase of life in the city. If Aristotle had seen New York life, he would have changed his maxim "Man is by nature a political animal" into "Man is by nature a commercial animal." And a striking feature of American commercialism is the organisation of the department store. Of course trusts, corporations, combines (and other organisations of similar description) may best show the magnitude of American commercial life; but the secret of the actual working of these tremendous enterprises is rarely revealed to the outsider. The influence of the department store, however, will be at once noticed by the visitor.

It is true that all the shops, or stores as they are called in America, are not run on the line of the department store; but the best portion of trade is transacted on that line. A department store of New York is, indeed, a bazaar of bazaars; there is nothing on earth which you cannot find there. Shopping in New York has been reduced to a very simple job. You just go down to a large department store downtown; there you hunt for your articles, shooting up and down in the elevators and telephoning from one department to another. You can find all your goods in one house, however diverse their descriptions may be.

When I came to New York, I asked my friends the best place where I could get books; and nearly all of them gave me the same answer: to go to a department store. I had the idea that there was, as in other cities, a special quarter where bookshops congregated; but, instead of indicating such a quarter, my friends told me to go to department stores for my books. This advice of my friends did not encourage me, for I have my own way of buying books. I take great pleasure in feasting

my eyes upon books at the shops before I buy them. I don't like to buy a book without turning over some of its pages.

Acting upon the advice of my friends, however, I went down one day to a department store, as I wanted to get some books. The experience afforded me some adventures and I was fully awakened to the actual state of New York commercial life. I have said that a department store of New York is a bazzar of bazzars; I should have said that it is a combination of a Babel and a labyrinth. Without the aid of a directory, even a born New Yorker cannot feel at home in a department store. You just imagine, therefore, how carefully I studied the directory before I embarked upon my adventures in the establishment.

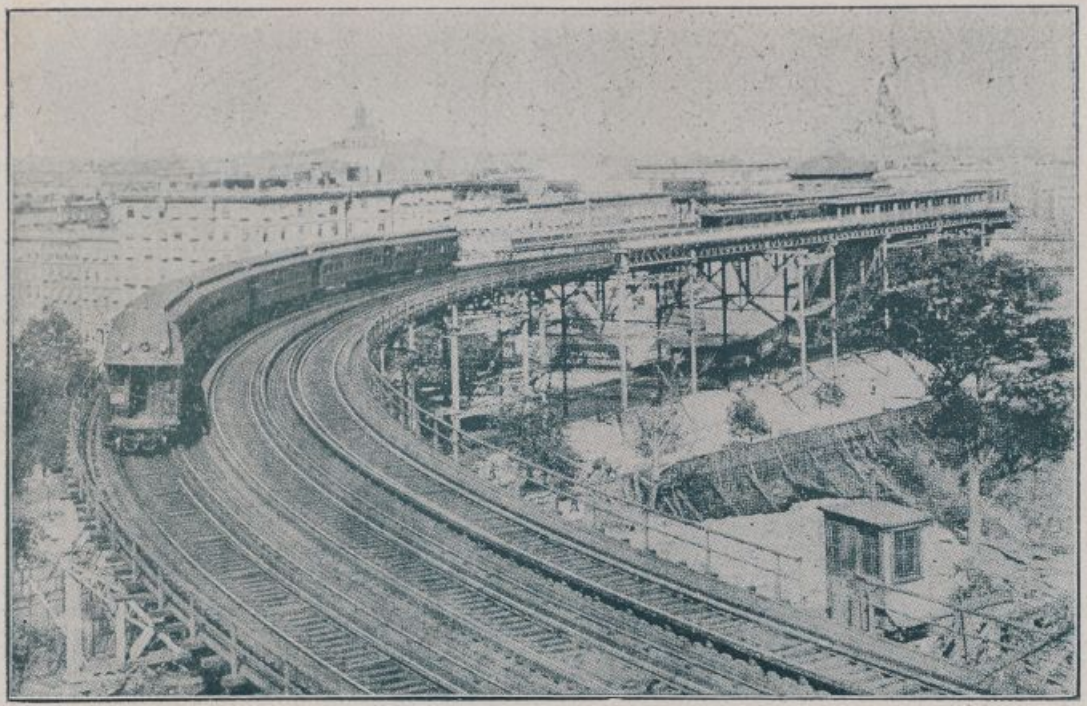
My first adventure was how to get into an elevator. Many elevators there were; they went up and came down without interruption; but every one of them was literally packed. It really required a good deal of courage and energy to push one's way into one of them: there was such a "squash" at the entrance. For some time, I stood

helpless; I was bewildered by the crowds. Nevertheless, after some difficulty, I was able to find my way to the book department at last. I was, however, a bit disappointed; for the department did not present such a scene as I had expected. I always expect a particular atmosphere from a book-shop, an atmosphere which is altogether different from that of an ordinary shop and which disposes one to linger before the books and to peep into them now and then.

I don't like to buy a book by the name; I must look into it before I decide upon it. I don't mind buying other articles by the sample; but I don't like to treat books as mere commercial commodities. I do not decide the value of a book by its market price. Now I could not go my usual way of buying a book in this department store. People were surging around me; the high-pitched and nasal voices of salesgirls assailed my ears from time to time; the department was side by side with ladies' toilet articles and blouses; and you were at a constant risk of running into somebody. In spite of this uncongenial atmosphere, I took up my stand

and tried to look over some books before I made my choice. The attempt was not a success, though. It was impossible for me to stand calmly in the midcurrent of flowing humanity and to thumb the leaves of a book in a leisurely manner. I did not see any one who was loitering about among the books; people came and went, without stopping to look into the books which they bought. There were not to be seen here those spectacled, grey-haired and bending personages who are familiar figures at other book-shops. After having secured some books, I hustled out of the house, and went back to my diggings uptown by elevated railroad.

On the elevated railroad which is so expressive of New York life, I began to muse on what I had experienced at the department store. In the first place, I was impressed by its huge organisation and heterogeneous nature. Indeed, its wonderful working and arrangements on such a gigantic scale seemed to affect my mental stability. But I wondered if such an organisation indicated the right way to the progress of human life and if other nations ought to follow the American example.



ELEVATED RAILROAD

The *motif* of the department store is to organise a system which should contain all the elements of daily life. The conception of this scheme naturally comes from the American mind which has not yet any established likes and dislikes. In other words, the system, however admirably it may be organised, would be too incongruous to satisfy those who have well-defined individual taste. The department store articles are too much of the same stamp; individual taste cannot be taken into consideration as they must appeal to as many people as possible.

For my part, I got this conviction that a department store was not the place where I should buy my books. I don't like to make book-buying and ordinary shopping the same thing: I want to draw a line between them. To buy a shirt and to get a book do not mean the same value for me. From the pure commercial point of view, however, a shirt and a book have the same value: they are both goods on sale. At the department store, therefore, books are treated in the same way as other commodities; and it is a very sensible idea from the commercial point of view. You can have your

shirts and books wrapped up in the same brown paper; and can carry your socks rolled up in your magazine. Such convenience is an attribute of the department store. Nevertheless, I have no taste for having my shirts and books wrapped up in the same brown paper.

When I told my friends of my misadventure at the department store, they directed me to Brentano's for buying my books:—Brentano's is a very big book-shop even for New York, which is saying a great deal. I paid a visit to the house at an early opportunity. I was glad to find there a different atmosphere from that of the department store; and I saw some people poking their nose into the books. I noticed, however, that most of the customers were ladies. I doubted if New Yorkers had the idea that reading was only women's concern. Another thing which I noticed was that only new books were on view: few classics were shown. Indeed, I wondered if English and French books had been placed on the American market before they were out in their own countries. The Americans seem to read only new books. A spacious

room downstairs where the periodicals of the world were shown made me admire the activities of American commercialism. I found there all the periodicals, English and French, whose names I knew;—I saw even a Japanese paper. Periodical literature is what appeals most to the Americans; classics cannot find a place on the shelves at a New York book-shop.

IV

SUNDAY PAPERS

American journalism is a thing which is quite different from that of other countries; but the Sunday papers of New York are really beyond our conception of the newspaper. Their only pretension to the category of ordinary Sunday papers is that they are issued on Sundays. A New York Sunday paper consists of no less than a hundred pages; and, as for its contents, anything which can possibly be put in print is found among them.

The mere sight of the New York Sunday paper frightened me. I could scarcely take heart to open it. A hundred pages in a book of the ordinary size are not of much consequence; but when they come to the size of a newspaper, they constitute a formidable quantity. It was, therefore, absolutely impossible for me to hold it in my hand

and turn over its pages with my fingers. I placed this formidable thing on a table, and turned over its pages with both my hands, standing out of my chair every time. I felt my arms aching when I had finished looking over its pages.

I remember, when in London, hearing an American complain that he could not find a Sunday paper there. I thought at that time that he was joking. But when I came over to New York, I realised that he meant what he said. There are no Sunday papers in London in the American sense. I wonder how a New York Sunday paper would impress a Frenchman who believes that a newspaper is a thing which must be thrust in his pocket.

To read a New York Sunday paper is an impossibility; you may just as well try to read a dictionary. It is not a newspaper in the ordinary sense of the term; it is a department store of all printable matters. I have said that one cannot get along in a department store without consulting the directory; the same principle applies to a Sunday paper. There is somewhere on the first page of

the paper a summary of its contents; by this key you must find such items as may interest you. But it is not an easy matter to glean such news of the day as is important to you out of this jumble of items.

I knew that the Americans were an energetic people; but I did not realise the full extent of their energy until I had seen their Sunday papers. The American strenuous life does not allow the people a moment of rest; they must have something even on Sundays to feed their energetic spirit. These formidable Sunday papers are, therefore, suitable mental food for them; but the dish was too big for my Japanese stomach. An American in London may complain that he cannot find a Sunday paper; but an Englishman in New York may equally complain that he cannot find a Sunday paper there. An Englishman would be as helpless as I was before a huge New York Sunday paper; he would have much ado before he gets to what he wants—perhaps he will never get there. I never found what I wanted; I always read the wrong pages.

Supply comes after demand; and American

BROADWAY

Sunday papers must be due to the demand of the people. The Americans are insatiable newsmongers; their feverish craving for anything new is almost morbid. They are the most eager newspaper readers. At least no other people buy papers so much as the Americans. On the subway or elevated railroad or in street cars, you will find not a single person who has not a paper in his or her hand, no matter what time of the day it may be. It seems that they cannot ride in these public conveyances without a paper in their hand. They buy a paper when they get on a car; and leave it in the car when they get off. Whether they have a mind to read a paper or not, they must have one when they get on a car. Indeed, I have sometimes noticed that they buy a paper at the subway entrance and leave it in the car without turning over a single page.

New Yorkers are the most eager newspaper readers; but they are the most careless readers. They are careless, so that something must be devised to catch their eye. Glaring headlines in thick type are the common resort to which almost

all the papers take; some of them go a step further by using red ink. I shan't be a bit surprised if a more enterprising and original man than Mr. Hearst hit on the idea of starting a paper which has only the headlines. Most people read only the headlines; they scarcely go into the main body of the "story." Nevertheless, everybody is expected to read a paper. At the subway entrance I was always attacked by a knot of newsboys, as I tried to pass before them without a paper in my hand. When I was coming home from my office in the evening, a newsboy would come up to me and say: "What paper, sir?", as if I had been under the obligation to get one from him. But I never read an evening paper; one morning paper was quite sufficient for me. Moreover, I did not like to make my pretty uncomfortable subway ride more uncomfortable by trying to read an evening paper.

A step outside his house, and the New Yorker catches at a newspaper; but he hardly reads it indoors. He believes that a paper is what should be read out of doors; or perhaps that it ought not

to be read anywhere but on the subway or in a street car. But the Sunday paper is admitted indoors; the daily paper is left on the subway or in street cars. Even the energetic New Yorker cannot digest a paper of a hundred pages every morning; so that he is content that only his Sunday paper runs to the length of a hundred pages. The Americans are so eager to read to-day's paper; but they don't care to keep it for future use. I wonder if there is a single family in all New York where a file of a daily paper is kept. The Americans don't care a scrap for the past; they don't take any interest in a thing of yesterday;—they keep up only with the interest of the moment. A New Yorker would sooner think of a waste-paper basket than of a file for yesterday's newspaper. My boss used to complain of my habit of keeping old papers at our office. He could not bear the sight of a heap of old papers on a table; and he would tell me that I should keep "that rubbish" in such a corner as it could not be an eyesore to him.

The American people take real pleasure in

throwing away old things; and they get tired of a thing before they have made full use of it. I rather fancy that they feel more happy when they throw away a thing than when they have got it. A morning paper is an old thing at noon; and they cannot keep it for the day. On the other hand, they are practical, so practical that they write their love-letters on the typewriter and make love through telephone. I cannot understand why this practical side of the American mind is not employed in their Sunday paper. From the practical point of view, their Sunday paper is a failure—it is too bulky. Useful news items are embedded too deep in the strata of advertisements. Indeed, there ought to be a pocket edition of the New York Sunday paper.

Almost all the daily papers have their Sunday edition. Principal New York papers are the *Herald; World; American; Tribune; Times; Sun; Evening Post;* and *Nation.* They all have the title "New York" added to their proper names, such as the *New York Herald* and *New York American.* On the whole they don't show

such a strong partisanship as their London confrères as to their political opinion; but some of them well champion the cause of their own party. The *Herald* represents the Republican interest, while the *World* is a powerful Democrat paper. The *Tribune* and the *Times* are more or less inclined towards the Republican and the Democratic side respectively. The *American* is a typical Hearst paper with its yellow journalism. But when we talk of New York papers, we naturally think of the *Sun* and the *Evening Post*, for they are really the pride of the American press with their high tone of style and independent views.

V

ICE CREAM SODA

Where there is no five o'clock tea, there is no English life; where there is no ice cream soda, there is no American life. I believe that modern American life dates from the time when the American people began to drink ice cream soda. In America (at least in New York) you can get ice cream soda anywhere and anytime—at confectioneries, pharmacies, department slores, at any time of the year. People, especially ladies, drop in at these places on their way home from the office or shopping, and have a glass of their favourite drink. If we call five o'clock tea an English institution, we must call ice cream soda an American institution.

Ice cream soda has such a hold upon the American people that they never can forget it, however

long they may have been divorced from American life. I know some American families in Japan who have been living in the country so long that they can now accommodate themselves to all the inconveniences of the country ; but they never can give up American ice cream. They try to console themselves with their home-made one. I really think that ice cream and apple pie are two essential factors in American life—if you lack either of them, you can't have American life.

The excessive use of ice in American daily life is wonderful, for they use it from morning till night and all the year round. I must confess here that I had not fully realised the actual extent of the use of ice till I came over to New York. I had had the idea that ice was a thing for summer only ; that is, its virtue could only be appreciated in summer time. But New York has taught me that its virtue can just as much be appreciated in midwinter. New York is a cold place, with plenty of snow in winter ; but iced drinks are never abandoned there. When the streets are buried in deep snow and a cutting wind is sweeping down from the tops of

skyscrapers, the New Yorker sits in his excessively heated room in shirt-sleeves and triumphantly drinks ice water. He is never so pleased as when, mocking the power of winter, he washes his dry throat with ice water, sitting in a room which is heated in a most liberal manner. He cannot be satisfied unless he has his rooms heated to such a degree that he cannot sit with his coat on.

