

PARIS
VISTAS

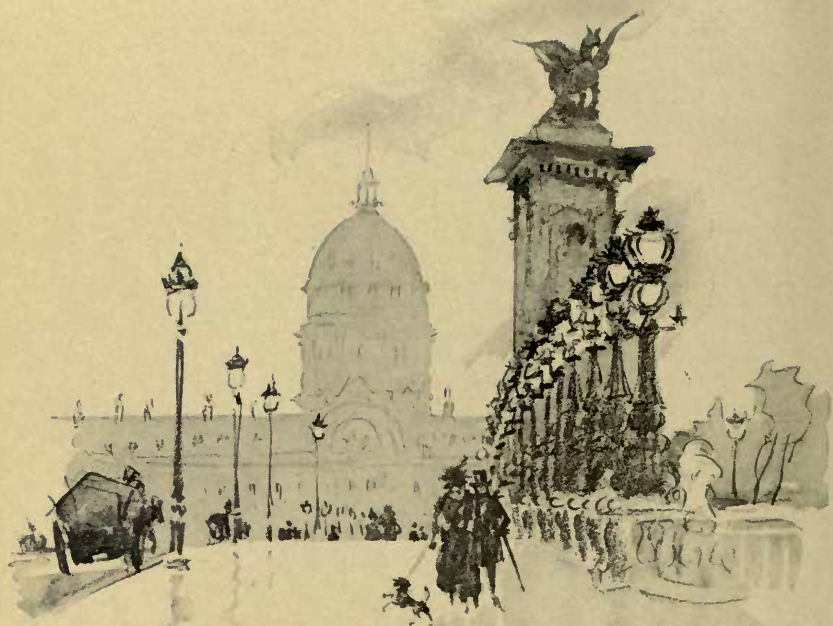
HELEN DAVENPORT
GIBBONS



Flora Shearman Douglas
1922

1st Ed.
P
195

PARIS VISTAS



W. J. G. J.

The Invalides from Pont Alexandre III

PARIS VISTAS

BY

HELEN DAVENPORT GIBBONS

Author of "A Little Gray Home in France,"
"Red Rugs of Tarsus," etc.

WITH SIXTEEN ILLUSTRATIONS

BY

LESTER GEORGE HORNBY



NEW YORK
THE CENTURY CO.
1919

PARIS VISTAS

ALVIN LANGSTON HUBBARD
Author of "The Story of the Little Black Boy"
and "The Story of the Little Black Girl"

Copyright, 1919, by
THE CENTURY Co.

Published, December, 1919



NEW YORK
THE CENTURY CO.
1919

TO
A CRITIC
WHO LIVED MOST
OF THESE DAYS
WITH ME

2130063

FOREWORD

Webster defines a vista as "a view, especially a distant view, through or between intervening objects." If I were literal-minded, I suppose I should either abandon my title or make this book a series of descriptions of Sacré Cœur, crowning Montmartre, as you see the church from dark gray to ghostly white, according to the day, at the end of apartment-house-lined streets from the *allée* of the Observatoire, from the Avenue Montaigne, from the rue de Solférino, and from the Rue Taitbout. I ought to be writing about the vistas, than which no other city possesses a more beautiful and varied array, that feature the Arc de Triomphe, the Trocadéro, the Tour Eiffel, the Grande Roue, the Invalides, the Palais Bourbon, the Madeleine, the Opéra, Saint-Augustin, Val de Grâce and the Panthéon.

But may not one's vistas be memories, with the years acting as "intervening objects"? Has not distance as much to do with time as with space? Vistas in words can no more convey the impression of things seen than Lester Hornby's sketches. If you want a substitute for Baedeker, please do not read this book! If you want a substitute for photographs, you will be disappointed in Lester's sketches.

The *monuments* of Paris, ticketed by name and historical events to tourists whose eyes have had hardly more time than the camera, known by photo-

FOREWORD

graphs to prospective tourists who dream of things as yet unseen, are interwoven into the canvas of my life. The Gare Saint-Lazaire, for instance, is the place where I was lost once as a kid, where I have had to say goodbye to my husband starting on a long and perilous journey, and over which I have seen a Zeppelin floating. Since Louis Philippe was long before my time, the obelisk always has been in the Place de la Concorde. And when you pass it, your eyes, meeting the Arc de Triomphe at the end of the Champs-Élysées, the Carrousel at the end of the Tuileries, the Madeleine at the end of the Rue Royale and the Palais Bourbon at the end of the bridge, record vistas as natural, as familiar as your mother's face in the doorway of the childhood home. Where else could the Arc de Triomphe be? Of course it looks like that!

I shall not attempt to apologize for the autobiography that comes to the front in my Paris vistas. Perhaps my own insignificance and unimportance and the lack of interest on the part of the public in what I do and think—impressed upon me by more than one critic of earlier volumes—should deter me from telling how I lived and brought up my family in Paris. But it is the only way I can tell how I feel about Paris. Whether the end justifies the means the reader must decide for himself.

H. D. G.

Paris, August, 1919.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

(1887-1888)

CHAPTER	PAGE
I CHILDHOOD VISTAS	3

(1899)

II AT SIXTEEN	15
-------------------------	----

(1908)

III A HONEYMOON PROMISE	31
-----------------------------------	----

(1909-1910)

IV THE PROMISE FULFILLED	41
V THE PENSION IN THE RUE MADAME	51
VI LARES AND PENATES IN THE RUE SERVAN- DONI	63
VII GOLD IN THE CHIMNEY	76
VIII AT THE BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE	86
IX EMILIE IN MONOLOGUE	97
X HUNTING APACHES	104
XI DRIFTWOOD	112
XII SOME OF OUR GUESTS	119
XIII WALKS AT NIGHTFALL	132
XIV AFTER-DINNER COFFEE	142
XV REPOS HEBDOMADAIRE	148

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
XVI	"MANY WATERS CANNOT QUENCH LOVE"	154
XVII	REAL PARIS SHOWS	167
XVIII	THE SPELL OF JUNE	181
(1913)		
XIX	CHILDHOOD VISTAS FOR A NEW GENERATION	193
XX	THE PROBLEM OF HOUSING	201
(1914)		
XXI	"NACH PARIS!"	211
(1914-1916)		
XXII	AT HOME IN THE WHIRLWIND	223
XXIII	SAUVONS LES BÉBÉS	231
XXIV	UNCOMFORTABLE NEUTRALITY	243
(1917)		
XXV	HOW WE KEPT WARM	253
XXVI	APRIL SIXTH	262
XXVII	THE VANGUARD OF THE A. E. F.	269
(1918)		
XXVIII	THE DARKEST DAYS	277
XXIX	THE GOTHAS AND BIG BERTHA	294
XXX	THE BIRD CHARMER OF THE TUILERIES	307
XXXI	THE QUATORZE OF TESTING	313
XXXII	THE LIBERATION OF LILLE	321
XXXIII	ARMISTICE NIGHT	326

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
XXXIV ROYAL VISITORS	341
XXXV THE FIRST PEACE CHRISTMAS	348

(1919)