By the way, the Americans love to take off their coats ; they are sooner shirt-sleeved than they are properly dressed. They seem to feel more at home in shirt-sleeves than in coats ; and their habit of wearing belts, instead of braces, makes them take off their coats more readily. Their way of taking off their coats is natural, sometimes beautiful ; Englishmen are clumsy and awkward when they take off their coats. No body is seen with his coat on in a New York office ; it looks too lazy to have a coat on. A coat is a hindrance to the American strenuous life.

Ice water is an indispensable thing to an office downtown in winter ; for the artificially heated rooms keep one always thirsty. Moderation is a

FIFTH AVENUE

thing which the New Yorker cannot endure; he must have excessive heat indoors when it is beastly cold out. I saw a very good example of the New Yoker's love for anything excessive. There was a lunch room in the basement in our office building; and I used to go down there for my lunch. It was midwinter; and the room was naturally heated to an almost unbearable point. And lo! one day I saw the electric fans going. The room was so much heated that the electric fans were necessary. *C'est tout à fait américain,* as a Frenchman would say.

In New York, not only drinks but some kinds of food are iced in winter. An ice box is kept in every family; and ice water is always ready at hand. When you go to a restaurant, the waiter comes round with a glass of ice water to receive your order. It reminded me of the Japanese custom at the restaurant, of serving every customer first with a cup of tea. The Japanese people are often represented by Western writers as sipping tea out of a tiny cup all the time; in the same way, New Yorkers may be represented as drinking ice

water from morning till night. Japanese tea (to say nothing of tea ceremony) makes one calm and reflective; while ice water has the effect of controlling the fire of an irritable mind. New Yorkers are frightfully nervous; and I think they find (whether they are conscious of it or not) a good remedy in iced drinks.

My boss at the office was not also free from this common trouble of New Yorkers, nervousness; and sometimes his nervousness affected me, too. At such a moment, a glass of ice water was an excellent remedy for me. It seems to me that the nervousness of New Yorkers in a way accounts for their habit of taking iced drinks all the year round. New York where modern machine life is seen in its strongest colour tries the nerves of the citizens; the dry air of rooms which are heated in an excessive manner in winter also has some effect upon their mind. They cannot sit still; they must be "on the go" or die. Natural water is too insipid for their palate; ice water is, therefore, necessary.

They New Yorker is ashamed to be a beloved child of Nature; he wants to be as independent of

her as he possibly can. He tries to mock the power of winter by heating his rooms excessively. He does not deign to drink the water fresh from Nature: he creates ice water. He does not think it a credit to his indepenent spirit to rely for light upon the sun; his house is so dark that lamps must be lighted even in the daytime. This sort of thing is very pleasing to his pride; for he can say that his house is lighted by electricity day and night. His rooms must also be heated in an extravagant way, because he wants to drink ice water and to take off his coat. He squanders his money, time, energy, and everything; he squanders even his life, —that is to say, he uses up his life, leaving no breathing-space or elbow-room. He heats his rooms because it is cold; but he is not satisfied unless they are heated to an excess, to such an excess that he must take off his coat and drink ice water.

I have said that you can have ice cream soda anywhere; and must now add that it is sold by the same system everywhere—by a ticket system. You get a ticket from the cashier at the entrance

and give it to the waiter who will serve you with a glass of ice cream soda. There is generally a long counter, upon which it is served. The counter is always crowded with pretty girls who perch upon high chairs like birds; the sight often reminded me of the "American Bar" at the cafés of Paris. American girls' relish for ice cream is now proverbial. Indeed, their tea party is often nothing but an ice cream party. When you take your girl out, you are always expected to treat her to a glass of ice cream soda.

VI

BROOKLYN BRIDGE STATION

I had heard much of Brooklyn Bridge, of its wonderful construction and imposing appearance, before I came to New York. I had now been in New York long enough to have seen the famous bridge; I could have found time for a visit to it. In spite of all this, however, I was never tempted to go down to see the wonderful bridge. When I got a glimpse of it from my office window, I often thought it strange that I never visited it, for it was only a few minutes' walk from my office. I was aware that it was one of the sights of the city which the visitor must not miss; and that it represented New York life just as much as the skyscrapers. But all my knowledge of the importance in New York life of the bridge did not induce me to have a look at it on the spot.

Indeed, I would never have been to the bridge but for an incident.

An American friend of mine whose acquaintance I had made in Paris lived in Brooklyn ; and one morning he rang me up on the 'phone, asking me to spend the evening with him. I was only too glad to accept the invitation. I left my office at five for my friend's ; and walked down to Brooklyn Bridge to take the " L " (elevated railroad) from there. It was the closing time of offices ; and the streets were densely crowded, not an unusual thing in New York by any means. The throng thickened as I approached the bridge ; I scarcely felt my feet on the ground, for I was carried along by the human stream. At last I found myself at the foot of the broad steps leading up to Brooklyn Bridge Station. I walked up the steps ; and could find my platform after some wanderings in the labyrinthine building. But when I went out on the platform, I was stunned.

Thousands of people were there, waiting for their trains—thousands of men and women, boys and girls. They were human beings no more : they

were living cargo waiting for shipment. Barriers were constructed on the platform with railings like pens; and people were shepherded into them by the guards. Trains came in and went out without interruption; but one had to wait a long time before one could get into a car. There was a rush for the barriers; a scramble for the seats in the cars; but only the few could enjoy the luxury of sitting room. You were, indeed, lucky if you could secure a strap.

All the possible standing room in the cars was occupied; the platforms were not spared, of course. It goes without saying that no regard for the sex was the rule. Pretty girls who seemed not to have seen more than sixteen summers were struggling in the squash with a book of fiction under their arm. Some of them attempted to open their books in the car and follow the career of the hero of the story which they had left reading at the office; but the unsympathetic crowd would not allow them to enjoy a few moments of reading—the cars were too much crowded for such a thing as reading. As for me, I was able to get into a car in due course of

time (which meant a long wait and some struggle); and could arrive at my destination without any hitch. But the experience left me a deep impression.

I am the first man to acknowledge that Brooklyn Bridge is a splendid triumph of engineering as a means of traffic; but I am the last man to envy the Americans its existence. According to a guide-book, from 135,000 to 140,000 passengers are carried by the bridge cars every day, 80,000 of whom go over in the rush hours from 7 to 9 in the morning and 4 to 6 in the evening. And these figures do not include 3,500 trolly cars which cross the bridge daily and carry their tens of thousands. You cannot, however, obtain from these cold figures any adequate idea of the actual scene created by the crowd! You must be on the spot to know what it is like. I don't mean to say that these crowds are disorderly; but one must have strong nerves to get along in their midst.

Brooklyn Bridge spans over the East River which separates Brooklyn from New York. Brooklyn forms a sort of suburb of New York; and

those who live in Brooklyn go over to their offices in New York in the morning and come back in the evening, crossing the bridge by "L" or trolly car. And such a scene as I have described above is seen at Brooklyn Bridge Station on New York side in these rush hours.

The bridge was begun in 1870 and was opened to traffic in 1883, having spent thirteen years in building, and cost $ 21,000,000. It was designed by John A. Roebling, the builder of the Niagara Falls Suspension Bridge. While engaged in the preliminary work, he met with his death. He was succeeded by his son, William A. Roebling, who was also injured in an accident and became a permanent invalid. He was able, however, to direct the progress of the work to its successful completion. The total length of the bridge is 6,537 ft., and the width 85 ft.

The strenuous life which is dear to the American heart may be all right; the doctrine of "go ahead" which animates the national life of the country may be excellent; the breakneck speed at which public conveyances are run may be splendid;

but the Brooklyn Bridge crowd made me doubt if New York life was sane. It is all very well that New York people work as hard as they please and make money as much as they desire; but then I should like to have some breathing-space in our life. The struggle for existence and the battle of life are what Western philosophers preach; but is the end of our life nothing but a struggle and battle? The Brooklyn Bride crowds have no time even to take breath—they are pushed and pulled like a machine. They have no control upon themselves: they are simply carried along by the general current of life. There is a strong current of life in New York; but the individual cannot live his own life: he is just floating on the surface of the stream.

The Brooklyn Bridge crowds are not a single instance; there are many other crowds of similar description. The subways are crowded to overflowing in the rush hours. Only the favoured few can fight for their seats; others are jammed in and cannot even have the joy of fighting for their seats. I was a miserable wretched creature in a crowded

subway train. Sometimes I might be able to catch at a strap; but then it was too high for me. I am of the average height for a Japanese; but in an American crowd I was a pitiable sight. The great trouble I experienced in a crowded train was how to get off at my station. Other people would push their way through the crowd to the platform, with the cry of "Out, out!", while the train was stopping; but I was powerless in such a crowd and the train would start before I could get out. It was not seldom, therefore, that I missed my station.

VII

MORGAN IS DEAD

As I have said before, I went down to my office every morning, generally taking the subway. One morning I was coming up to the street from Wall Street subway station, when I heard newsboys cry : "Morgan dead! Morgan dead!" The famous financier had been reported to be critically ill in Italy ; so that the hysterical call of newsboys did not startle me very much. But when I came out to Wall Street, I was surprised to see the doors of many buildings draped with the American national flags. I knew that Mr. J. P. Morgan was the veritable sovereign of Wall Street and that his death was a universal loss to the financial world. It was, therefore, perhaps natural (from the American point of view) that Wall Street should have shown its sympathy for the demise of this sovereign

WALL STREET

by a display of the national flags. My Japanese mind was, however, astonished at first; for, in Japan only the death of members of the Imperial Family or of Princes of the Blood is mourned by hoisting the national flags. In our country the national flag—the symbol of national life—is always associated with the Imperial throne. But there is no permanent central figure in American national life; any honest citizen can make as much use of the national flag as he pleases.

The death of Mr. Morgan was naturally a great event in New York life; everybody was talking about it. That day I went to a barber's and I was greeted with the words "Morgan is dead" when I entered the shop. I could now realise the extent to which Mr. Morgan wielded his "sovereign power" over American life. In republican America everybody is (at least theoretically) just as good as anybody else; there is no bar to any ambitious youth who aspires to the highest achievement in his profession. Such an example, therefore, as Mr. Morgan who has reached the highest position as a financier inspires his fellow-citizens

not with envy but with admiration. They believe that they also have the potentiality to become a Morgan. In consequence, the influence of a powerful man is felt in every walk of life.

In New York life, the influence of the millionaire can be seen in every department. Everybody is trying to live the millionaire life in one way or another. A shabby-looking newsboy takes a pride in throwing away a dime to have his worn-out boots cleaned. A poor workman would not hesitate to pay a quarter for his cigar. All New Yorkers, from the millionaire down to the shoeblack, are living a luxurious life in their own way. Every contrivance is, therefore, undertaken to appeal to million dollar vanity. For instance, there are magnificent mansion-like buildings for the habitation of the poor; electric lighting is carried on most extravagantly in a humble family; heating system keeps every room unnecessarily warm; and hot water can be had any time and everywhere. A poor man's life is thus on the model of that of a millionaire. It is true that New York streets are not paved with gold; but people appear to have an

idea that they are all millionaires.

The best proof of New York life being a millionaire life is that a nickel (two pence halfpenny) is the smallest coin you can use in buying things (except when you buy a paper which is generally one cent). If you tip a barber shop's assistant with a nickel, he would be offended. At a café in Paris, the garçon or waiter is quite happy with a ten centime tip which corresponds to American two cents; but a New York waiter would knock you down if you offered him three cents. Of course, it must be admitted that tipping is not so widely practised in New York as in London or Paris. The fact is that when you do tip a porter or shoeblack, you must tip him as a millionaire. This influence of the millionaire has led to New Yorkers' spendthrift habit. They go in for making money with all their heart; but they are also resolute in spending what they have earned in the sweat of their brow; they hate niggardliness. The American "sport" is, therefore, different from the English "sport"; the former is one who spends his money in a millionaire way, while the latter is

a dandy with a touch of English sportsmanship.

New York life often reminded me of English life which is an interesting contrast to it. I have said that New York life is a millionaire life; and I would call English life the middle class life. I don't mean to say that there is no high life in England; far from it. What I mean is that English life is established on the principle of the middle class life. For instance, comfort is the first thing to be considered in English life; and it is generally very comfortable. When the landlady of a London boarding house tries to convince her would-be boarder of the excellent quality of her house, she insists that it is comfortable. The landlord of a New York apartment house allures his tenants with the advertisement that his house is fitted with "all modern improvements." In a New York house which has any pretension to modernness, there must be elevators and telephone service. These modern improvements are excellent in a way; but they would offend the English sense of comfort.

American millionaires are not useless people

IN CENTRAL PARK

altogether; they render some services to their country. The Metropolitan Museum of Art which is a credit to commercial New York owes a great deal to the late Mr. Morgan and other millionaires. The Museum occupies a site in Central Park; and is claimed to be the largest and richest art museum in America. Most of the paintings and other works of art in the museum have been presented by these men of wealth. Public institutions in the country are generelly doing fine work; and their success must be attributed to the liberal contributions from rich people. American Universities are perhaps superior to any other country's institutions of similar description in the point of equipment and endowment; but all this is due to the munificent donations from millionaires. The names of Rockefeller and Carnegie are especially prominent in this line.

That the United States is governed more by Wall Street than by Washington can be noticed on every hand. The national life of the country depends more upon private enterprises than upon State undertakings. In other words, most of the

elements of daily life are supplied by the enterprises of those who have influence in Wall Street. Almost all public services (except postal service) are conducted under private management, and with remarkable success. Indeed, as compared with other public services, postal service is not in a very good condition, one great disadvantage being that you have to get post stamps somewhere else than at a post office as there is not a sufficient number of post offices.

In Japan the buildings which are conspicuous in the streets are those for Governmental services, such as police stations, post offices and law courts; while in America these public buildings are thrown into the shade by private buildings, a fact which shows that the country is more under the sway of the people than that of the State. And Wall Street represents the strongest force of the American people.

VIII

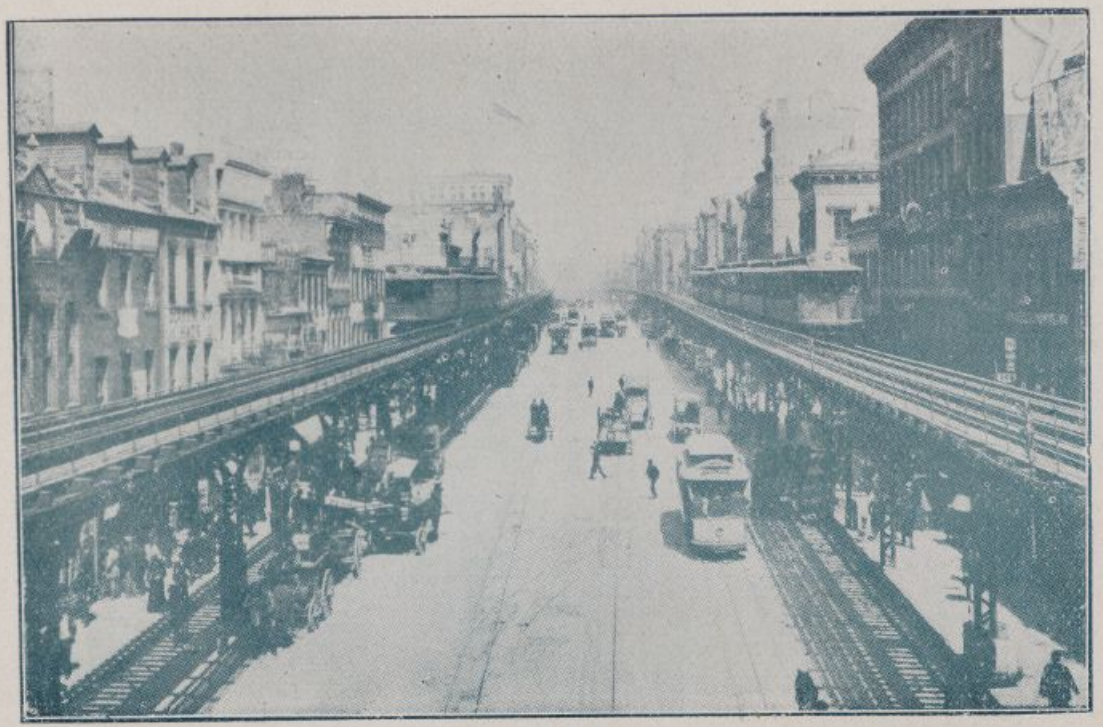
LIFE IN THE STREET

The New Yorker's conception of the street and that of the Parisian are diametrically different; the former has the idea that the street is a convenient passage for traffic, while the latter holds the view that it is a pleasant walk for foot-passengers. The result is that in New York nearly the whole space of the street is occupied by traffic, but in Paris the best part is given up to pedestrians. In the streets of New York, street cars are running on the surface, elevated railroad trains are thundering overhead, and subway trains are groaning underground. Poor pedestrians are pushed to the wall. The advantage of this sort of street planning is that one can get from one place to another very quickly; and what else can be more precious to the New Yorker than speed?

Walk about the streets for a few moments, and you will soon perceive that New Yorkers are not a slow people. Indeed, you will be struck by the high speed at which street life is moving. Slowness is a thing which the New Yorker cannot abide. You must always hurry up in New York, or you will be knocked down by other people. "Go ahead, and the devil take the hindmost"—such is the motto of New York.

When you go to a restaurant for your lunch, you must be quick, for it is "quick lunch." You should not sit down to a table (it takes too much time); you stand at a counter and dispatch your meal in ten minutes, and walk out. This "quick lunch" system really reflects the temper of New York people. It is quite a contrast to the Parisian way of taking lunch. In Paris all the shops are closed for one and a half hours at noon, for the simple reason that the shopkeepers are taking lunch! I am sure the New Yorker would be mad even at the bare idea of such a confounded thing.

As the street is simply a highway for traffic in New York, it is bare of unnecessary trappings;



STREET TRAFFIC

nothing is allowed even to relieve its monotonous aspect. So long as the current of traffic moves smoothly in the street, New Yorkers don't care to do anything with it: they believe that nothing more is needed for the fulfilment of its function. It is inconceivable to them, therefore, that pains should be taken to make the street look beautiful with trees or other ornaments. What is the use, they reason, of garnishing means of communication with empty embellishments?

It is quite natural from this conception that New York streets are not very attractive: the buildings which tower on both sides are too tall and irregular; street cars and elevated railroads mar the view. On the other hand, one does not see here such wretched figures as crippled bootblacks, deformed organ-grinders and blind beggars who infest London streets. In fact, almost no loafers are to be found in the streets; idleness should not be permitted to retard the movement of New York life; everybody must be moving on—a moving fast.

People all seem to be trying to get way from the street as soon as possible—they have no such

affection for it as Parisians. They have no mind to loiter about in it; they want to be out of it whenever they can help it. Young New York would be indignant if one suggested that there is no "man about town" there; but the New York man about town must have a different idea about town life from his London brother, or especially from his Paris brother. In London a good part of town life is to be seen in the street; in Paris the best part of it must be enjoyed there. The London man about town will not fail to spend some time in Piccadilly in his daily round in the town, while the Parisian boulevardier (as the name indicates) makes it a rule to take a long promenade along the Grands Boulevards every day. One cannot imagine, however, that the New York man about town would pay much attention to life in the street.

Some streets by night present, it is true, a lively scene with a crowd of people; but they are not out to enjoy life in the street; they are only on their way to some other places of amusement. Most of the streets are dark. Not that lighting system is neglected; but because it is for the most part

employed for the advertising purpose. Illuminations in brilliant colours and with cunning signs flash way up in the sky, proclaiming the thousand and one virtues of wares of all descriptions. The New Yorker, who is the embodiment of American commercialism, could not fail to find a splendid advertising agent in modern electric light. He makes, therefore, full use of it, with the result that his city by night is illuminated from end to end with glaring electric signs which tell you that you would incur a great loss if you did not buy the articles advertised by them. These signs, brilliant as they are, are of little use for the purpose of lighting the streets, for they are set up too high and their rays are piercing through darkness hundred feet above your head. Poor pedestrian has, therefore, to grope his way through the dark cañons of skyscrapers, keeping his eye upon an advertising sign in the sky.

The streets of New York are, as mentioned before, free from loafers and deformed people who infest the streets of London ; and bootblacks who are invariably cripples in London are persons with

perfect limbs here (though they are generally Italian immigrants). It is curious that the trade of bootblacking is almost entirely taken up by Italian immigrants who are sometimes called by the undignified appellation of Dago, while the job of laundry is nearly monopolised by the Chinese. Italians and Chinese present a very interesting contrast in another line of trade—they are both successful restaurant-keepers. The Chinese "Chop Suey" is doing excellent business not only in New York but in many other important cities of America; the Italian restaurants (sometimes quite Bohemian) are attracting a great number of Epicureans. In fact, if you want to taste such delicacies as are provided by the restaurants in Soho district, of London, you must visit some dingy and rather uninviting Italian eating-houses near China Town.

One would be attracted in the street by the sign "Shine Inside." It means that you can have a good shine on your boots inside the house. The room where the process of bootblacking is performed is called by the elegant name of parlour. The

HAVING A SHINE

English custom of leaving one's boots outside one's bedroom door at night for the maid who cleans them is not known in democratic New York; you have got to have your boots cleaned somewhere outside your house. Hence the raison d'être of so many parlours of this description. Not only are there the parlours of this kind, but you will find bootblack's chairs almost at every street corner. If you are working in an office, your bootblack makes a regular call every morning, greeting you with "Shine?" Thus New York is amply catered for in the line of bootblacking, and the profession is lavishly patronised by the public. New Yorkers have a weakness for shiny boots; but this is no wonder, for "all that glitters" always appeals to them. They do not grudge a nickel or dime for a shine every morning; and sometimes you will see a beggarly-looking urchin beaming with a proud smile, as he comes down from a bootblack's chair. The New York dandy feels pleased with himself when he sits down in a subway car and, tucking up his short "pants" a little, looks at his well-polished boots.

The New Yorker speaks of downtown and uptown, just as the Londoner speaks of the town and suburbs; downtown district stands for business centre, and uptown part for residential quarter. Wall Street, which is the best representative of downtown streets and which is the centre of money market, is the pride of not only New York but of all America; its name is now beginning to eclipse the old-established fame of Lombard Street. Its name is derived from the wall which once defended the city (then called New Amsterdam) at this point, and which was built by command of Governor Peter Stuyvesant in 1653. The street propor is not a very pretentious one; but tall and massive buildings which stand on both sides and the crowd of hurrying people will soon remind you that the street is not an ordinary one. With the street as the centre, there are situated all important institutions of finance such as the Stock Exchange, Banker's Trust Company, United States Sub-Treasury, J. P. Morgan & Co., Clearing House, and Chamber of Commerce.

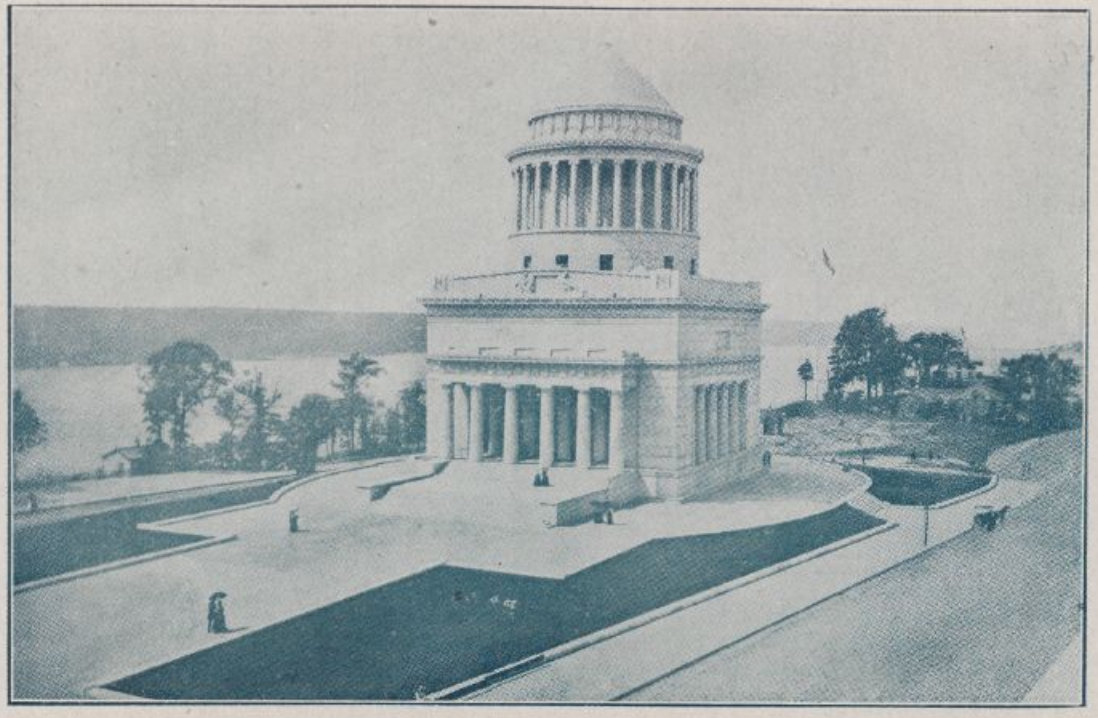
There are two famous thoroughfares in the city,

and they are Fifth Avenue and Broadway. Fifth Avenue, which is the most fashionable street, runs uptown just through the central part of the city, beginning at Washington Square in the south and extending north six miles, past Central Park which is the finest park in New York. Along both sides of this broad and beautiful thoroughfare there stand palatial residences, magnificent hotels and splendid clubs ; fashion and equipage are the dominant note of the street. That part of the Avenue which fronts upon Central Park is noted for a long succession of palatial residences, popularly called " Millionaires' Row " which may be compared to Park Lane, of London. The million-dollar residence of Andrew Carnegie is found in the row ; and the mansions of the Vanderbilts and of John Rockefeller stand on the Avenue further down.

Broadway, which New Yorkers are proud to call the longest street in the world, stretches from the south end of the city way up to the north, cutting Fifth Avenue at 23rd Street as it slants across the city. The thoroughfare from 23rd street to 42nd is the centre of gay life, with all the important

theatres and high-class hotels. At night thousands of electric lights create a brilliant constellation, giving rise to the name, "Great White Way." Besides Fifth Avenue and Broadway, two cross-town streets must be mentioned—Twenty-Third and Forty-Second. The former is one of the chief shopping streets, while the latter is the centre of theatreland, corresponing to Piccadilly Circus, of London.

Riverside Drive, which is the Mayfair of New York, is a high-class residential district along the bluffs of the Hudson River, with a beautiful drive. A row of magnificent mansions lines one side of the drive, and the Hudson presents a succession of picturesque views on the other. Grant's Tomb stands on a height by the drive; and the view which can be obtained of the Hudson from the terrace is superb. The walks I used to take along the drive on my way home from the office in the evening are among the sweetest memories of my New York life.



GRANT'S TOMB

IX

AMERICAN ENGLISH

On landing in New York, I soon found that there was some difference between the English which Americans spoke and that used by the English. As I arrived on Thanksgiving Day, there were no cabs to be had ; and I had to get to my friend's by other public conveyances. I asked a man if I could find a tram. He seemed not to understand me ; I repeated my question, but again he did not understand me. Now, I could not believe my English was so poor that I could not make myself understood in such a simple question. But I was soon reminded that I was using the wrong term, for in America the tram-car is called street car. I said, therefore, street car, and I was understood at once. This was my first experience in American English.

Another instance in which I was a bit shocked by American English was the one I had when I was talking with a new acquaintance soon after my arrival in New York. I was visiting a friend at his office whom I had met in London, when he introduced me to one of his colleagues. We soon fell to talking. After a few moments' conversation, my new friend asked me with that light-heartedness which is so characteristic of the American :—

"By the way, where are you located?"

I must confess I was a bit shocked when this purely American expression was flung upon me without a warning. I had known of the American meaning of the word "locate"; but it was the first time I heard it spoken. I was glad afterwards to think that my knowledge of spoken English (or rather spoken American) was thereby enriched.

English visitors to America generally do not speak favourably of the American language; but it is so expressive of the national spirit of the country. The notice at a railway crossing is an example of pure American English. It runs :—

" Look out for the cars."

Compare this with the conventional English notice, " Beware of the trains," and you will see that the American language has more force than the English. Indeed, superannuated and traditional English would seem to be too weak and colourless for American life which is full of young blood and activities. Whatever its faults may be, American English is terse and laconic.

Nothing can better represent, I think, the national character of England, America and France than their notices for wet paint which are each written in a different way. In England it is, " Wet Paint," which is English in good form; but in America it comes to one word " Paint." To the Americans who hate anything superfluous and who must do things quickly, the word " wet " is unnecessary : " Paint " is sufficient. But if you go to France, you will find that people there are slower than even the English; and the notice reaches such a length as this : " Prenez garde à la peinture " (Take heed of the paint). In France five words are necessary, while in America, one

suffices; such is the difference between the two peoples in their national character.

The fact that Americans and the English speak differently seems to have been noticed by the shopkeepers of Paris who have both peoples as their good customers. A friend in Paris told me that he saw at a shop this notice: "On parle Anglais; on comprend Américian" (English spoken and American understood). Generally speaking, the French are not strong in their commercial talent; but this Parisian shopkeeper is really unsurpassed in his wit and cleverness.

The Americans are commonly reputed to speak through their nose; and New Yorkers are certainly up to the reputation. Go to a department store, and your ears will soon be assailed by a chorus of nasal sounds. The speech of salesgirls at a department store is really spoken half through the nose and half through the mouth; and, when there are scores of such speakers, the effect is something inspiring. I don't know the real cause of their nasal twang; but a little touch of it in a pretty girl is not without some charm. Another peculiarity

of New York speech is the pronunciation of such words as *curtain*, *first*, and *work*. These words are pronounced *coitain*, *foist*, and *woik*. This pronunciation is rather sweet; and I love to hear a New York girl pronounce these words. The sound of short "o" in such words as *hot*, *got*, and *top* is also softened; they are pronounced *hut*, *gut*, and *tup*.

I was often amused to observe that the English and American people try to laugh at each other's pronunciation. As I am a foreigner to their tongue, they would correct my English and I appreciated their kindness; but sometimes I was placed in a very difficult position, for my English and American friends differed in their corrections. On such an occasion, I had to take a middle course; and I used to call my English Atlantic English (because the Atlantic lies between England and America). Now and then, however, I would play a trick upon them. The landlady of my first London boarding-house was very particular about my English pronunciation. One morning at the breakfast table I said "tomeito" (tomato),

following the American sound.