XXXVI PLOTTING PEACE	361
XXXVII LA VIE CHÈRE	373
XXXVIII THE REVENGE OF VERSAILLES	378
XXXIX THE QUATORZE OF VICTORY	385

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

The Invalides from Pont Alexandre III . . .		<i>Frontispiece</i>
	<small>FACING PAGE</small>	
The Madeleine Flower Market		16
Looking up the Avenue de l'Opéra		32
The Rue de Vaugirard by the Luxembourg		64
Château de la Reine Blanche: Rue des Gobelins		88
Where stood the walls of old Lutetia		120
The Panthéon from the Rue Soufflot		144
Hôtel de Ville from the Pont d'Arcole		168
Market day in the Rue de Seine		184
The first snow in the Luxembourg		224
A passage through the Louvre		256
In an Old Quarter		272
Saint-Germain l'Auxerrois		304
Old Paris is disappearing		320
The Grand Palais		336
Spire of the Saint-Chapelle from the Place Saint-Michel		368

PARIS VINTAS

1887-1888

1887-1888

PARIS VISTAS

CHAPTER I

CHILDHOOD VISTAS

MY Scotch-Irish grandfather was a Covenanter. He kept his whisky in a high cupboard under lock and key. If any of his children were around when he took his night-cap, he would admonish them against the use of alcohol. When he read in the Bible about Babylon, he thought of Paris. To Grandpa all "foreign places" were pretty bad. But Paris? His children would never go there. The Scotch-Irish are awful about wills. But life goes so by opposites that when my third baby, born in Paris a year before the war, was christened in the Avenue de l'Alma Church, Grandpa Brown's children and grandchildren and some of his great-grandchildren were present. My bachelor uncle had been living in Paris most of the time for thirty years. My mother, my brothers, and my sister were there. We Browns had become Babylonians. We were no longer Covenanters. And we had no high cupboard for the whisky.

After Grandpa's death, the Philadelphia house was

PARIS VISTAS

sublet for a year. In the twilight we went through all the rooms to say good-by. Jocko, our monkey-doll, was on the sitting-room floor. Papa picked him up and began talking to him. Jocko tried to answer, but his voice was shaky, and he had n't much to say. Papa took a piece of string out of his desk drawer, and tied it around Jocko's neck. He asked Jocko whether it was too tight. The monkey answered, "No, sir." Jocko never forgot to say "sir." We hung him on the shutter of a window in the west room where I learned to watch the sunset. There we left him. What a parting if we had known that the tenants' children were going to do for Jocko, and that we should never see him again! It was bad enough as it was. It is hard for me, even to-day, to believe that it was Papa and not Jocko who told us stories about the fairies in Ireland.

A carriage drove us to a place called Thelafayette-hotel. It was very dark outside and we seemed to have been traveling all night. Papa carried me upstairs to a room that had light green folding doors. My little sister Emily was sound asleep and had to be put right to bed. Papa sat me in a red arm-chair. Beside it were satchels and Papa's black valise. Wide awake, I looked around and asked, "Is this Paris?" I did not see why they had to laugh at me.

A steward of my very own on the *Etruria* told me that she was the biggest transatlantic liner. People

CHILDHOOD VISTAS

gave me chocolates until I was sick. So Mama painted a picture of the poor little fishes that could get no candy in mid-ocean. She made me feel so sorry that when I got more chocolates I would slip to the railing and drop them overboard. Once, before I had heard about the fishes, I was lying in my berth. After a while I began to feel better and to wish that Papa and Mama had not left me alone. My feelings were hurt because I had to stay all by myself. I found my clothes and put on a good many of them. My steward came and was surprised that I was not on deck. He brought me a wide, thin glass of champagne. It was better than lemonade. The steward told me that by staying in my cabin I had missed the chance to see the ship's garden. He buttoned my dress and put on my coat. He found my bonnet. All the time he was telling me how the ship's garden was hitched to the deck. He carried me up those rubber-topped steps that smell so when your stomach feels funny. He hurried all he could and got terribly out of breath. But we did not reach the deck in time to see the garden. The steward said that you had to get there just at a certain time to catch it. I wondered how a ship could have a garden. He replied that he'd like to know where a ship's cook would find vegetables and fruit, and how there were so many freshly picked flowers on the dining-room table every day, if the ship had n't a garden. To prove it he brought me a plate of cool

PARIS VISTAS

white grapes—"picked before the garden went out of sight a few minutes ago," he assured me.

So the week at sea passed, and the next thing I remember is London. It was not a pretty city. Too much rain and smoke that dirtied your frock and pinafore. These funny names for my dress and apron, and calling a clock Big Ben, and a queer way of speaking English, form my earliest memories of London. No, I forgot sources of wonderment. The best orange marmalade was bitter, and the tooth-powder was in a round tin hard to open, that spilled and wasted a lot when you did succeed in prying the lid off.

And in Paris I found that my dress was a "robe" and my apron a "tab-lee-ay." This was worse than "pinafore," but not so astonishing, because one expected French words to be different.

Which is the greater joy and satisfaction—always to have had a thing, or, when you think of something in your life, to be able to remember how and when it came into your possession? Paris is my home city in the sense that I cannot remember first impressions of things in Paris. Of events, yes, and sometimes connected with things, but of things themselves, no. And I am glad of it. My husband did not see Paris until he was twenty, and he learned to speak French by hard work. I have always had a little feeling of superiority here, of belonging to Paris as my children belong to Paris. But Herbert contests this point of view.

CHILDHOOD VISTAS

He claims that affection for what one adopts by an act of the will is as strong as, if not stronger than, affection for what is yours unwittingly. And he advances in refutation of what I say that he knew Paris before he knew me!

“*Cinquante-deux Rue Galilée.*” I cannot remember learning to speak French. That just came. But standing on a trunk in the corner of a bedroom and repeating *Cinquante-deux Rue Galilée* after Marie is just as clear in my mind as if it were yesterday instead of thirty years ago. It is a blank to me how and when we came to Paris and how and when we got Marie Guyon for our nurse. I recall only learning the number and street of our *pension*, and the impressiveness of Marie telling me how little kids get lost in Paris and that in such a case I must n't cry when the blue-coated *agent* came along, but simply say, “*Cinquante-deux Rue Galilée.*”

Clear days were rare—days when it did n't look as if it were going to rain. Then I would have my long walk with Papa, who did n't stay like Marie on the Champs-Élysées or in the Tuileries, but who would take me (Emily was too little) where there were crowds. We would climb to the roof of the omnibus at the Madeleine and ride to the Place de la République. Then we would walk back along the Grands Boulevards. Down that way is a big clothing-store with sample suits on wooden models out on the side-

PARIS VISTAS

walk. One day Papa bumped into a dummy wearing a dress-suit. Papa took off his hat, bowed, and said "*Pardon.*" I thought Papa believed it was a real man. So I told him that he had made a mistake. But Papa replied that one never makes a mistake in being polite. I used to dance with glee when we came to the Porte Saint-Denis. For there, at the place the boulevard now cuts straight through a hill leaving the houses high above the pavement, the pastry and *brioche* and waffle stands were sure of my patronage. Papa may not have had regard for my digestion, but he always considered my feelings. I used to pity other little children who were dragged remorselessly past the potent appeal to eye and nose. The pastry places are still there on that corner. And a new generation of kiddies passes, tugging, remonstrating, sometimes crying. As for me, I beg the question. I walk my children on the other side of the street.