"Tomeito, did you say?" cried she, "I tell you, I cannot allow such English in my house."

To confess the truth, I said "tomeito" on purpose, to see what effect it would produce upon my landlady. And it brought about a stronger effect than I had expected.

While in New York, I once said to a waiter: "Give me some 'tomäto' sauce," adopting the English pronounciation. He looked up at me, studied my face for a few moments; and then brought me the thing I demanded. But his manner clearly showed that he would excuse my bad English because I was a Jap. On another occasion an American lady kindly corrected my pronunciation of "lieutenant," for I pronounced it "leftenant" in the English way. She was a kind-hearted lady; and I knew that she corrected my English out of kindness, so that I did not like to contradict her.

When I came over to New York after having lived in London more than one year, my pronunciation was naturally inclined towards the English way; and my American friends used to

make fun of me. On hearing my pronunciation of such words as "can't" (cănt), "Oh, no!" (ou, nou), and "no more" (nou mō), they would say: "Hallo, here comes an Englishman." But there was an English lady who had been in New York for twenty years and yet could not shake off her English sound; she was very pleased with my English, and always encouraged me to keep up my "correct" English pronunciation. Well, it was a hard job for me to please both my English and American friends with my English.

As for the American slang, it is sometimes picturesque (though Englishmen call it vulgar). There are two slang words which are heard on all sides and on every occasion, and they are "cute" and "dandy." Anything nice, lovely or beautiful is cute; when you see a pretty girl, you call her cute; when you receive a beautiful gift from your friend, you say it is cute; and so on. The word "dandy" is employed almost as widely as cute; when you have enjoyed yourself, you say you had a dandy time; when you have seen a very interesting play, you tell your friends that the play was

dandy. I remember once talking with an American in Paris about the steamship service in the Atlantic, and I asked him if his ship was comfortable, when he replied with a touch of enthusiasm: "Oh, she was dandy."

The Americans are very original in many ways; and no less so in their language. I saw an excellent example at a barber's; he had on his window this sign: "Hair-Cutter." Quite original, isn't it? I have already spoken of the word "locate"; another term which has received the same widening of meaning in this land of Liberty is "to ship." To send a thing not only by water but by land is to ship; so that you have your trunk shipped by rail. But the word "parlour" has undergone an extraordinary transformation in this democratic country. Speaking of the transformation of the word an English writer says: "It is in a dentist's parlor that the American's teeth are gilded; he is shaved in a tonsorial parlor; he travels in a parlor-car;....." And I have already told you that the American has his boots cleaned in a "shine parlor."

There are one or two colloquial expressions which are the hall-mark of Americanism. The most widely spoken one is "Is that so?" Where an Englishman would say "Really?", the American says "Is that so?"; and with more frequency perhaps. Another locution which is as much American is, "got through." When you have finished anything, you simply say: "I got through," and the word "got" must, of course, be pronounced "gut." And "I guess" for "I think" is also characteristically American.

Many things are called differently in America and England; and let me here give a short list of those terms which are quite in common use (English equivalents follow in brackets):—*auto* (motor-car); *baggage* (luggage); *candy* (sweets); *commutation-ticket* (season-ticket); *drawers* (pants); *dry goods store* (drapery shop); *elevator* (lift); *fall* (autumn); *freight train* (goods train); *movies* (cinema); *pants* (trousers); *railroad* (railway); *shoes* (boots); *side-walk* (pavement); *street car* (tram-car); *store* (shop); *subway* (underground or tube).

X

FROM MY OFFICE WINDOW

I have said that my office was on the fifteenth floor and that I went up there every morning. I have also stated that I had not much work to do at my office. I used, therefore, to stand at my window and to look down upon the world below—and to muse. My window overlooked a sea of roofs. There was, in truth, a street just below; but it was hidden by the roofs. Nothing attractive stood in sight; only the murmur, sometimes noise, of life and traffic in the street reached me; and I would soon be buried in a reverie.

All the roofs which stand before me are those of the skyscrapers. When seen from the street, they may look majestic or inspiring; but they present rather an ugly aspect when viewed from this

height. The roofs are irregular in height as well as in style ; and the chimney-tops add to the irregularity. I miss the grey tiles which cover the Japanese roofs. A Japanese town, when seen from a height, presents a hazy vision with its tiled roofs ; and the view is not marred as there are no chimneys. The best skill of Japanese architecture is shown at the top of the house. The sweeping roof and curving eaves are sometimes a beautiful work of art ; and their beauty is perhaps better appreciated when seen from a height.

The skyscrapers which now stand before me offer no special features at their tops. It looks as if the architect, having spent his best energy upon the lower part of the house, were exhausted and could not give a finishing touch to the top. Indeed, these house-tops look like unfinisired work ; they seem to be waiting for a hand which would make them level. The height and massiveness of these skyscrapers also lose their beauty as they stand with no regard to juxtaposition. Here towers a twenty-storey building and next to it stands a five-storey house which is pitiably dwarfed

by the adjacent edifice. The skyline is, therefore, unpleasantly irregular. But art is the last thing the New Yorker cares for. He never hesitates to sacrifice art to business ; nay, nothing should stand in the way of his business.

The name of the Hudson had always been dear to me as I read much about it in books. One afternoon soon after my arrival in New York I went down to see the river. When I came out to Riverside Drive, I was really charmed by its fine view. The broad expanse of the water with its tranquil bosom looked like a lake ; and Jersey City on the opposite bank formed a pleasant background for the picture. My eyes which had been dazed by the glare of city life were pleasantly refreshed by the soothing view ; and I was so much enchanted that I forgot to go home. Evening was now at hand ; night began to fall. I decided, therefore, to stay and enjoy the night view.

By and by, gathering darkness enveloped the view ; and the stars commenced to twinkle in the sky. But, lo ! electric signs advertising all sorts of commercial commodities began to glare through

THE HUDSON

the night on Jersey side. I was soon awakened from my enchantment; and was reminded of the reality of commercial New York. I don't mind how much New Yorkers are interested in their business or how much money they want to make; but I should like to suggest that they should forget their business once in a while. Can't you forget your business even while you are looking at the charming scenery of the Hudson? Can't you make a distinction between Wall Street and the banks of the Hudson? You speak of sacrilege to God; but you don't mind sacrilege to Nature. I always regret that my first impression of the Hudson was spoiled by the commercialism of New York.

I cannot see Wall Street from my window, though it lies within a stone's throw. Life in that street, however, is quite familiar to me, as I pass there every morning and evening. I now recall the scene in the street on the day the death of J. P. Morgan was reported. It seemed as if a Prince had died; the flags were displayed, and a gloomy aspect brooded over the street. The multi-millio-

naire who exercised unlimited power over the financial circles of the world is now gone—is gone like any other mortal being. Wall Street felt the loss very keenly; but it will soon resume its old activities, and it will not be long before another Morgan appears on the scene. Many a Morgan comes and goes; but Wall Street stands solid and firm, and man is as mad at making money as ever.

The windows of those tall houses, when seen from my window, look like pigeon-holes. Many lights are seen through them even in the daytime. The rays of the sun are not allowed in most of the offices; people generally work by the light of electricity. When hundreds of offices are piled one upon another under one roof, it is inevitable that the light of the sun does not reach most of them. The conquest of Nature is, we are told, the principle of Western civilisation. But must we defy even the light of the sun? I sometimes wonder whether we can't make a friend of nature and whether we really ought to wage war against her. Mine is perhaps the plea of a weakling; and Western civilisation has no mercy for the weak—

the strongest only survive.

The click-clack of a typewriter now comes to my ears from I don't where; and, if I strain my ears, I hear the click-clack everywhere. Indeed, the very air is charged with the sound. I don't know who has invented the machine; but its true worth is realised only in New York life. It is employed in every possible case. Once I visited the offices of the *New York Times*, when I was especially interested in the reporters' department. At first I thought it was a stenographers' department, because I saw there nothing but rows of desks each with a typewriter on and many people working at their machines. I was told, however, that they were all reporters, for they were expected to write all their "stories" on the typewriter. One must be a typist before one can take up the profession of a newspaper reporter in New York.

The market for stenographers in New York is wonderfully extensive. The profession is eagerly taken up by young girls; and there exists a tremendous army of them in the business district

downtown. They add a great deal to the Brooklyn Bridge crowds and other subway crowds. Most of them can hardly earn salary enough to pay their car fare and lunch; but they seem to be proud of their position. Curiously enough, they are all pretty; I wonder if they are examined on their looks. At lunch time these pretty things are seen walking up and down the streets in groups—a sort of demonstration, *I guess.* They are wonderfully fast in their work; but you cannot always rely upon what they have done. Their only concern in their work seems to be how quickly they can "get through." Speed is a thing for which the American people have a reverence; but mistakes are not what they mind much. And this American trait is unreservedly displayed in these stenographers. Our stenographer used to say to me: "You are too particular," because I often let her do my article over again if I found too many errors in it.

* * * *

While I am thus engrossed in my day dream, a telephone bell rings; our stenographer answers the

call. Telephone is the other element which makes up New York life with the typewriter. Telephone service in New York is developed to the utmost extent : a telephone is installed on every desk ; and some people are not satisfied unless a telephone is within easy reach of their hand even while in bed. Indeed, telephone and typewriter are the two wheels which keep New York life going. But, hark ! our stenographer calls, and tells me that somebody wants to talk to me through the phone. Ah, well, I am in New York, not in Tokyo.....

XI

ACROSS THE CONTINENT

It was not that I was dissatisfied with my New York life; for the weekly salary which I got for my work, though meagre, was something, and I had some liking for the Bohemian element in my life; but several circumstances combined to decree that I should not stay any longer. For one thing, my programme was to be abroad for two years, and I had already been more than two. My father at home also wrote me to come home as soon as possible. I decided, therefore, to go home.

I had some difficulty in persuading my boss to let me go; and was really sorry for him, for I had never thought he appreciated my work and relied upon me so much. He was so disheartened that I wished I could have changed my mind. But everything had already been arranged—I had

booked a through ticket from New York to Yokohama via San Francisco. It was on Friday in the early part of May (1913) that I left New York on my homebound journey across the continent of America.

I remember it was Friday, because my landlady was astounted when I told her that I was leaving on Friday. I knew that people had superstition about Friday; but I never thought of that when I made arrangements for my journey. When my landlady reminded me of the fact, I was not much encouraged. But I pretended not to mind it at all, telling her that in Japan Friday was looked upon as a lucky day insomuch as people called it "Good Friday." This was all false; but she was satisfied, and I felt at ease, too.

Trains for the West start from Jersey City; and I took a night train from there for Chicago via Buffalo, for to see the Niagara Falls was a most important item in my itinerary. Accompanied by two Japanese friends, I crossed the Hudson River by tunnel railway. The tunnel is really a triumph of modern engineering; the service is quick and

comfortable ; but it has deprived the trip of its charms. The beauty of the Hudson, as I have said before, was what I loved most in New York ; and I always wanted to enjoy a trip on its water. When you cross it, however, by tunnel underground, you feel no sensation at all. I regretted that I did not take a ferry boat.

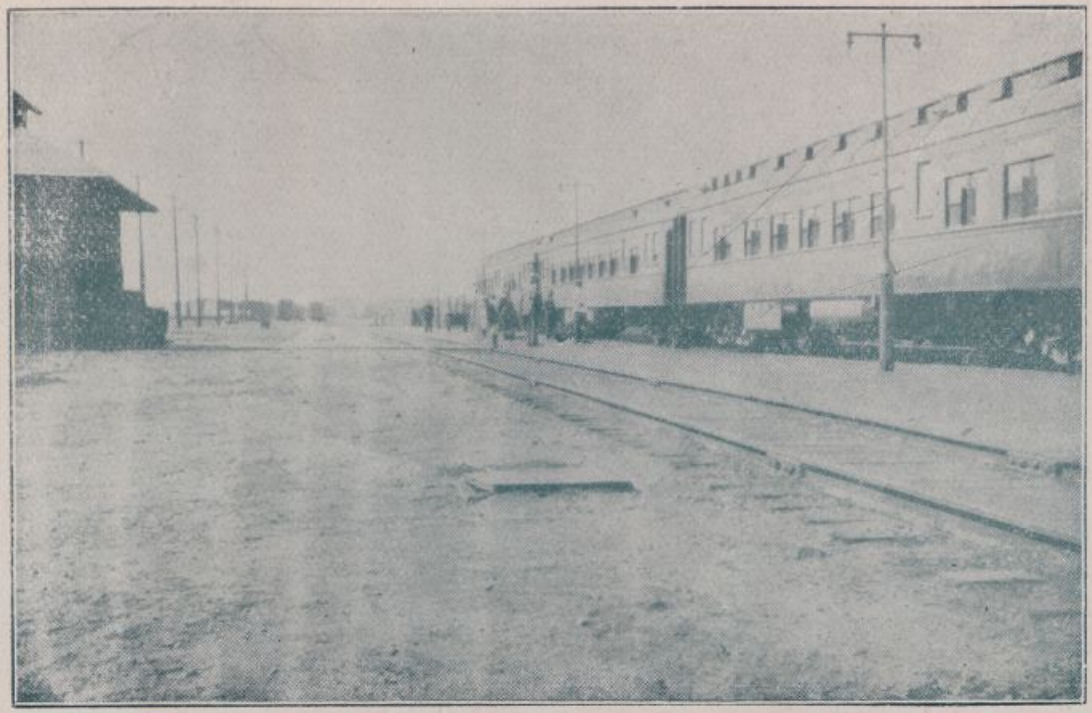
At the station my friends instructed me in many important matters relating to American railway travelling, with special emphasis upon the way of tipping the negro porter ; and I promised them that I would follow their instructions to the letter. They told me that I must not tip my negro porter too soon, for he would not do any service for you after he got money from you. I made a resolution, therefore, that I would tip him at the last moment. But I found afterwards that the last moment was not the right moment.

When our train arrived at Buffalo early the next morning, we had to change cars for Niagara Falls. Now my luggage consisted of a handbag and a suitcase ; and they were a bit too heavy for me to carry. My idea was to let my negro porter carry

them to our new train; and I was, of course, prepared to tip him a little more than the usual amount. There was a moment once or twice when I thought it was the right time to tip him; but I remembered my friends' advice and waited till the last moment. By and by, our train got into the station; people began to stir about, and our porter was busy taking out their luggage; but he would not give even a glance at mine. I began to fear that I may have missed the right moment to tip him; but I believed my friends' advice too much to admit it. All the passengers were now out except myself; but the porter would not touch my luggage. I could not wait any longer; I took them out to the platform and asked him to carry them to our new train. "But you don't pay me," said the coloured man, with a frown. I was not beaten outright, but was up to the emergency; and assured him, with my hand in my pocket; "Why, I was just going to give you....." "All righ', then," said he, and took up my luggage with an air of triumph.