One afternoon Marie took us to buy Papa's newspaper. When we got to the front door, it was raining. So Marie left us in the *bureau* and told us to wait until she returned. But the *valet de chambre* came along with his wood-basket empty. He always boasted he could carry any basket of wood, no matter how high they piled it. So we asked if he could carry us. Immediately he made us jump in, and told us we must pretend to be good little kittens, and little kittens were never good unless they were quiet, and they were

CHILDHOOD VISTAS

never quiet unless they were asleep. When we got to our room, we could look right in at Papa and Mama through the transom. We reached out and knocked. The sound came from so high up that Papa looked curiously at the door. When he opened it we ducked down into the basket, and were not seen until the valet dumped us out on the bed.

My first memory of a negro was in Paris. Probably they were common enough in Philadelphia not to have made an impression and I had forgotten that there were black men. I was paralyzed with fear, thinking I saw Croquemillot *en chair et en os*. Marie saved me by teaching me on the spot to stick out my index and little fingers, doubling over the two between. This charm against evil helped and comforted me greatly. I found it useful later when I saw suspicious-looking beggars in Rome. Only, although the gesture was the same, it was *jettatura* and not *faire les cornes* in Italy, and the charm was more efficacious if concealed. I was glad my dress had a pocket.

Mama and Marie took us to the Louvre. I was filled with anticipation. For had I not heard some one say at our *pension* that she had bought things there for a song? Why spend Papa's money if just a song would do? I could sing. Marie had taught me a pretty song about "La Fauvette." I was willing to sing if I could get a doll's trunk. I'd sing two or three songs for a pair of gloves with white fur on them.

PARIS VISTAS

But when I sang "La Fauvette" they only smiled at me. I asked the saleslady to take me to the toy counter, as I could sing again for things I wanted. I had to explain a whole lot to Mama and Marie and the saleslady. I suppose I cried with disappointment. Then a man in black with a white tie came along and heard the story. He gave me a red balloon and Mama consoled me by buying me a blue velvet dress.

A few months before the war I was walking in the Rue Saint-Honoré with an old American friend who was doing Paris. He was brimming over with French history. Your part was to mention the name of the place you showed him. He would do the rest with enthusiasm and a wealth of detail.

"What is that church?" he asked.

"Saint-Roch," I answered.

"Saint-Roch! Saint-Roch! Saint-Roch!" he cried in crescendo. "Of course, OF COURSE, because this is the Rue Saint-Honoré. The Rue Saint-Honoré!" Beside himself with excitement, he rushed across the street, and up on the steps. I followed, mystified. My friend was waving his cane when I reached his side. "It was here," he announced, as if he had made a wonderful discovery, "right on this spot."

"In Heaven's name what?" I queried.

"The beginning of the most glorious epoch of French history, the birth of the Napoleonic era."

And then he told me the story of how young Bona-

CHILDHOOD VISTAS

parte, called upon to prevent a mob from rushing the Tuileries, put his guns on the steps of Saint-Roch, swept the street in both directions, and demonstrated that he was the first man since '89 who could dominate a Parisian crowd. "You would n't have thought there was anything interesting about this old church, would you?" he ended triumphantly.

My eyes filled with tears, and my lips trembled. It was his turn to be mystified, and mine to lead. I took him inside the church, and back to the chapel of Saint Joseph. "Here," I said, "on Christmas Eve I came with my father when I was five years old. It was the first time I remember seeing the Nativity pictured. Good old Joseph looked down on the interior of the inn. The three wise men were there with the gifts. Le petit Jésus was in a real cradle, and I counted the jewels around the Mother's neck. My father tried to explain to me what Christmas means. He died when I was a little girl. I brought my first-born here on Christmas Eve and the others as they came along. I never knew about Napoleon's connection with Saint-Roch before. And you asked me whether I would have thought there was anything interesting about this old church!"

The same place can mean so many different things to so many different people. Paris was Babylon to my grandfather who never went there. And to those who go there Paris gives what they seek, historical

PARIS VISTAS

reminiscences, esthetic pleasure, intellectual profit, inspiration to paint or sing or play, a surfeit of the mundane, a diminution or an increase of the sense of nationality, pretty clothes and hats and perfumes, "rattling" good food and drink or a "howling" good time. You can be bored in Paris just as quickly and as completely as in any other place in the world. You can fill your life full of interesting and engrossing pursuits more quickly and completely than in any other place in the world. Best of all you make your home in Paris, with no sense of exile, and enjoy what Paris alone offers in material and spiritual values without being abnormal or living abnormally.

My childhood vistas seem fragmentary when I put them down on paper. But they have meant so much to me that I could choose for my children no greater blessing than to know Paris as home at the beginning of their lives.

1899

CHAPTER II

AT SIXTEEN

THE family was abroad for the summer, one of those delightful May-first to October thirty-first summers when school is missed at both ends. The itinerary was supposed to be planned by letting each member drop into a hat slips of paper indicating preferences. Mother was astonishingly good about considering the wishes of all. But as the trip was undertaken for education as well as vacation, the head of the family did not intend to make it aimless rambling. Although, to get full benefit of the strawberry season, we took our cathedrals from south to north in England, none were omitted. By the time we reached Edinburg, Roman, Saxon, Early Norman and Gothic were as mixed up in the head of the sixteen-year-old member of the party as they were in the buildings inspected. "Inspected"—just the word for an educational tour! Later visits to East Coast cathedrals have not conquered the instinctive desire to avoid going inside. Impressions of places were vivid enough. But I fear Canterbury meant London the next stop; Ely a place near Cambridge; Peterborough the view from

PARIS VISTAS

the top of the tower; Lincoln tea-cakes that crumbled in one's mouth; York a mean photographer who never sent me films I left to be developed; and Durham a batch of long-delayed letters from boys at home.

At sixteen strawberries do not satisfy hunger: cathedrals do not feed the soul.

No, cathedrals and history and the origin of the political institutions under which I lived interested me very mildly. At sixteen one is too young to have love affairs that interfere with the appetite, and too sophisticated to cling to the dream of a cloistered convent life that followed giving up the hope of being a chorus-girl. The mental effort of preparing for college (which the tour abroad was to stimulate) could not claim me to the exclusion of clothes and an engrossing interest in the doings of the group of boys and girls who formed my "crowd." The trip abroad was going to give me something to talk about at dinner-parties and the advantage of wearing clothes bought in Paris. One never looks forward to the coming winter with as keen anticipation as during the sixteen-year-old summer. Hair would be put up, and dances and dinners were a certainty for every Friday and Saturday evening.