The carriage in which I rode was the famous

Pullman car ; and it was, of course, the first time that I travelled in such a coach de luxe. I have said elsewhere that even the average man in New York led a life founded upon the model of that of the millionaire ; the statement would be well illustrated by my taking the Pullman car. I was very pleased with my car (and who would not be satisfied with such a carriage ?) ; it was tall, spacious, airy. Other arrangements were also excellent ; you could enjoy a smoke in a pleasant compartment (a parlor, if you please) at the end of the train provided specially for the purpose. But what pleased me most was the berth. I booked an upper berth, because I did not like to sleep underneath an American ; but I learned afterwards that the upper berth was cheaper than the lower one. Anyhow I found my berth very comfortable ; I was especially charmed with the small lamp placed at the head. It was, indeed, *cute ;* I will never forget the pleasure I had in reading by the soft light of the tiny lamp. American railway travelling is charming ; and I now fully understand the Americans who complain of the discomforts on



PULLMAN CAR

our railways.

The visit to the Niagara Falls marks a new chapter in my life. The sight opened my eyes to the wonders of Nature. I had read and heard of them a good deal; but when I actually saw them with my own eyes, I was simply spellbound by their grandeur. My former conception of the beauty of water did not hold good here; for the waters coming down from such a height and in such a large volume did not present anything like the sight I used to associate with water: they looked like sheets of most delicate silken stuff. It is an idle sport to try to describe their grandeur—it transcends human conception. The Italians are proud of their Naples and insist: "See Naples and die"; the Japanese brag about their Nikko, saying: "You must not talk about beauty before you have seen Nikko"; but the Americans have a better reason to boast of their Niagara. It would seem that God has provided the Americans with the Falls to inspire them with the idea that they should not be daunted by anything. The American character fostered by such a wonder of Nature must naturally

be dauntless, rash, impetuous ; and the Americans may be excused if they attempted at something extraordinary.

I arrived at Chicago on the morning of the Sunday. The principal reason why I stopped over at Chicago was to see the world-famed live-stock yard ; but I could not enjoy the gruesome sight as it was Sunday. Here I was like a true American, for I did the city in a single day. I had a look at the live-stock yard from outside ; tried to find a friend of mine at the University of Chicago ; had a shave ; saw movies ; went round the streets by tram and on foot ; had dinner at a Chinese " chop suey "—such was the itinerary of my busy day in Chicago.

Five days' railway journey from Chicago to San Francisco, without any break, was rather monotonous ; but it was not without some attractions. The plains through which we sped were not, on the whole, interesting ; mile upon mile there was nothing to be seen but boundless fields, cultivated and uncultivated ; not a sign of life for several hours ; I felt sometimes as if we were passing through a

desert. When we came to the Rockies in Colorado, the monotonous view was a little enlivened; but I was disappointed with them, for they did not present such a grand spectacle as I had expected. A book of geography tells you that the Rocky mountains reach their highest altitude in Colorado, with peaks ranging from 13,000 to 14,000 ft. in height. But this altitude is from sea-level; and you don't look at them from sea-level. They stand on a vast plateau which rises pretty high from sea-level, so that the peaks of the mountains are not, in reality, very high from their foot. An observation car was attached to the rear of our train when we passed through the mountain gorges and my fellow-American passengers made a fuss about them; but I was not interested at all: such a sight is too familiar to a Japanese.

The most interesting part of the journey, however, was to be found on the train. I soon began to become acquainted with my fellow-passengers and talked with them in the smoking compartment by the hour; now and then some passengers would get on at intermediate stations, and join in our

conversation. I was specially interested in the talk by a gentleman who came on at a small station. He was a man of the West; seemed to have some relatives in New York; and visited them now and then. He told us of his last visit to them. He said that he did not care much for New York; it was too noisy; so that he always tried to stay there a short time. After relating his impressions of the city, he went on to say:—"Well, they say wild West, but I say wild East. My God! the way women in New York dress!" It was at the time when, after the passing of the hobble skirt, the divided skirt (showing the ankles) was coming into vogue in New York.

At San Francisco I stayed only one night; the next day at noon I left the Land of Liberty for home by the Tenyo Maru, of Toyo Kisen Kaisha. The passengers were for the most part Japanese; but there was a goodly number of the Americans, too. The first thing which attracted my attention on board the ship was the contrast between American and Japanese ladies in their complexion. I know that our people (both men and women)

cannot be proud of their complexion ; but, when I saw our ladies side by side with their American sisters, I was really ashamed that I belonged to the Japanese race. A strange thing, however, happened later on. After a few days out at sea, the fair complexion of the American ladies began to change. It was gradually losing its beauty ; it was not in keeping with the colour of the atmosphere. As we came nearer the East, the beauty of the Americans declined ; while the Japanese began to look better and better. When we came to Honolulu, the yellow people sometimes looked better than the white ; and the Kanaka girl was the most beautiful. When we arrived at Yokohama, the Japanese ladies seemed to outshine the American. Beauty depends upon the atmosphere.

XII

NEW IMPRESSIONS OF JAPAN

Our ship got into the harbour of Yokohama on the afternoon of the 1st of June; and after a brief health examination, we were allowed to land. She came alongside the pier; gangways were laid down; and passengers began to descend. "All now was hurry and bustle; the meetings of acquaintances—the greetings of friends—the consultations of men of business. I alone was solitary and idle. I had no friend to meet, no cheering to receive."

I had been more than two years away from home; I had been divorced from its life; and when I arrived at Yokohama, I felt as if I were in a strange land—everything was strange to me. Indeed, I was now receiving new impressions of my own country. I had that sensation which one

feels when visiting a foreign country for the first time. As our ship neared the shore, I went on deck, and, leaning over the railing, I was looking on at everything which came into sight. The first thing which I noticed was women's dress. It was very pretty, in rainbow colour; but there was something on their back which looked cumbrous. This was, I ought to have remembered, the obi or sash, which Edwin Arnold loved to call the dazzling obi. There is certainly some beauty in it; but, at first sight, it has a curious appearance.

Two American ladies were standing beside me, interested in the novel scene which was unrolling itself before them; and one of them, pointing at a man on the shore, asked me what he carried in his hand. He had in his hand *furoshiki* or bundle wrapped in a piece of cloth. The cloth is square, though the size and stuff have a great variety; you wrap things up in it and carry it in your hand or under your arm; it is most extensively used by men and women (by children, too). It takes the place of a bag in England and America; in the case of school-children it takes the place of a

satchel. It is the most handy thing in our daily life; you can thrust it in your pocket when you have done with it. I cannot understand why Western people (ladies in particular) don't adopt this most practical wrapper—they are perhaps too clumsy to handle it. Japanese girls would be ashamed to carry their purchases in brown paper: their furoshiki which is used for such purpose is always a pretty thing with beautiful pattern.

I was among the last to leave the ship; and, as I expected no friend to meet me, I felt myself quite a stranger to the land. My first business was to get my luggage through the Custom House. Here I had an incident by which I was strongly reminded of the difference between Western and Japanese sense of decency. While the Customs officer was inspecting my trunk, he came upon a package of post cards showing the pictures in the Louvre. He took them up in his hand; began to examine them one by one; and then told me that some of them must be confiscated because they were indecent. I remonstrated with him, telling him that the originals of those cards were all master-pieces

exhibited in a famous picture gallery of Paris for public view. He insisted, however, that the nude figures should not be passed; and I could save them from being confiscated only by leaving my card as a pledge of my honour. Poor French artists! Their chefs-d'œuvres are pronounced indecent by the Customs officer of Yokohama.

I wanted now to take my luggage to the station (there is some distance between the station and the Custom House), for I was going to take the next train for Tokyo; but there were no cabs to be had, nor taxi nor any horsedrawn carriage, except the omnipresent rickisha. Yokohama is one of the most important ports in Japan; and there are no cabs at the Custom House. This primitive state of traffic made me pity our people. After some trouble I was able to secure a handcart; my luggage was loaded on it; and a man was to pull it. I followed the handcart and walked up to the station. Thus I cut a very unenviable figure on stepping upon the soil of my homeland.

I paid the carriage at the Custom House so that I was only to tip the man at the station. When I

arrived at the station, a porter came along and offered me his service with amiability and politeness. I gave him directions about my luggage; and then looked for the man of the handcart as I wanted to tip him, but he was not to be found anywhere. It seemed that he had gone while I was talking with the porter. It was a surprise to me; for on such an occasion an American or Englishman would never go before he received a tip from you. I remember while in London once having a trouble in tipping the man of Carter Paterson, the well-known parcels delivery company. I had a trunk sent by the company; I paid the carriage to the delivery man at my door, and was going to get in, forgetting to tip him, when he demanded of me bluntly: "What are you going to give me?", adding that the carriage I paid him was for the company, not for him.

It is true that tipping is not unknow in this country; nay, it is an old-established institution and there are many instances where it is abused; but the Japanese (even the lower classes) are a people who are most indifferent to pecuniary matters. I

know a friend who offended a policeman in Tokyo by following the English way. He had been in London for many years; and, on his return to Tokyo he was one day asking a policeman his way. The policeman was very kind and gave him satisfactory information; he was so pleased that he put his hand in his pocket and tried to give the "bobby" some money just as he would have done in London. The policeman got furious; and my friend had to apologise. If a policeman in Japan were found to have accepted a tip, he would be dismissed the next morning.

The porter also impressed me very favourably. I don't mean to say that the porters in America or European countries are all bad; but, when I was received by the one at Yokohama Station, I was overwhelmed by his amiability and politeness—it was such a difference from the American negro porter. At first I could hardly believe that he was an ordinary public porter: I really began to doubt if he may have been sent down specially to meet me by my friends. He did everything for me: bought my ticket; checked my trunk; saw me into

my carriage ; and stayed on the platform, anxious to leave nothing undone, till my train moved out. I had never met with such an obliging porter during my two years' travels in Europe and America. These two men—the man of the handcart and the porter—made me realise that there was something in our people which we may be proud of.

To me who was fresh from the Pullman car, the Japanese railway carriage appeared like a toy. When I looked at my train from a distance, I wondered if I could get in it—it looked like a row of match-boxes. The journey from Yokohama to Tokyo by rail was also a great contrast to that from Chicago to San Francisco. The line runs through rice-fields, but such wee, tiny rice-fields ! It was, I think, Mr. William Archer who said that we speak of Japanese rice-fields but that they ought to be called ricebeds in the proper sense. In fact, they are not fields in the English, particularly American, sense. To the eye which has seen the cornfields in Western America, they look like pretty gardens. They are pretty, to be sure ; but

they cannot yield much crop. The mountains, however, which are seen through the carriage window, are splendid ; they can well compare with the Rockies in appearance.

On arrival in Tokyo, I took a tram through Ginza Street, the Broadway of Tokyo. What struck me first was the height of the buildings on both sides of the street. No wonder that they looked pitiably low, for they are generally of two storeys, and not very high at that. The small amount of street traffic also attracted my notice. One could calmly walk about in the roadway ; one waited for one's tram, standing right in the middle of the street. Of course, people were not in a hurry ; nor was there much movement. The subway, elevated railway were not in existence ; tram-cars were the only public conveyance kept busy. The taxi was as yet a curiosity. I was extremely amused to see so many (comparatively speaking) people in frock-coats. Certainly there were more frock-coats than in Broadway, of New York.

My first night at a Japanese house (save the

mark !) was full of surprises. Following the native custom, I had a bath before dinner. I was just enjoying myself in the bath, when the maid came into my bath-room without ceremoney and inquired if the bath was to my liking. I nearly screamed ; but was able, with some effort, to keep my presence of mind. The Japanese girl is too innocent to think it indecent to enter a bath-room where a gentleman is taking a bath. Bed and the pillow gave me some trouble. There is no bed in Japan in the English sense ; it is made at night and unmade in the morning. Quilts heavily wadded with raw cotton are spread on the floor which is covered with mattresses, and you sleep in them. As for the pillow, it is as hard as wood because it is stuffed with buckwheat husks. To sleep in such a bed with such a pillow was not very comfortable ; indeed, I felt my head and back aching and had a very bad sleep that night. Such was the experience of my first night at a Japanese house.

MY PARISIAN DAYS

MY PARISIAN DAYS

I

THE LATIN QUARTER

My days in Paris begin with the Latin Quarter —and end with it. Le quartier latin—its very sound had long used to thrill me before I actually found myself in it. How I longed to be one of those students who (as I imagined from what I had read about them) enjoyed a true Bohemian life, having their diggings in the quarter! When I came to Paris, therefore, the Latin Quarter claimed my first attention.

Eventually I took up my abode there; and stayed there till the end of my sojourn in Paris, which extended over a summer and an autumn. It goes without saying that I liked the place from the beginning—I felt as if I had met with an old friend. The sight of students on Boulevard Saint-Michel with their flowing ties, telescope-like pipes

and pyramidical caps, was not a surprise to me: I seemed to have known them before. Boulevard Saint-Michel (or Boul Mich, as they call it) is, indeed, the main current in which the life of the Latin Quarter flows and ebbs. All the phases of the life of the quarter are reflected on the boulevard; Sorbonne University which is the centre, geographically and practically, of the place stands by the middle part of the boulevard. But one would soon notice that the academic life at the Sorbonne does not form the principal part of the life of the Latin Quarter; on the contrary, Boulevard Saint-Michel represents the life of the quarter. The Café d'Harcourt and the Taverne du Panthéon really create the moods of life in the quarter. One can, therefore, enjoy the life of the quarter without attending the Sorbonne.

I stayed, as most of the foreign students do, at a hotel near the Panthéon—on the terms of the "pension." For one thing, I liked the hotel very much, and that was that I could see at any time Rodin's immortal "Penseur" which stands in front of the Panthéon. I would not have grumbled, if

SORBONNE SQUARE

the proprietor of the hotel had charged me for the privilege of enjoying the divine sculpture so conveniently. The hotel was not a very large one; twenty people or so generally sat at one long table. A cosmopolitan atmosphere was always created in the dining room; for there were many different nationalities represented at table. On my left, a Russian mademoiselle sat; on my right, an Egyptian student; and opposite to me, a Swiss medical student. There were also English and American University graduates; American lady-travellers; Italian merchants; and German students. Passing travellers of many different types would drop in now and then, too. At one time there stayed an Indian gentleman (I use the word gentleman with due respect); at another time a Chinese student was one of the "pensionnaires," to say nothing of my compatriots who would stay for some months or pass a week or two.

The conversation at table was naturally very interesting, as we "exchanged our views," telling each other of his or her own country. The language to be used was, of course, French in

principle ; but an Englishman or an American was the first to violate this "international law." Englishmen are a most law-abiding people at home ; but they don't seem to heed other people's law very much. "The Englishman on the Continent" is an old story ; and I saw an English guide-book in which the author warned his readers to take as much care of their dress when in Paris as in London.

The English language has now taken on some international colour, but when it is heard in the heart of Paris, its local colour comes out very strong. It is held that the English people are so proud that they don't speak a foreign language even when they know it. My observation on the matter, however, is different: they may be so proud as not to try to study a foreign tongue ; but they are not so proud as not to speak a foreign language when they can. The fact is that their national pride (for which I have great admiration) does not allow them to be placed in the undignified position in which they find themselves when trying to speak a foreign language—for they are bad

linguists. I never met an English lady who was not proud of her French; and met many who pretended to know something about the language. There was an English lady at our hotel who spoke even to her fellow-countrymen in her wretched French. I also met in Paris an Englishman who could not understand why I bothered myself with the study of French when I could speak English—he believed French or any other language was no use to a man who could speak English.