If you believe in the value of first impressions and are in a mood to love Paris, plan your introduction to the queen of the world for an evening in June. Do not worry about your baggage. Send a porter from the



The Madeleine Flower Market



hotel afterwards for your trunks. Find a *fiacre* if you can. An *auto-taxi* is second-best, but be sure that the top is off. *Baisser la capote* is a simple matter, done in the twinkling of an eye. Of course the *chauffeur* will scold. But handling *cochers* and *chauffeurs* in Paris requires the instinct of a lion-tamer. If you let the animal get the better of you, you are gone. You will never enjoy Paris. Mastery of Parisian drivers, hippomobile and automobile, does not require a knowledge of French. Your man will understand "put down the top" accompanied by the proper gesture. Whether he puts it down depends upon your iron will and not upon your French!

Best of all stations for the first entry to Paris is the Gare de Lyon. But that good fortune is yours only if you are coming from Italy or Spain or if you have landed at Marseilles. The Dover and Boulogne routes bring you to the Gare du Nord and the Dieppe and Havre and Cherbourg routes to the Gare Saint-Lazare. In any case, ask to be driven first to the Pont-Neuf, then along the *quais* of the Rive Gauche to the Pont-Alexandre Trois, then to the Avenue des Champs-Élysées. Only when you have gone over this itinerary and have passed between the Grand Palais and the Petit Palais are you ready to be driven to your hotel. It is the difference between seeing a girl first at a dance or a garden-party or running into her by accident in her mother's kitchen when the cook is on a strike.

PARIS VISTAS

How often, in the decades that have passed since June, 1899, have I wished that the return to Paris had included this program, not only initially but for every June and July evening of our weeks there. But it did not. The passionate love of Paris, my home city, that was born in me as a child, that was re-awakened and deepened in maturity, did not manifest itself when I was a school-girl as it should have done. The change from regular lessons to the governess-controlled days of sightseeing was not as amusing at the time as it seems in retrospect. Madame Raymond and I were not made for each other. It was n't incorrigibility on my part or severity in a nasty way on hers. We just pulled in different directions, and shocked each other. It began on the first day. She found that I spoke French well enough not to call for the usual effort she had to make with American girls and that I did not need to be told the names of *monuments* and *jardins* and *avenues*. The memories of infancy had been carefully kept alive by word and picture. Mother had seen to that. Paris meant to me my father. Consequently, I suppose Madame Raymond's conscience stimulated her to lay stress upon history and art. She wanted to earn her money.

Mutual lack of comprehension began immediately. My first reading under Madame Raymond's direction was a volume of Guy de Maupassant's stories, with markers to show which could be read and which were

forbidden. Next day Madame was horrified to see the markers gone and to learn that I had sat up late reading without censorship. She told me that a well-bred *jeune fille* ought to be ashamed of reading certain things, and refused to argue about it when I asked her why a *jeune fille* should be ashamed of reading the stories she had indicated to be skipped.

"To-day," said Madame Raymond, "I intend to take you to the Cluny Museum, and then we shall begin the Louvre."

"But," I protested, "I want to go first to Morgan Harjes."

"What for? Madame your mother gave me fifty francs this morning."

"She gave me a hundred and fifty. It is n't for money. I want my letters."

"If there are any letters for you, Madame your mother will give them to you if it is good for you to have them!" snapped Madame Raymond.

"Fiddlesticks! My mother does n't read my letters."

"Letters written to a *jeune fille* of sixteen years can easily wait. They are not important. Your education is. Anyway, who would write to you over here?"

"Well, there is Bill. I'm crazy to know if he passed his examinations for Yale and how he liked going to the dance at the Country Club with Margaret when he asked me first. Joe and Charlie went off on a fishing trip to Canada before I sailed, and I've been

PARIS VISTAS

waiting a month to know if they caught anything. Then Harold. He's an older man. You can talk to him about serious things and his advice is pretty good. Naturally, it would be—Harold is a member of the bar and knows lots."

"But," said Madame, "you mean to say you write to men and men write to you?"

"Certainly. Just ask mother. Here, I know how to fix it. You seem to be in a hurry to go to the Museum. If it interests you, go right along. I'll take a cab to the bank and follow you later. Meet you at the Cluny in an hour."

"Alone!" cried Madame; "my conscience would not allow it. Your mother trusts me."

Madame Raymond hailed a cabby.

"To the Cluny Museum," said she, with finality.

In its setting, the Cluny Museum is one of the most delightful spots in Paris. On the Boulevard Saint-Michel and the Boulevard Saint-Germain one has the life of Paris of to-day. Looking out from the little park with its remains of Roman baths and archæological treasures of old Lutetia scattered around in the shrubbery, one sees a fascinating *carrefour* of the Latin Quarter, noisy, bustling, ever-changing. It is a contrast more striking than any that Rome affords. On the other side, where one enters the Museum, you have the atmosphere of the middle ages, with the old well and the court yard and the fifteenth-century façade.

AT SIXTEEN

Across the street, the great buildings of the Sorbonne and Collège de France seem to be carrying on the traditions of the past. But if you had to go inside with a governess who insisted on showing you everything in every room, you would rebel as I did.

Madame Raymond did not have it all in her head. She peered down over the glass cases and read the descriptions in a high voice, adding pages out of a guide book from time to time. She was near-sighted. As she droned along, I plotted a scheme for kidnapping her spectacles. When we left, I had seen embroideries and laces and carriages and cradles and slippers of famous people and stolen stained-glass windows to *her* heart's content.

We went to Foyot's, opposite the Luxembourg Palace, for lunch. After the meal was ordered, the waiter brought the *carte de vins*.

"A bottle of Medoc," said Madame. "I prefer red wine, don't you, my dear?"

"Plain water for me. No mineral water. *Eau fraiche* out of a carafe," said I.

"Extraordinary!" cried Madame.

"I think it is dreadful to drink wine," I protested, half in earnest and half in joke. "The Bible says strong drink is a mockery. The first thing I remember about Sunday school is that text."

"Ridiculous," said Madame, "table wine is not alcohol."

PARIS VISTAS

"Yes," I continued, "but it is the first steps toward strong drink. You are going to order a *fine champagne* with your coffee. You cannot tell me that brandy is not strong drink."

"Here in France," said Madame, "everybody takes a drink and nobody gets drunk. You must understand, my dear child, that we have a different point of view."

"Maybe *you* don't get drunk," said I, "but how about what one sees in Brittany?"

"You lack respect," answered Madame. She ignored Brittany. In France, one is not accustomed to argue with a sixteen-year-old girl. Questioning the judgment of one's elders is impertinent. Since I have brought up my own children in France, I am more than half won over to French ideas. The strong individualism of the American child shocks me now in somewhat the same way as my "freshness" must have shocked Madame Raymond. I was ready to contest her belief that American girls had no manners. I have not taught my children to courtesy—for the simple reason that it is no longer the fashion in France. But I am far from believing now, as I told Madame Raymond, that courtesying is affectation. And I fear that my children have had the example of French children in regard to wine. I am trying to put down here how I was at sixteen. When, after years in America, I returned to France, my point of view was different.

AT SIXTEEN

But about some things maturity has not changed the opinion of a pert young American *miss*. French ideas of sex relationship between adolescents seem to me now as they did then, absurd and false. Nor have I revised my opinion about high heels and tight corsets, powder and paint.

It was Madame's duty to take me to the dressmaker's. Before my dress appeared in the fitting room, I was put into my first pair of corsets. When they were laced up, I rebelled, took a long breath, and stretched them out again. Madame Raymond and the fitting woman shook their heads and assured me that my dress would not fit. My governess sided with the girl, when she remonstrated against my stretching the lacings. I showed little interest, too, in Madame Raymond's suggestion concerning the purchase of a box and a pretty puff with a silk rose-bud for a handle, which was to contain pink powder.

"I never make up," I declared. "If you put powder and other stuff on your face when you are young, you are not far-sighted. Ugh! I loathe pink powder."

One day we went to a *foire*, one of those delightful open-air second-hand markets that never cease to fascinate Parisians. A man darted out from a booth and offered to sell me a wedding gown.

"How much is that dress?" I inquired.

"Two hundred francs, Mademoiselle."

"Let me see. I wonder if it is big enough for me.

PARIS VISTAS

I'm getting married next week. This would save me the bother of having one made, *n'est-ce pas?*?"

"Certainly, Mademoiselle," cried the merchant delighted.

He pulled out his tape-line and was preparing to measure me when Madame dragged me away.

"It is not *convenable*, what you are doing," she exclaimed heatedly. "You must not speak lightly of marriage."

"Oh, it comes to us all like death or whooping-cough."

I must not give the impression that my mind at sixteen was absolutely insensible to historical sight-seeing and the art treasures of Paris. I always have loved some of the things in the Louvre, and after the Great War broke out, I discovered what a privation it was not to be able to drop in when I passed to look at something in the Luxembourg or the Louvre. But I did not like overdoses. And I have never gotten accustomed to crowds of pictures all at once in the field of vision or cabinets and glass-covered cases filled with a bewildering variety of *bibelots*. How I came to enjoy the Musée du Louvre will be told in a later chapter of the decade after Madame Raymond. Why should I not confess frankly that at sixteen I was more interested in the Magazin du Louvre, even though I knew I could no longer hope to purchase what I wanted there "for a song"? The best thing I took away from Paris in

1899 was an evening-dress with a low neck—my first to go with hair put up. It was in the middle tray of my trunk, packed with tissue paper and sachet. I can see now the different colored flowers woven into the soft cream of its background in such a way that, according to the girdle you chose to put on, your color effect in night light could be lavender, blue or rose.

Ten years before my father had taught me to love to ride on the top of an omnibus, on the *impériale*, as the French called it. Alas that I should have to use the past tense here. *Impériales*, still the fashion on Fifth Avenue and Riverside Drive, disappeared from Paris before the war. I shall tell later of the last horse-driven omnibus. The auto-buses started out with *impériales*, but banished the upstairs in 1912 and 1913. They were still the vogue in 1908. Madame Raymond objected to the *impériale*. She hated climbing up and down the little stairs, especially when carrying an umbrella prevented proper circumspection in regard to gathering in skirts. And by riding inside one avoided a *courant d'air*.

On a sunshiny day with a long ride ahead of us, I could not bear the thought of submitting to my governess's whim. I forgot my manners and jumped on first. With this advantage I was able to climb quickly to the top. There was nothing else for Madame Raymond to do but slip the guide-book hastily into her black silk bag and climb up after me. A man in

PARIS VISTAS

uniform came along and stopped in front of me. I was reading, and did not look up when I offered him the necessary coppers. He took my money and sat down beside me. Then he laughed and handed it back to me. He was a sous-lieutenant of the French army. I was not confused by my mistake, for he gallantly took it as an opening. We chatted in English. Madame Raymond plucked at my sleeve, whispering admonitions. I was deaf on that side. Finally she told me that we had reached our destination, got up and started down. Naturally I followed. I found that we were still several blocks away from where we were going. We both held our tempers until we got off. Then the fur began to fly. That night my adventure was re-tailed to Mother at the hotel in the Rue de la Tremoille. Mother sided with the governess.

But the next week, when we were at the Opéra one night, I met my officer on the Grand Escalier. He came right up to me, and I didn't have it in my heart to turn my back or treat him coolly. When my governess turned around, she recognized him. I did not bat an eyelash. I introduced him to Mother and to her and he managed to get an invitation from Mother to call on us. This is the only time I was ever glad about the long intermission—the interminable intermission—between acts at the Paris Opéra. Afterwards, nothing I could say would convince Madame Raymond that the second meeting was pure hazard. She told me that she

AT SIXTEEN

knew he had slipped me his address and I had written to him to arrange the rendez-vous. This did not make me mad. What did make me furious was her condemnation of the supposed intrigue solely on the ground of my age and my unmarried state. When does a girl cease being too young to talk to men in France? And why should it not be worse for a married woman than for an unmarried woman to encourage a little attention?

These questions interested me later as much as they did then. Was the Old World so different from the New World or was I taking for granted both a latitude and an attitude at home different from what I was going to meet? Little did I realize that I was destined to live in Paris as a bride and to bring up my children there to the age when I should have these problems to face from the standpoint of a mother of three girls.

1908

CHAPTER III

A HONEYMOON PROMISE

WE left Oxford very suddenly. Six weeks in the Bodleian Library, in spite of canoeing every afternoon, sufficed to go through a collection of contemporary pamphlets about the Guises. And then we were getting hungry. Since he never changes the menu, roast beef and roast lamb alternating night after night, and accompanied by naked potatoes and cabbage, must content the Englishman. But all who have not a British birthright either lose their appetites or go wild after a time. We thought that we could not stand another day of seeing that awful two-compartment vegetable dish. It never contained a surprise. You could swear with safety to your soul that when the lid was lifted a definite combination of white and green would meet your eye.

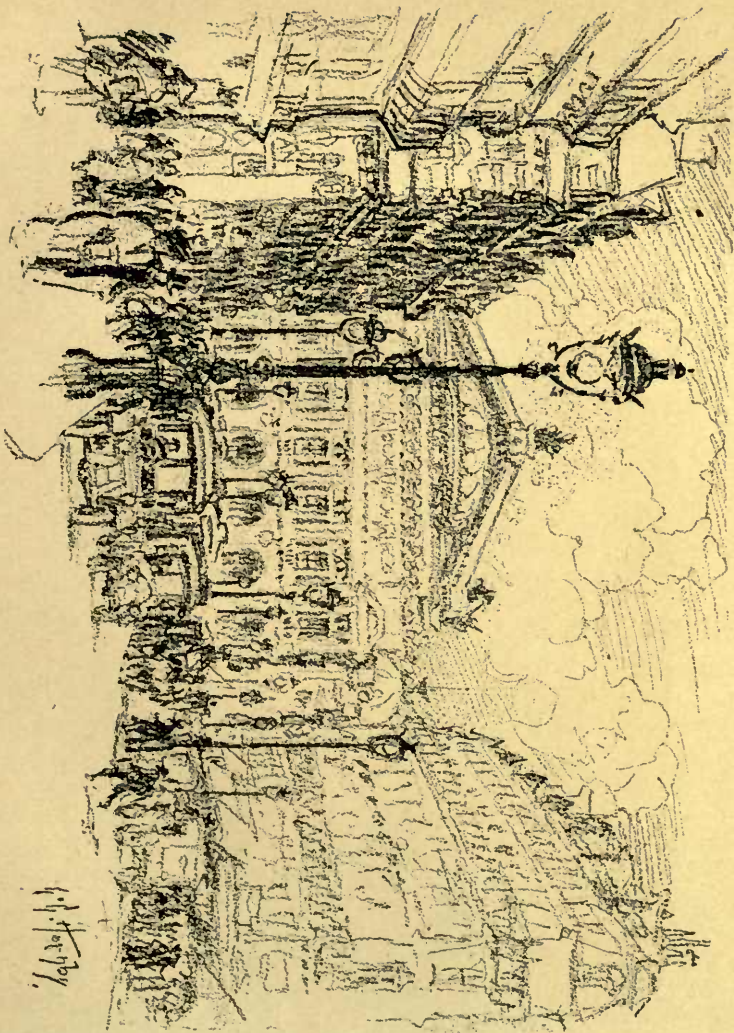
So, when in the early days of July nineteen hundred and eight the London newspapers published telegrams from Constantinople that foreshadowed startling changes in Turkey, we were ready to flit. We had planned to spend our honeymoon winter in Asia Minor, anyway, and thought we might as well get out there as soon as possible. The spirit of adventure is strong in