After dinner, some of us used to meet in the "salon," and to spend some part of the evening *tous ensemble*. They would put ever so many questions to me about Japan and the Japanese. It was a hard job for me to explain why and how General Nogi and his wife committed suicide (the news of their tragic death came to Paris while I was there). They did not forget to introduce the omnipresent question of kissing; and a French lady was a bit offended when I told her that a Japanese husband did not kiss his wife—in public, at least. We were once talking about food; and I alluded to the French habit of eating snails, when a

Frenchman retaliated by saying :—" *Mais*, you eat raw fish." And the verdict of the assembly was that I was beaten. On another occasion, a Russian student who was well acquainted with Parisian life said to me that some theatres in Paris were " très libre " (very liberal); but a Canadian who pretended to know something about Japan told him that there were in Japan public baths where men and women took their bath in the same room. I am sometimes made to think that Western people's Japan is a bit different from our own Japan.

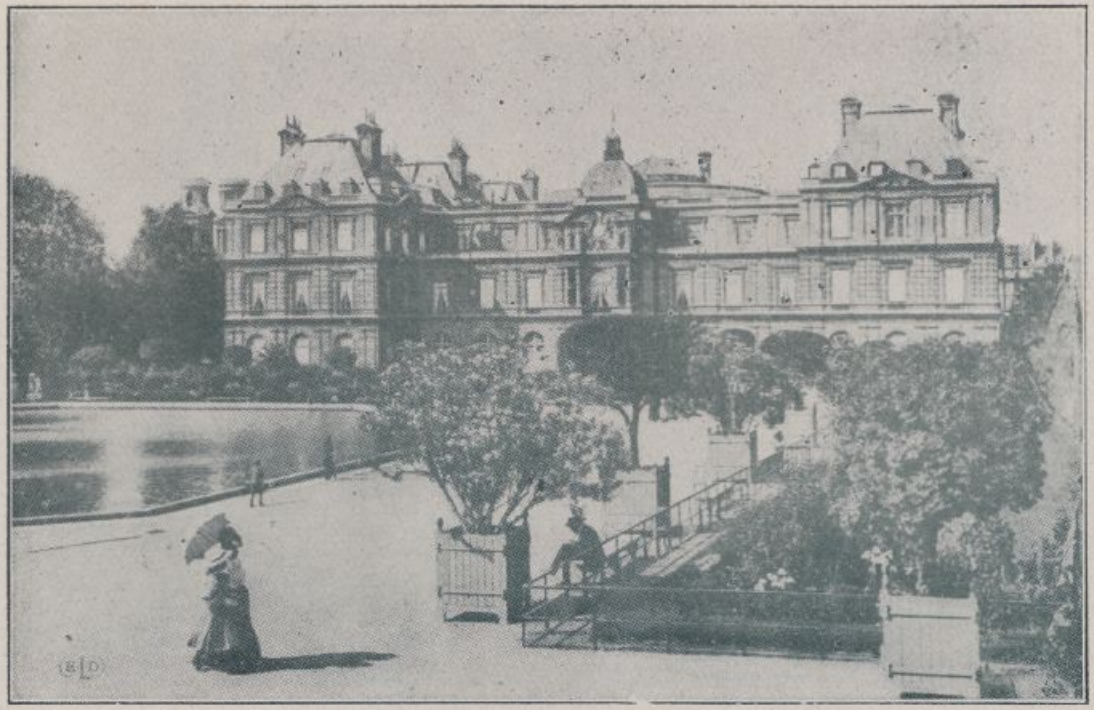
An Indian gentlemn who stayed at our hotel for some time told me that he knew an English lady who was very much disappointed when he told her that the Indians were now getting civilised. I am often amused to notice some peculiar manifestations of the racial or national prejudice in a person who is otherwise an amiable character. There was a Russian lady at our hotel who had an indomitable aversion to the Germans. One evening we were playing cards, when she dropped her cards in the middle of a game, declaring, to our great astonishment, that she would not play any

more. We could not see what was the matter at first; but she soon told us that she did not like to continue the game, because she discovered the cards were of German make. She had a cosmopolitan turn of mind, and was much interested in Buddhism and Oriental thought; but she could not explain clearly why she disliked things German so much—indeed, she used to say that German literature was excellent.

My individual life at the hotel was a most peaceful and rather monotonous one, but the one which I liked best. My nature and other circumstances did not bring me into contact with the proverbial gay side of Parisian life; its general atmosphere, however, somehow well accorded with my personal moods. It was Heine, I think, who said:—"You must send a philosopher, but not a poet, to London." But Paris is a place where you must send both a philosopher and a poet. London makes one feel that life is a strife; while Paris gives you the idea that there must be something more than a strife in life. There is a certain mood in Parisian life which is, I fancy, akin to what

Wordsworth calls "the sad music of humanity"—it makes you serious, retrospective, philosophical. Indeed, something like the sentiment of the "Attic Philosopher" gains in you; and the strong colours of life appear mellowed. You begin to feel an easiness, reposefulness and peace in life. Such was, at least, the effect Parisian life, or rather the life of the Latin Quarter, produced upon me.

I never missed a morning walk in Luxembourg Garden where I found the most peaceful state of mind. I would get a paper at a kiosk on my way there—by the way, I like the size of the French paper which is folded in such a neat manner, ready to be thrust in your pocket. After making a round of the garden, I would take a seat on a bench and read my paper—I hate to read a paper while walking or eating: it is an insult to journalism. The children sailing their toy boats in the basin were always an attraction for me; and I would sometimes watch a man feeding the sparrows with "petit pain." The garden itself never can compare with any of London parks in beauty or extent; but a walk through it put me in that mood



LUXEMBOURG GARDEN

which the French expression, "On est content," implies. And this was, I think, in a measure due to the general atmosphere of Parisian life.

II

FRENCH LESSONS

One of my principal objects in coming over to Paris was to improve my French. To "pick up" French was not, however, what I meant; I wanted to improve the practical side of my knowledge of the language in a systematic way. My next move, therefore, after having secured my diggings, was to obtain a suitable teacher. To find a teacher of French in Paris—it sounds easy; but it is not such an easy job as it appears. It is something like choosing one's wife; there are so many girls, but there are so few who are likely to suit you. The best way perhaps is to get one by your friend's recommendation; but I was not placed in such a fortunate position, so that I could not but rely upon the advertisement columns of papers. I determined to see all the teachers who advertised in Parisian

papers one after another, until I should hit upon a suitable one. My determination was courageous; but I did not require such a great amount of energy as my determination suggested, for I was able to find one before I had exhausted the advertisement columns of the first paper.

My teacher was a mademoiselle who could speak (so I understood) lots of language; and kept a sort of school with some lady-assistants. She was kept "awfully" busy, seeing her new pupils, giving instructions to her assistants and teaching some of the pupils herself. Even while I was interviewing her to make arrangements for my lessons, there came in an old couple accompanied by a young girl who appeared to be their daughter. They spoke English; and their accent soon told me of their nationality—American. It was evident that the young girl was taken by her parents on a trip to Europe and that she wanted (or she perhaps thought she ought) to study French as one of the necessary accomplishments of a girl. In fact, the majority of the pupils were young girls; and I began to imagine that French might be a language

which should be spoken only by pretty girls.

The mademoiselle was very tall for a French lady—she once said to me in joke: "I have been 'grande comme ça' (tall like this) even when I was a small baby." But you could not mistake her for a lady of any other nationality than French when you once began to talk with her. Her manner was *tout à fait* French—amiable and graceful. My lessons consisted in reading Anatole France's "Jocaste," and practising conversation. I chose the book myself; she had nothing to do with it. I had not taken any special interest in the book before: one day I picked it up at a certain book-shop and took it to my teacher; and we began to read it—voilà tout. I found the book, however, very interesting; and I was very glad I had chosen it as my text-book.

It is superfluous to say anything by way of commenting upon the value of this well-known story; and the author enjoys a world-wide fame. An American author has declared that none of the living writers not only of France but of England and America can rank with Anatole France as a

stylist. I do not pretend to be a competent judge on the style of French writers; but the delicacy of his style charmed me a good deal. When I came to this sentence: "Hélène songeait que René Longuemare était parti, parti bien loin et pour longtemps, sans un mot d'amour, sans un mot de regret," I was really fascinated by the music and cadence of the words. I asked my teacher to repeat it again and again.....encore une fois. I have not an ear for music, but the cadence of this short sentence always haunts my ears.

I never hesitated to put any question to my teacher. One day I made so bold as to ask her if she could give me an explanation of the English expression: "to take French leave." She was well acquainted with English customs and manners; but she appeared not to know this expression. I told her what it meant. But she denied, in a most emphatic manner, the existence of a French custom of taking leave without telling the hostess; and ridiculed the English people for their erroneous notion. I don't know whether my teacher gave me the right answer or not; but it reminds

me of the fact that people often try to cover their faults by the excuse that they are imitating others.

The French and the English are next-door neighbours, with just a strip of water between them; but they are so different in character and sentiment that, whenever they see anything extraordinary or odd, they attribute it to the other. In England, French pictures and stories mean special kinds of pictures and stories; and in the same way, anything which has the adjective "English" in France is generally what a decent sort of man would not care for. Another trick is to employ other people's language. Many French words are used in England to designate things which are of a delicate nature; and the French equally take recourse to this trick. What may hurt the pride of the English-speaking people is the sign for public lavatories in Paris which is written in plain English—water-closets. I never came across a sign written in this way in England; but most of public lavatories in the capital of the neighbouring country have this English sign. A French dictionary on my desk (Petit Larousse)

contains this term and says: "Mot anglais,..." (English word.)

Owing to some circumstance, I had to change my teacher after a month. This time I had not the trouble to hunt for my teacher, for I found one through a friend. My new teacher was a gentleman; but, as to his age, I couldn't say anything. He appeared sometimes young, and sometimes old; he would now laugh like a child, and then he would look serious like an old philosopher. A philosopher he really was. He was a bachelor, no doubt, having his rooms in the heart of the Latin Quarter; and he seemed to be earning a livelihood by taking pupils. His life was not, so it seemed to me, a very enviable one from the economic point of view; but he took life so philosophically. He told me a short story at every lesson; and I was to repeat it. His views of life were now and then reflected in these stories.

Here is one of them. There lived a blacksmith next-door to a big hotel, who had to work from early morning till late at night. A millionaire happened to pass a night at the hotel; but he could

not get a good sleep, because the blacksmith next-door made incessant noise. Learning of the poor condition of the blacksmith, he gave him a big sum of money, so that he might not have to work so hard. The humble artisan was very happy with his new fortune ; but the possession of this big sum of money soon began to trouble his mind ; for he did not know where to keep it safely—he felt everybody was always trying to rob him. He could not now sleep well nor enjoy his meals ; and a few days' experience with his new fortune made him long for this former life. He took, therefore, the money back to his pseudo-benefactor ; and resumed the humble life of a blacksmith. I am sure my teacher believed in this story ; and he would not have changed his unpretentious life for the wealth of the whole world. He always reminded me of Souvestre's "Attic Philosopher"—indeed, he may become an "Attic Philosopher" some day. His last words to me when I was leaving Paris were entirely in the vein of the "Attic Philosopher"; he simply said : "We may meet again," as if I were leaving for a day or two.

It was the second evening after my arrival in Paris that I wanted to take a bath. I asked the garçon if I could have a bath. He looked at me with a suspicious face, but replied :—" Oui, Monsieur. But are you going to have it in your room or in the dinning room ? " Well, I was not going to have my bath in the dining room ; but why on earth did the boy suggest the dining room ? It then flashed upon me that I made a mistake in my French. I said " du bain " instead of " le bain " (bath), so that the boy thought I said " du vin " (wine).

Speaking of bath, I liked the public baths on the Seine. They are installed in a houseboat, floating on the river. You can have either a cold or warm bath ; and it is really pleasant to take a bath on the water. I don't know whether the idea to have baths on the river has come from practical considerations ; but the effect is highly artistic. I used to go down there for my bath ; but it was not because the boy at my hotel suggested to me to take my bath in the dining room—the situation of the bath-house appealed to me. One difference

between the French and the English character is, I think, that the former are never satisfied without some artistic background or ornament for their pleasure, while the latter care for nothing but their direct objects. To have baths on a river is an idea purely French.

III

LES GRANDS BOULEVARDS

The first thing a visitor to Paris will notice is that French people seem to spend most of their time in the streets. And if he happens to come from London (as in my case), he will be struck by the difference between the English and the French way of looking upon town life. The former regard town life as a natural consequence of running business on a grand scale ; while the latter think it a proper form for the pursuit of pleasures of civilised life. Of course, the English people speak of the " man about town "; but he does not love town in such a way as the Parisian boulevardier sticks to the Grands Boulevards. In fact, the Boulevards are not monopolised by the boulevardiers ; they are no less patronised by all Paris. " On s'amuse " (Everybody enjoys himself) in Paris really means

that everybody takes a keen interest in the life of the street.

The Grands Boulevards which stretch from the Place de la Madelaine to the Place de la Bastille are, indeed, the pulse of Paris. The extensive highways are to all the middle and lower classes of Paris what Park Lane is to a privileged class of London. The most popular pleasure with Parisians is to enjoy themselves by promenading the streets in a leisurely manner; and the streets—at least, those which are called boulevards—are so constructed as to suit a promenade. When in London, I wanted to get away from the streets as soon as possible—and as far as possible. When in Paris, however, I did not mind walking in the streets; and I liked to mingle with the stream of humanity which does not move so fast as in London. The very idea as to the construction of streets is different between the English and the French. In London, the best part of the street is given up to vehicular traffic, and poor humanity is "pushed to the wall"; that is, the roadway occupies a large space of the street, and the pavement

CHAMPS ELYSÉES

is given a niggardly small portion. In the case of Paris boulevards, humanity enjoys a better treatment: the "trottoir" is very wide and looks pleasant, if not beautiful.

I like the Champs-Elysées not so much because the avenue is beautiful in appearance as because the space reserved for pedestrians is very wide. In London I was often made to doubt if the comfort of the human race was ever taken into consideration in the planning of streets – it seems that they are meant only for the passage of vehicular traffic. If you happen not to be in possession of a long purse, you have to ride on the top of a bus or to be carried underground.

England is a free country; but one is not free to walk about the streets of London. The grandmotherly London Country Council talk about schemes for the better management of traffic, but they never think of improving the streets. When I came to Paris, I was glad to walk on the "trottoir" of the boulevards. I am one of those who doubt the merits of the French Revolution and who look rather askance upon the French motto;

"Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité"; but I believe the "rights of man" are much respected on the boulevards of Paris. In London there are lots of Kingsways, Queens Roads and Bishops Streets, but there is no People's Road. Many of the streets of Paris, however, are named after statesmen and men of letters; that is, the representatives of the people. We are really on equal footing when we go on foot. Pedestrians have no high and low —they all run the same risk. In this sense, the boulevards of Paris make people equal; the bourgeois, workmen and cocottes rub shoulders with one another.

Paris is the most cosmopolitan city in the world; and Parisians are proud of it. The throng on the boulevards is a motley crowd—all specimens of the human race, white, yellow, and black, are met with there. Parisians never seem to object to this state of things; on the contrary, they believe that it is a mark of the capital of the world. Frenchmen's pride (or vain-glory, if you like) is that they want to be always "à la tête de la civilisation." They want to lead the world in the march of civilisation.