PARIS VISTAS

the blood of the twenties and decisions are made without reflection. It is great to be young enough to have a sudden change of plans matter to none, least of all to oneself. On Monday afternoon we were canoeing on the Cherwell, with no other thought than the very pleasant one of doing the same thing on the morrow. The next afternoon we were in a train speeding from Calais to Paris, trying to recuperate from the Channel passage.

Herbert and I both knew Paris. But we did not know Paris together, and that made all the difference in the world. When we reached the Gare du Nord, we were as filled with the joy of the unknown as if we had been entering Timbuktoo. On the train we discussed hotels. A slim pocketbook was the only bank in the world to draw upon for a long journey. On the other side was the less commonsense but more convincing argument, that this was once in our lives, and that if it ever was excusable to do things up right, now was the time. The pocketbook was so slim, however, that until we stepped out into the dazzling lights, we were not altogether sure that it would not be a modest little hotel. We compounded with prudence by hailing a *fiacre* instead of one of the new auto-taxis, and directed the *cocher* to take us where we wanted to go.

It was the thought of being in the heart of things, right at the Place de l'Opéra, that prompted us to choose the Grand Hotel. The price of rooms was pre-



Looking up the Avenue de l'Opéra

W. J. Forster

A HONEYMOON PROMISE

posterous. We took the cheapest they had on the top floor. The economical choice is sometimes the lucky one. Next time you are in the Place de l'Opéra, look up to the attic of the Grand Hotel, and you will see little balconies between the windows. Each window represents a room. So does each balcony. We drew a balcony. It was just wide enough for two honeymoon chairs; and it was summer time.

When I was waiting in the vestibule of a New York church for the first strains of the wedding march, my brother pressed a five-dollar gold piece inside my white glove. "For a bang-up dinner when you get to London," he whispered. In London we had been entertained by friends. This was the time to spend it. The initiated would open his eyes wide at the thought of the "bang-up" dinner for two for twenty-five francs in Paris today—or anywhere else in the world. But remember I am writing about nineteen hundred and eight. Six years before the war, twenty-five francs would do the trick, and do it well, on the Grands Boulevards. We had fried chicken with peas, salad and *fruits rafraichis* at Pousset's, and there was some change after a liberal (ante-bellum!) tip.

After dinner we strolled along the Boulevards des Italiens. We came to a big white place, with a wealth of electric lamps, that spelled PATHE—PALACE. A barker walked up and down in front, wearing a gold-braided cap and a green *redingote*. We paused as at

PARIS VISTAS

the circus. It was a cinema. Herbert wanted to go in, but I was n't sure. I had never seen moving pictures and had heard that they hurt one's eyes. To be a good sport I yielded. It was a revelation to me, and I felt as I did a year or two later when I first saw an aeroplane. My censor and literary critic, who has not the imagination of an Irishman, wants to eliminate this paragraph. But I have refused. It is true that I had never been to the cinema before I married him, and I am not sure that it was not his first time, too. The wonders of one decade are the commonplace of the next, and in retrospect we should not forget this. "Nineteen-eight" was to be the wonder year. Is there not an old Princeton song, still in the book, which was sung with expectation by our fathers? It went something like this:

I'll sing of the days that will come,
Of the changes that many won't see,
Of the times years and years hence.
I can tell you where some of you'll be:
If you don't know I'll give you the tip.
So catch on and don't be too late:
If you do, you'll get left and you'll all lose your grip
In the year nineteen hundred and eight.

And then the chorus, as they used to sing it—that older generation—on the steps of Nassau Hall:

In nineteen hundred and eight, in nineteen hundred and eight
You can go to the moon in a two day balloon;

A HONEYMOON PROMISE

In nineteen hundred and eight, in nineteen hundred and eight
To the north pole you can skate,
And you'll find Annie Laurie cutting grass on the Bowery,
In nineteen hundred and eight.

After the movies we went back to the Hotel, and sat out on our balcony with the brilliant vistas of the Avenue de l'Opéra and the Boulevard des Italiens before us. We could hear the music of the opera orchestra, faintly to be sure, but it was there. The spell of six and sixteen came back. Nearly another decade had passed, but Paris was home to me, and I had a twinge of regret that we were going farther afield. Had it not been for the news of Niazi Bey and Enver taking to the mountains in a revolt against the Sultan, I might have suggested giving up Turkey.

I was glad that we would have to stay long enough to get our passports. The passport, now the indispensable *vade mecum* of travelers everywhere, was needed only for Rumania and Turkey and Russia ten years ago. To make up for the extravagance of the Grand Hotel we found our way to the American Embassy and the Turkish Embassy afoot. Every corner of the Champs-Élysées had brought back memories to me and I was able to point out to Herbert the *guignol* to which Marie had often taken my little sister and me nearly twenty years before. We stopped to listen. Some of the jokes were just the same. Judy had lost the stove-lid, and Punch told her to sit on the hole herself. And

PARIS VISTAS

a useful and indispensable nursery household article (whose name I shall not mention) was suddenly clapped by Punch over the policeman's head in the same old way. The children laughed and clapped their hands in glee. Herbert, on his side, showed me the walk he used to take every morning from his room on the Rue d'Amsterdam by the Rue de la Boëtie and the Avenue d'Antin¹ to the Exposition of 1900, when he was writing feature stories for the Sunday edition of the *New York World*.

With passports obtained and visaed, tickets bought and baggage registered, we were having our last meal in Paris before taking the train for Rome. It was a late breakfast on the *terrasse* of the Café de la Paix. The waiter was not surprised when we ordered eggs with our coffee: but we were when we found they cost a franc apiece. As we sat there, at the most interesting vantage point in Paris for seeing the passing crowd, my childhood instinct came back with force. I cried, "O! I do want to come here to live when we return from Turkey!"