Another ideal of the French is to be a "citoyen du monde." These two ideals preoccupy the French mind to such an extent that they often forget to look after their domestic affairs. Traffic on the boulevards is badly managed; the agent de police has not the knack of handling the stream of traffic in such an admirable way as the London bobby; and the break-neck tram-cars are a positive shame (as an American said to me).

There is, however, one retribution of these visionary ideas, and that is that one is treated as a "citizen of the world" in Paris, When in Paris, you feel you are not so much in the capital of France as in the capital of the world. The political centre of the world to-day may be somewhere other than Paris; but the centre of human interests must still be found there. And the French treat all foreigners (no matter what nationality they may belong to) in the same way—in a cosmopolitan way. What pleased me very much while in Paris was that I was never pointed at as a Jap with a finger—not even by urchins of the slums. Colour or stature in a man is no bar to the citizenship of

the world in the French eye; and their failure in colonisation may come from this idea. They don't, as the practical English, make any distinction between the subject race and themselves from the beginning; they try to apply their own standard to the people of a lower civilisation at once, which is absurd from the practical point of view. Indeed, the French are idealists who are always chasing the shadow of a vision.

I used to take a promenade from Boulevard Saint-Michel up to the Grands Boulevards in the evening—a long distance, rather. A promenade in the streets is an indispensable item of daily life in Paris. It is something like afternoon tea in English life: it is an institution of Paris, if not of France. You cannot say you have lived Parisian life unless you have taken a promenade on the boulevards every afternoon or evening, winding it up with a drink at a café. To a casual observer, it would seem that Parisians spend their whole time out in the streets, dropping in at the cafés to take a drink or a meal. I should not be a bit surprised if a matter-of-fact American declared that the

French did not know how to work. How seriously the French take their promenade can be seen from the fact that your porter at the hotel will wish you a "bonne promenade" (good walk) when you go out. A girl of London would just love to take a long day's walk through open country; but a boy of Paris would not venture beyond the Grands Boulevards. Every Englishman has the air of a globe-trotter; every Frenchman has a touch of the boulevardier.

IV

A FLYING VISIT TO BERLIN*

Somehow I don't care much for Germany. I rather think I have contracted this dislike for the country from my hatred of its language. Nobody (except some cranky heads) likes a foreign tongue from the beginning ; but I have never been able to educate myself into a tolerant attitude towards the German language. I began to study the language at the comparatively early age of seventeen—I did not know a word of French before I was twenty. I cannot now clearly recollect the motive which prompted me to learn the language ; but it seems I got the idea into my head that one would not be regarded as an educated person in Japan without a knowledge of German. There is a superstition among the professed scholars of Japan that a

* The article appeared in the " Far East," October 1913.

knowledge of German is a necessity for a scholar, no matter what subject he may want to study ; and this superstition seems to have influenced my young mind.

I was studying English at school at that time ; but there was no German class in the school. I could not find a private teacher, either ; so that I had to learn it by myself. As my school was in a remote place down in the country, it was a matter of great difficulty for me to obtain a book on German lessons ; but I was able to secure Otto's Grammar (in English) after a long hunt. Now I went in headlong for the study of this new language ; and the walls of my study were all covered in a few weeks with pieces of paper upon which I wrote all the declensions of the articles and verbs which I wanted to commit to memory. I don't know how long I continued at this heat ; but dropped it altogether later on. I took it up again after some years ; and I did not fare any better than before.

The horizon of my knowledge, in the meantime, widened ; and I began to believe that the language

was not such a precious thing as I had imagined before. Whether my estimate of German is sound or not, the language is against my very nature—there is something in it which does not agree with me. All that I now remember of the language is this single sentence : " Meine mutter macht butter" —I am not sure of the spelling, though. Some people seem to object to the grammar of the language ; but I hate the spelling of its words : sometimes it is too long and sometimes it has too many consonants. I have a peculiar aversion to the letter " k "; and one thing which makes me so disgusted with German is that there are ever so many " k's " in its spelling. And one reason why I like French is that it has no " k."

My dislike for the German language has made me dissatisfied with anything which may remind me of it. The capital of Germany, therefore, has never held any attraction for me. A friend of mine whom I wanted to see by all means, however, was staying in Berlin when I was in Paris ; and I decided to pay a flying visit there. I also hoped that I might begin to find some interest in the

language and people of the country if I saw it on the spot.

It was towards the end of September—an ideal season for travelling—that I visited the German capital; and I stayed there a week. If the truth be told, my first impressions of the place were not very favourable: I came back with an additional dislike for German food. I am a plain man, and have no delicate palate; but in Berlin I felt German food was really going to undermine my tough palate. It was anyhow too salt; every dish was deprived of its original taste by the salt in it. The Germans, I was told, like such salt dishes, because they want to drink much beer. At any rate, a glass of beer is a necessity, not a luxury or sin, at the German table. I am sure even the chairman of a temperance society will make this concession that his members may drink a glass of beer after a German dinner. If he would not allow his members this privilege, I am convinced that something is wrong with his palate.

You would be fined if you do not order some kind of drink at a Berlin restaurant (the terms of

the fine are clearly stated on the menu). I imagine that this system has been established out of a very humane idea; for, if you don't wash your mouth and throat with beer or some other alcoholic drink after every dish, your eating organs would be unable to accept next one. By the way, have you ever seen a German tooth-pick, such as are provided at the restaurants of Berlin? It is a wonder of the world—it is as big as your thumb and as long as your middle finger. I was struck by its size, but it was no use to me for the practical purpose. I took, however, some with me for the purpose of presenting them to the Imperial Museum in Tokyo. The Germans are a very economical people; and I am sure one tooth-pick will last them for life.

Some say that Berlin is one of the most beautiful cities in the world; and others believe that it is one of the most unattractive cities on earth. I agree with both opinions; that is, some of the newly-built streets are very beautiful, but most of the old ones do not present any attractions. The much-talked-of avenue of Unter den Linden was a bitter disap-

pointment to me ; when my friend said to me that we were now in the avenue, I thought he was joking. But my disappointment with Unter den Linden was nothing as compared with my despair of the museums. I was simply bewildered when I visited the National Gallery—not because of a pompous array of exhibits, but because of their scantiness. I had that sort of feeling which one experiences when visiting a house which has been left uninhabited for ages. The building is rather big ; and its rooms present a desolate aspect, because there is so much space on the walls which is innocent of a frame. Once I said to a German :—

" You should have another war with France."

" But why ? "

" Because you must put something in your museums, and there are plenty of pictures in the Louvre of Paris."

Bismarck tried to impoverish France by exacting a heavy indemnity of war from her ; but he forgot to get something for the museums of his country. I felt while in Berlin that everything was still in the

making, and that nothing was yet crowned by the sanction of history. In fact, Berlin has no historical background—it has only a modern foreground. That sort of atmosphere which prevails in the house of a *nouveau riche* hangs over the city. You may find a magnificent palour in the house of a *nouveau riche ;* but you will miss some old trees in the garden ; the beautiful streets of Berlin will impress you in the same way.

I was, however, very much interested (or rather amused) to come across many things which reminded me of Westernised Japan—Westernised Japan for which I don't care much. You must remember that the Constitution of our country has been framed on the German model, one reason being that the late Prince Ito who was chiefly responsible for its framing came under the influence of Bismarck. Most of our modern institutions have been copied from German models. Indeed, a cynic might say that the institutions of modern Japan have been " made in Germany."

Japan is often accused (not without reason) of merely imitating Western institutions in a superfi-

cial way; but the accusation must be shared by Germany, for German civilisation from which our governmental authorities have copied is in the main an imitation of French and English originals. Thus it is that our governmental authorities who are for the most part the disciples of German scholars import secondhand institutions from the West.

V

THE CAFÉ

The English custom of five o'clock tea (as I have said somewhere) charmed me at once; and the French institution of the café has also appealed to me from the beginning. I was not an habitué of the café. I did not taste the cream of the life there; but I was glad to enjoy a glass of coffee—yes, a glass, not a cup, of coffee—at a café now and then. You can have wine, beer, brandy, and all sorts of drinks at the café; and one may not have enjoyed the real virtues of the café before one took to these drinks of strong flavour. But I was content with a glass of black coffee.

A glass for coffee may sound prosaic; but the French black coffee ought to be drunk out of that tall trumpet-shaped glass. As somebody has said the French "poulet roti" is a different thing from

roast chicken, so "café nature" is a thing altogether different from black coffee. If you want to know the original flavour of tea, you must take a cup of Japanese tea; and if you want to know the real taste of coffee, you must take a glass of "café nature" at a Parisian café. I have no taste for anything which is a mixture of many ingredients. I like Japanese tea and French "natural coffee" because they are not adulterated by any other ingredients.

French "natural coffee" must be taken on a marble-topped table; just as Japanese tea should be served in a Japanese tea-room. The taste of a drink or dish much depends upon the vessel in which it is served and upon the place where it is taken. Every drink or dish has a particular vessel or place which suits it. Thus "café au lait" must be served in a large cup; "café nature" should be drunk out of a glass.

The garçons or waiters at the café are, indeed, interesting creatures. They all wear a moustache, generally a fine one—I never saw one without this ornament. It seems that they cannot become a

waiter before their face is dignified by a moustache. But why dignity for your waiter? In Japan the business of waiting at table is confined to the fair sex—to young girls. There are no male waiters in Japan (I am not speaking of those hotels and restaurants which are run in the European fashion); the service is done by girls in the home and at public places. To be waited upon by solemn-looking and uniform-wearing waiters does not appeal to me; I expect more grace and charm from those who wait upon me.

It is true that all Japanese waitresses are not graceful or charming; but the original idea as to the function of a waitress in our country is that her service must be discharged with all feminine grace and charm. A Japanese dinner would never be a success without a troupe of pretty and charming waitresses. And the service of waiting at table can be undertaken by any Japanese girl, for every girl is taught how to wait upon guests—it is, in fact, one of the most important of her accomplishments. I cannot understand why girls are not employed at European restaurants as waitresses.

I know that some cheap restaurants in London, such as " A. B. C." and Lyons, employ waitresses ; but then it is just because they can be obtained for lower wages than male waiters—their particular quality, feminine grace and charm, is not taken into consideration.

Charms of the French café, it seems to me, would be enhanced a great deal by the presence of pretty waitresses. A Japanese waitress at the hotel or public place is always addressed by the pretty term " Neisan " which means Sister ; and, while in London, I could never screw up my courage to call out to a girl " Waitress." I have not much pretension to gallantry ; but it sounds too blunt to me to cry out " Waitress " in a commanding tone.

The most striking feature of the Parisian café is that the customers write their letters there. All writing materials, pen, ink, paper, and envelopes, are provided for their benefit. To write letters at a public place where the clatter of glasses and the din of incoherent human voices are always assailing the ear is what only the French mind can take a

fancy to. It is said that the café is a club for the French ; but letter-writing at such a club does not seem to be very edifying. I wonder whether a love-letter or business-letter ought to be written at a café. For a love-letter the place is too much in public ; for a business-letter there is too much of noise. I imagine that just a short note for a happy rendezvous is the very thing which ought to be penned at a Parisian café.

But we are told that Paul Verlaine wrote his poems nowhere but at the cafés. At any rate, people are never in a hurry there—some of them sit out a night with one bock of beer before them. This idle way of passing time would be irritating to the American mind which wants to be stimulated by movement and action ; but, curiously enough, it will please the Japanese mind. I was often made to think that there was much in common between the French and the Japanese temperament. They are both a quick-tempered people ; but, when they take their pleasures, they are very patient and sluggish. It may be because of their views of life : they believe that they must work in order to live ;

while the Anglo-Saxons seem to believe that they must live in order to work. Work is the life of the Anglo-Saxons: life is the work of the French.

A Frenchman cannot work for work's sake, for he stops in the middle of his work and asks himself, what is the good of it? *Voilà* the reason why the French have created the café where the strains of actual life are not admitted. The English "pubs" are the draining pipes into which the poor working people pour their cares of life: the French cafés are the place where all people, high and low, come to taste the joy of life. In fact, the existence of so many cafés in the streets of Paris testifies to the fact that the French are much given to the enjoyment of life.

No Frenchman would deny that the atmosphere of the café is in most cases charged with some undesirable elements. Some (perhaps most) of the girls found at the cafés are not innocent ones; but they are tolerated without much persecution. Their presence, however, strikes a stranger in such a way that he at once jumps at the conclusion that the Parisian cafés are given up to debauchery.

There is plenty of bacchanalianism ; but the tone of the life there is not so low as a casual observer might imagine.

An American lady who has never seen life and the world comes to Japan ; and she is horrified at some aspects of the life of the country. France and Japan adopt, to some extent, the same principle of not shutting up the regrettable side of human life behind closed doors. Hence the charge that they are both an immoral people. On the other hand, the English are accused of hypocrisy. The accusation is as wrong as the charge against the French and the Japanese. The real fact is that they believe the undesirable side of our life had better be concealed as much as possible.

I was often amused to compare London restaurants around Piccadilly Circus with Parisian cafés in gay quarters. In the case of the former, the life inside is concealed from public view, and one is left only to imagine what it is like ; in the case of the latter, all the doors are thrown open, and one can see from the street what is going on inside. My experiences and observations both in London and

Paris have convinced me that, when a Frenchman pretends to act in the English way, he is a hypocrite, and that, if an Englishman tries to go by the French standard, he is guilty of a lapse in morality.

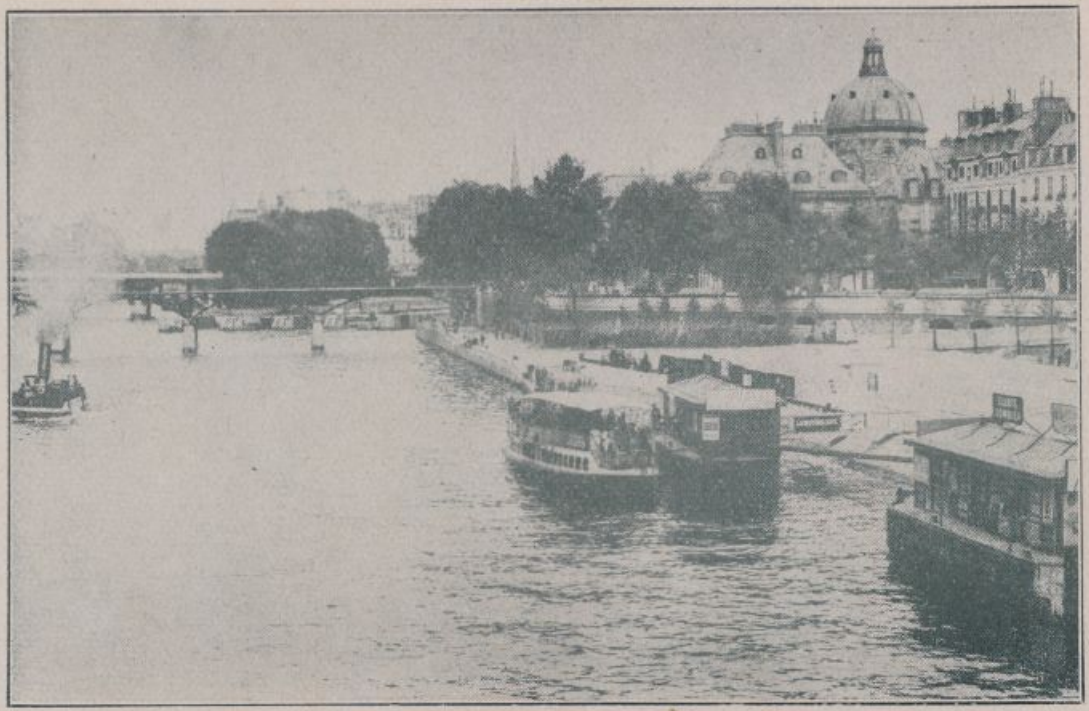
In the same way, Europeans and the Japanese should not be judged by the same measure. For instance, women (to say nothing of men) are often seen, especially in summer time, without socks in the streets of Tokyo. Even a most daring militant suffragette would not have the courage to go without stockings in the streets of London; but these sockless Japanese women are by no means indecent in their manner;—they are not conscious of the Western sense of shame in the exposure of their dainty feet. But these women would never dare to kiss their husbands in public; they would think it an unpardonable offence against public decency.

VI

ON THE SEINE

".....,, there is something, or there seems to be something, in the very air of France that communicates the love of style. Precision, clarity, the cleanly and crafty employment of material, a grace in the handling, apart from any value in the thought, seem to be acquired by the mere residence; or if not acquired, become at least the more appreciated. The air of Paris is alive with this technical inspiration."—this is what R. L. Stevenson says about the air of Paris. And it seems to me that "this technical inspiration" is most manifest in its autumnal air. To appreciate fully the air alive with this inspiration, however, one must spend an afternoon on the Seine when the blue water of the river reflects a clear autumnal sky.

The autumn in Paris is what I can never forget;



BATEAUX PARISIANS

and my recollection of it calls to mind the pleasant souvenirs of many afternoons which I spent on and along the Seine. I used to go down to the river when it was fine (and fine weather is the rule for the autumn in Paris), and to spend some hours of the afternoon on the water—taking one of the Bateaux Parisiens (Parisian Boats). These boats are not pleasure boats; they ply for the practical use of citizens between two ends of the city through which the river runs; but a trip by them is a very pleasant one, and I often made it just for pleasure.

The water is clear; the air, warmed by the soft rays of the autumnal sun, is caressing; the beautiful buildings on both sides of the river give a kaleidoscopic view; the numerous bridges under which your boat passes surprise you with their engineering wonders; and your boat now steams down the river like a swan, landing and taking on board passengers at every pier.....

I would take a boat at Pont d'Austerlitz and go down to Auteuil, or sometimes as far down as St. Cloud. On such an occasion, I really felt in the very air something of what Stevenson calls the love

of style—the appreciation of the cunning handling of material, by the pen or brush or chisel.

I am a mere scribe, and cannot pretend to feel anything like technical inspiration; but the air of Paris (especially the autumnal air) often gave me such sensation of pleasure as I feel when reading some French writers of dexterous style or when looking at Ingres or Corots. When my boat reached Auteuil or St. Cloud, I would get off and take a solitary walk on suburban roads or in forests. The air in these quiet places was serene: it made me think of Art and Nature. Indeed, I never felt more keenly the spirit of autumn than on such an occasion.

The autumn in Paris often reminded me of autumn at home. A clear sky, the soft breath of air, and the fallen leaves bespeak the autumn in Japan; and the Parisian autumn does not lack these elements. Paris is known as the "gay city"; but I was convinced that it also had a serious side. When no Cook's tourist parties are met with after summer is over, and the trees on the boulevards begin to be stripped of their green

leaves, the city assumes a serious aspect—there is something melancholic in the life of the "gay city." There is no autumn in London: the last days of summer merge into winter. In Paris, however, between summer and winter there comes a period of autumn which seems to be always trying to linger as long as possible, just as French women essay, as it is said, to keep up their beauty till old age. I felt that the serene and calm air of autumn reflected these phases of Parisian life.

When I did not spend my afternoon on the Seine, I took a walk on the quays of the river. It was really pleasant to walk along the quays, stepping on the fallen leaves which made a sound under foot. But those second-hand booksellers' stalls which are arranged along the quays from Saint-Michel down to Concorde always attracted me. I would peep into every stall as I passed by; would stop now and then, attracted by some books; and sometimes would forget where I was, engrossed in an interesting volume. A promenade along this endless row of books in the warmth of the declining sun was, indeed, delightful.

I saw some Japanese old prints which were ostentatiously displayed to attract attention. I was nearly tempted to ask the man where and how he had obtained those Japanese old prints and if he knew they were Japanese, not Chinese. When they were printed in the far-away land hundred years ago, who would have thought that they would finally be exhibited on the banks of the Seine? The fate of inanimate things is far more uncertain than that of animate beings. Anyhow, I enjoyed this book-hunting on the quays of the Seine. I don't know anything about the gay side of Paris; but I fondly cherish the memories of autumnal afternoons I spent on and along the Seine.

The joy of autumn in Paris, however, would be incomplete without chestnuts. The appearance in the streets of the stoves for roasting chestnuts heralds the arrival of autumn; and the chestnut-men's cry "Tout chaud! Tout chaud!" (All hot) proclaim the glory of autumn. Indeed, the "marrons rotis" savour of the spirit of autumn in Paris: their delicious taste is a good symbol of the charm of Paris autumn.

I always associate the spirit of Japanese autumn with mushrooms,—when I eat them (they are much more admired in Japan than in America or England), their fine flavour reminds me of autumn which brings the maple leaves and a clear sky. Chestnuts are not confined to France, nor are Parisians the only people who eat them roasted; but the roasted chestnuts of Paris have a taste entirely their own. I don't know whether the quality of the chestnuts is extra fine or the way in which they are roasted is unique; but I rather fancy that the very atmosphere of Paris has something to do with their fine taste.

The French custom of drinking wine at meals pleased me so much (shall I confess?) that I determined to adopt it when I went home. Strange to say, however, French wine does not go very well with Japanese meals—it no more charms me. Japanese saké, which is warmed when it is drunk, must be used at the Japanese table. I knew an English gentleman in London who had visited Japan and had been so much charmed by saké that he took some home. He told me, however, that he

could not find its native taste in London; and he believed that saké must be poured by the dainty hand of a Japanese girl. Well, the chestnuts of Paris must be tasted at a café or on the boulevard —and nowhere else.

VII

THE AMERICAN BAR

The curiosity of any one who either belongs to the English-speaking nation or knows something about the English language will soon be roused by the English term " American Bar " which is used in Paris. The American Bar at the Olympia Theatre is most famous ; and there are many cafés which boast of such a bar. The public places bearing this name are not a credit to American life ; for the worst side of the life of the Parisian café is often seen there.

One evening I took an American friend to one of these bars just for fun ; and he was a bit scandalised. It must not be supposed, however, that America is represented only in this scandalous manner in Paris. Far from that. The truth is that she is exercising a great influence on the life of

Paris.

When I was in Paris, there was current a catchword : " C'est tout à fait américain " (It is entirely American). As every catchword is expressive of so many things, it is used for a lot of different meanings ; but it serves to signify something which is extraodinary, out of the common run. For instance, if you happen to be a very tall man and go among Parisians who are comparatively small, they would say : " C'est tout a fait américain," no matter whether you are an Englishman or a German. I think this expression would not be unpleasant to the American pride which takes such a delight in anything extraordinary.

A Frenchman visiting America will find the real meaning of " C'est tout à fait américain " in the skyscrapers of New York. Indeed, I fancy that this catchword may have been suggested by those buildings. But the origin of this expression must be attributed to the fact that the American element is much in evidence in the life of Paris. During the summer season, American visitors are met with anywhere in Paris—at places of interest, hotels,

TUILERIES GARDEN

restaurants, cafés, theatres, shops and what not. The American sound, which strikes very forcibly the ears accustomed to the English, is really "in the air." If you see a party at a café who go out without leaving coppers for the waiter, you may be sure that they are from the other side the Atlantic. If you meet a man at a restaurant who tips the waiter more than he actually pays for his bill, you may be sure that he is a man from the Land of the Almighty Dollar.

A great number of children who sail toy boats in the basins at Tuileries and Luxembourg are recruited from America in summer time. They also do not fail to impress their love for the extraordinary upon their French comrades: an American boy's huge boat goes out amid the wonder and admiration of Frenchc hildren, who exclaim: "Qu'il est grand!" One morning I saw an American mother and boy (their speech soon told me of their nationality) trying to sail a boat in the basin at Luxembourg: and as they seemed to have great difficulty in setting the boat under sail, I offered them my help. They were very pleased with my

voluntary service ; and the mother began to tell me about the history of the boat. Her husband visited the Far East the previous year, when he bought it in China for his boy ; and they brought it with them to Paris where they were spending the summer. I thought such was, indeed, " tout à fait américain."

America in Paris, however, is best represented by her girls. They form a feature of Parisian life insomuch as " la fille américaine " (the American girl) has acquired a special significance. They are in great numbers ; some of them are staying for studies and others come on a visit. All of them have more or less the same object—to get a touch of French grace. It is true that some of them come to Paris just because they want to say to their friends : " I have been to Paris " ; but most of them seem to have some purpose—for instance, to study painting or to learn French.

Parisians are sometimes delighted with American girls' dauntlessness and naturalness. They (American girls) are not often received very cordially by their English cousins ; but they generally get a

kind treatment at the hands of their French friends. Paris extends a cordial welcome to all strangers, irrespective of their nationalities; and American girls do not, as in London, feel ill at ease in the capital of France. Their speech and manners seem to impress Parisians very differently from their English sisters; the uninformed believe that the English and Americans speak different languages. The shops in Rivoli are the place where American girls are most conspicuous. You can easily distinguish an American girl from her English sister; for the former tries to look like a Parisienne, while the latter tries not to be taken for one.

In Paris one is often made to doubt if America is nearer to Paris than England. Apart from the traditional relationship between France and America, close intercourse is maintained between them. Not only American girls, but many American gentlemen are found in Paris. I took great interest in comparing the Englishmen and Americans in Paris. I came to know some Englishmen and Americans personally, so that I had a fairly good chance to form my opinion upon them. Most of

my English and American friends were graduates of universities in their respective countries; and were staying in Paris for the further pursuit of their studies.

My impressions of them are that Englishmen cannot leave their snobbery at Dover, while Americans become quite cosmopolitan after a voyage in the Atlantic. Those Englishmen who come to Paris are, for the most part, of the aristocratic inclination; they appear to try hard to keep up their mark. I knew a young Englishman who changed his dress at every meal, and who had a conservative paper sent from home. The Americans in Paris (those who are not mere passing tourists) are generally delightful and interesting creatures. They don't bother you with the talk of their own country and people; they show interest only in the things around them. I do hate those people who talk about nothing but themselves and their own interest—their country, wife, children and mother-in-law. An Englishman can hardly acquire a touch of French polish; but some Americans who have received higher liberal education at

home soon become polished by French culture. I really like those Americans who have a touch of French culture—to say nothing of the American girls with a touch of French grace.

VIII

ART-WORSHIP

One need not count the number of art-students in Paris to know that Art is held in high esteem there. In fact, it is widely and reverently worshipped in Paris, if not in all France. One might say that a statue stands at every street corner and that a nude picture hangs on every door. A French wit has said that England is a country of shopkeepers ; an English cynic might retaliate with the remark that France is a country of art-students.

Some Europeans are good enough to say that Japan is a country of art. Well, I am not going to sing the praises of our art ; but I want to say that our art seems to be better appreciated by the French than by any other European people. I had with me some old Japanese pictures (not of any great value) ; and used to show them to my friends

in London and Paris. I noticed then that my French friends generally showed more interest in them than my English friends did—at least, my French friends admired the pictures in such a way that I would have them. Opinion may be divided on the question whether the French, of all European nations, best resemble the Japanese in character; but I think it certain that both peoples have something in common in their æsthetic instinct. I have said that art is worshipped in France; so it is in Japan. The Japanese have a sort of religious faith in art.

If you go to Kyoto (the old capital of Japan), and visit old temples there, you will hear many charming (or silly, if you please) stories about the old pictures treasured therein. At one of those temples, you will be shown a painting on a sliding door which represents some sparrows on bamboo plants. Your guide will call your attention to a small depression on the painting; this depression has one of the most curious stories. We are told that the sparrows in the picture were so well drawn that real sparrows took them for their friends and

used to come down to play with them. One day, however, one of the sparrows in the picture flew away with his friends.....and never came back. The depression shows the place where the missing sparrow once was. The story demonstrates the fact that art wields great power upon the popular mind of the country. A French artist would be charmed to hear of the story : it would inspire him.

The French were the first, I think, among foreigners to recognise the art of our Hokusai. It may sound strange, but I began really to appreciate him when I came to Paris. It was not because I saw many of his pieces there ; as a matter of fact, I saw none of his work in Paris. But French art, or rather the French way of appreciating art, taught me to find a beauty in Hokusai. The characteristics of Hokusai are that his brush is free and daring and that his pictures are full of life. It was said of him that there existed nothing on earth which he could not draw—his brush was so free that he could transmit any form to his canvass.

Now the French love of freedom not only in politics but in art made me realise the true merit of

RODIN : LE BAISER

Hokusai. In some of his pictures free strokes of the brush seem to have been carried too far; but every one of them is just bursting with life. And the same is true of French art in general. The charge is sometimes made against French pictures that too much freedom is allowed them. When I saw the Salon d'Automne, I thought that the artists went in some cases to the extreme in their endeavour to shake off the yoke of conventionality; but, at the same time, I was struck by their daring efforts for the creation of their own art. Liberty is the spirit of the French; and the realm of freedom is the cradle of French art.

Rodin and Ingres represent two sides of modern French art: the one represents the tour de force and life; and the other, finesse and delicacy. I had not known the real power of the chisel in creating life until I was Rodin's "Le Penseur." The muscles of the figure are throbbing with life; and blood seems to be running in the veins. In the same way, Ingres's nude pictures opened my eyes to the beauties in the form of the human body. I confess I had not taken much interest in nude

figures before; in fact, I had not seen any of real merit. But Ingres charmed me; and I was convinced that a work of art could transcend our conventional sense of morality.

Art is worshipped by the French; they are inspired by it. The Louvre and the Luxembourg Gallery are the temples where they pay homage to the God of Art; and these temples always attract a great number of worshippers. I was interested to notice that there were among the visitors to these temples of art those who belonged to the lower strata in social order. And these people whose unenviable clothes proclaimed their social position seemed to take real interest in the works exhibited; for, standing before a picture or a sculpture, they would utter: "Que c'est beau!" It can be said, therefore, that art is not the monopoly of the "idle rich" in France; the man in the street takes a share in the enjoyment of it.

Stevenson says that the very air of France communicates the love of style; and it seems to me that the very air of Paris makes one more careful about one's *toilette*. Somehow I seemed to take

more care of my toilet in Paris than in London. Once an English lady confided to me that she envied even a working girl of Paris her way of dressing. The Parisiennes, from the *grande dame* down to the grisette, are " well dressed " ; there is something in their very nature which makes them love form and colour. Toilet is an art for all the classes of Paris ; and art is much worshipped in France.

I fancy that the French art-worship has something to do with their toilet. No one will dispute with me when I say that Japanese kimono are more artistic than European clothes—the only defect of Japanese kimono is that they are sometimes too artistic for the practical purpose. And this also comes, I think, from the fact that the Japanese are an art-loving people.

NEW YORK LIFE

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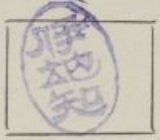

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