Herbert had a fellowship from Princeton for foreign study. It had been postponed a year so that he could teach for a winter at an American college in Asia Minor. Then and there we made a decision that was prophetic. All the other men were going to Germany.

¹ The Avenue d'Antin has become since the victory in the recent war Avenue Victor Emmanuel III., in honor of Italy's intervention.

A HONEYMOON PROMISE

The German universities were a powerful attraction for American university men. The German Ph.D. was almost a sine qua non in our educational system. You could not get a Ph.D. in England or in France. Herbert gallantly sacrificed his on the spot. It was not a revolt against Kultur. Nor was it clairvoyance.

"On one's honeymoon," Herbert said, "the wife's wish should be law. The man who starts endeavoring to get the woman he has married to realize that the things to do are the things he thinks should be done gets into trouble, and stays in trouble."

The last thing we were looking for on that perfect July morning was trouble.

"All right," said he, "we'll come back and study in Paris, and if you want to live here afterwards, I guess we can find some way to do it."

1909-1910

CHAPTER IV

THE PROMISE FULFILLED

“**I**T was alcohol! He was right, that old buck. It was alcohol!”

We were sitting in the restaurant of the Hotel Terminus in Marseilles. Our month-old baby was lying on the cushioned seat between us. The maître d’hotel told us she was the youngest lady that had ever come to his establishment. Bowls of coffee were before us on the table, and we were enjoying our French breakfast when Herbert burst out with the remark I have just recorded.

“What is the matter with you?” I asked.

Shaking with laughter, he told me the story.

“You know the basket with breakables in it? And those two champagne bottles Major Doughty-Wylie gave us?”

“One of them had boracic acid in it. Well?”

“Yes, yes, that is just it. The customhouse officer spied the bottles and it did not take him long to uncork one and smell it. He wanted to stick me for duty.”

“What did you do?”

“Protested against paying duty on boracic acid solu-

PARIS VISTAS

tion. I pointed you out to him sitting over there with the baby. He yielded finally—observing that Americans are queer, tough customers, and that their babies must be husky if their eyes can stand such stuff. But he got the wrong bottle. Don't you remember that in the second one is pure grape alcohol, and that is what he sniffed."

Traveling with a baby, when tickets do not allow one to take the *rapide* sleeping-cars, has its good points. People do not care to spend the night in a compartment with a baby. We got to the train early—very early. We put Christine's wicker basket (her bed) by the door, and found it to be the best kind of a "reserved" sign. Half a hundred travelers poked their heads in—and passed on. The sight of Christine acted like magic to our advantage. The baby started to cry. "Don't feed her yet," ordered her dad. "Until this train starts, the louder she cries the better for her later comfort." As the wheels began to move, a man came in, put his bag on the rack and sat down. Laughing, he closed the door and pulled down the curtain.

"I have been watching you," said he. "Yours is a clever game. I have three little cabbages myself, and I know babies don't disturb people as much as those who have none think. No," he added, "I must correct myself, thinking of my mother and my mother-in-law. Even those who have had many babies forget in the course of time how they were once used to them.

THE PROMISE FULFILLED

We'll have a comfortable night. Have a cigar, monsieur!"

We did have a splendid sleep. Christine has always been one of those wonder babies. So we were ready to see Paris cheerfully. Heaven knows we needed every possible help to being cheerful! For we were embarked upon a venture that looked more serious than it had the year before. A pair of youngsters can knock around happily without worrying about uncertainties. A baby means a home—and certain unavoidable expenses. Where your progeny is concerned, you can't just do without. We had two hundred and fifty francs in cash, and the prospect of a six hundred dollar fellowship, payable in quarterly installments. That was all we could count upon. Our only other asset was some correspondence sent to the *New York Herald* that had not been ordered, but for which we hoped to be paid.

The Marseilles express used to arrive at Paris at an outlandish hour. It was not yet six when we were ready to leave the Gare de Lyon. Two porters, laden down with hand-luggage, asked where we wanted to go. We did not know. The Paris hotels that had been our habitats in days past were no longer possible, even temporarily. There was no mother to foot my bills, and Herbert was n't a bachelor with only his own room and food to pay for. I suggested the possibility of a small hotel by the station. The porters took us out on

PARIS VISTAS

the Boulevard Diderot. Across the street was a hotel (whose gilt letters, however, did not omit the invariable adjective "grand") that looked within our means.

Once settled and breakfasted, the family council tackled the first problem—Scrappie, gurgling on the big bed. Ever since she was born we had been traveling, and she naturally had to be with us all the time. Only now, after five weeks of parenthood, did the novel and amazing fact dawn upon us that no longer could we "just go out." Scrappie was to be considered. Without Scrappie, we could have set forth immediately upon our search for a place to live. With Scrappie—?

There always is a *deus ex machina*. In our case it was a *dea*. Marie still lived in Paris. The contact had never been lost, and when we went through Paris on our honeymoon the year before, I had taken my husband to show him off to Marie. It was decided that I should go out immediately and find her. A month before we had written that we were coming to Paris in June, and she would be expecting us. Marie, and Marie alone, meant freedom of movement. I could not think of trusting my baby to anyone else.

The address was at the tip of my tongue—22 Rue de Wattignies. A few people know vaguely of the battle, but how many life-long Parisians know the street? Not the *boulevardiers* or the *faubouriens* of Saint-Germain, or the Americans, North and South, of the Etoile Quarter. And yet the Rue de Wattignies is an

THE PROMISE FULFILLED

artery of importance, copiously inhabited. We had gone in a cab last year, and remembered that it was somewhere beyond the Bastille. At the corner of the street beyond our hotel, just opposite the great clock tower of the Gare de Lyon, I saw the Bastille column not far away. Why waste money on cabs? To the right of the Bastille lay the Rue de Wattignies, and not very far to the right. I remembered perfectly, and started out unhesitatingly.

Oh, the Paris vistas! No other city in the world has every hill top, every great open space, marked by a building or monument that beckons to you at the end of boulevard or avenue. No other city in the world has familiar dome or tower or steeple popping up over housetops in the distance to reassure you wherever you may have wandered, that you are not far from, and that you can always find your way to, a familiar spot. The Eiffel Tower, the Great Wheel, the Arc de Triomphe, Sacré Coeur, the Panthéon, Val-de-Grâce, the Invalides, the Tour St. Jacques, give you your direction. But when you dip into Paris streets, on your way to the goal, you are lost. Even constant reference to a map and long experience do not save you from the deceptive encouragement of Paris vistas. You can walk in circles almost interminably.

I had done this so often in the old days when I escaped from my governess. I did so again when I tried to find the Rue de Wattignies. Perhaps I did not try

PARIS VISTAS

very hard: for one never minds wandering in Paris. The life of the streets is a witchery that makes one forget time and distance and goal. When I lost sight of the Bastille column, the labyrinth of St. Antoine streets led me on until I had crossed the canal and found myself by the Hôpital St. Louis. After the year in the East, and years before that in America, old houses and street markets held me in a new world. It was a glorious June day to boot, and after steamer and train, walking was a keen pleasure. Marital and parental responsibilities were forgotten. The Hôpital St. Louis brought me back to the realities of life. I knew that it was north of the Bastille, and not in the direction of the Rue de Wattignies. Suddenly there came uneasily into my mind the picture of a husband, a prisoner, patiently waiting in a very small room in a very small hotel, and a baby demanding lunch. Conscience insisted upon a cab: for nearly two hours had passed since I started forth to find Marie. I had left the hotel early enough to catch her before she might have gone out. What if Marie should not be at home? "Hurry, *cocher!*"

My panic was unjustified. Marie was at home. Delighted to hear of our arrival, and eager to see her petite Hélène's baby, she put on her funny little black hat, and went right down to the waiting cab.

When we got to the hotel, Herbert was eating a second mid-morning petit déjeuner. He had a copy

THE PROMISE FULFILLED

of the Paris edition of the *New York Herald*, and showed me, well played up in a prominent place, the last of the Adana massacre stories he had forwarded by mail from Turkey. This was the first time he realized that his "stuff" had been exclusive. There was a pleasant prospect of drawing a little money. So my long absence brought forth no remark, specially as Scruppie had slept like an angel.

"We played a wise game," said Herbert, "when we sent the stories smuggled through Cyprus to the *Herald*. We shall not have to correspond with New York on a slim chance of a newspaper's gratitude. We can get at James Gordon Bennet right here in Paris." Then he showed me some advertisements picked out in the column of *pensions* as promising and within our means. We had decided to consider nothing outside of the Latin Quarter.

Marie had not changed a bit. She could not say the same for me although she fussed over me as if I were five going on six. She forgot that twenty years had gone since the last time she combed my hair. She communicated to me the old sense of security. She bathed the baby. She brought me food and sat beside me, observing that long ago she had to coax me to take one more mouthful to please her.

"You always were fussy about your food. *Ma chère petite Hélène*, you don't eat enough to keep a sparrow alive. You are a naughty one."

PARIS VISTAS

She insisted upon my drinking a cup of camomile tea, and took me straight back to my sixth year by calling it *pipi du chat*. Knowing that name for camomile tea is one of the tests of whether one really knows French.

"Marie," I begged, "show me how English people speak French—the way you used to do!"

But Herbert, who had gone out to get the *Daily Mail* for its *pension* list, was coming in the door, and Marie would not show off before Monsieur. Never did she call me *chère petite Hélène* when he or any other person was present. It was always Madame before company. The *Mail* had many advertisements of *pensions* in streets near the Luxembourg. Marie helped us pick them out. The Luxembourg Garden was an integral part of the Latin Quarter, and we had to think of Scruppie's outing.

After lunch we turned Christine over thankfully to Marie and went out *pension*-hunting together.

"You were lucky in finding Marie," was all Herbert said.

"Yes," I answered, "I really could n't have left the baby with anyone else."

"But is Marie the only person in the world? Without her, would you be a slave for ever and ever? There must be plenty of people that we could get to look after Scruppie."

THE PROMISE FULFILLED

"You don't know what it means to have a child!" said Scruppie's mother.

"I guess I look pretty healthy for a fellow who has just landed in Paris with a wife and a baby and 250 francs!" said my husband.

"Can't make us mad," said I; "we 're in Paris."

You pile up on one side of the scale heaps of things that ought to worry you, but if you put on the other side the fact that you are in Paris, down goes the Paris side with a sure and cheerful bang, up goes the other side, and the worries tumble off every which way into nowhere.

The main threads of the world's spider web start very far from Paris in all directions and the heaviest urge of traffic is towards the centre. Paris was the centre of the spider web long before Peace Delegates came here to discover the fact. Students, diplomats, travel-agencies, theatrical troupes knew it and whole shelves of books have been written, down the years, to prove it. If Paris is your birth-place, you learn that you are in the capital of the world long before you know how to read the books. If you are an expert on ancient coins, if you are a wood-carver, if you are a singer wanting a voice that will make your fortune because it was trained in France, if you are a baker, if you are a burglar, if you are a silk merchant, if you are a professor from Aberdeen hunting for manuscripts

PARIS VISTAS

that will prove your thesis concerning Pelagius, if you are an *apache*, if you are an English nursemaid,—you'll never be lonely in Paris. No matter how isolated or queer or misunderstood you were where you came from, in Paris you'll find inspiration, competition, companionship, opportunity and pals. The papers tell us every week that the birth rate is going down. But the population of Paris is increasing. So in peace, in war and in peace again, there was one constant quantity underpinning existence—Paris, the centre of the spider web. The spider that lures is liberty to work out one's ideas in one's own way in a friendly country. It is a wonder the men who make maps in France can draw lines latitudinally and longitudinally. What difference did it make then if we had only two hundred and fifty francs?

CHAPTER V

THE PENSION IN THE RUE MADAME

WE started our search for a temporary home at the Observatoire, and good fortune took our footsteps down the Rue d'Assas rather than down the Boulevard Saint-Michel. Had we turned to the right instead of to the left, we should probably have found a *pension* that satisfied our requirements on the Rue Gay-Lussac, the Rue Claude Bernard, the Rue Soufflot, or behind the Panthéon. But a short distance down the Rue d'Assas, we turned into the Rue Madame, which held two possibilities on our list. The first place advertised proved to be a private apartment, whose mistress was looking for boarders for one room who would not only pay her rent but her food and her old father's as well. We got out quickly, and kept our hopes up for the second place. It was a small private hotel just below the Rue de Vaugirard, with a modest sign: *Pension de Famille*.

A beaming young woman, who told us that she was Mademoiselle Guyénot, *propriétaire et directrice de la maison*, answered our first question in a way that won our hearts forever. "Do I mind a baby!" she exclaimed. "I love them. No trouble in the world.

PARIS VISTAS

Wish the *bon dieu* would allow me to have one myself. If any boarder complains about babies crying in my house, I ask them how they expect the world to keep on going. *Parfait!* Bring the little rabbit right along. Of course there is no charge. Is it I who will feed her? Think of it, then!" And Mademoiselle Guyénot opened wide her arms and lifted them Heavenward. Her eyes shone, and she laughed.

We engaged a room on the court, two flights up, for seventy francs a week *tout compris*, lodging, food, boots, wine. Lights would not amount to more than a franc a week. We could give what we wanted for attendance. The arrangement with Marie was perfect. She would stay at home and come for the days we wanted her. That meant only her noonday meal on our *pension* bill—one franc-fifty.

We got out of the Boulevard Diderot hotel none too soon. The charges were fully as much as at a first-class hotel (I have frequently since found this to be the case in trying to economize in travel) and made a serious dent in our nest-egg. When we reached the *pension* with our baby and baggage, we felt that it was only the square thing to acquaint the new friend who loved babies with our financial situation.

"Oh! la, la," cried Mademoiselle Guyénot, "you may pay me when you like!"

"You must understand," said my husband, "that we have just come out of Turkey and have very little

THE PENSION IN THE RUE MADAME

money. Of course, as soon as we get settled, things will be all right again."

Mademoiselle received us in the *bureau* of her pension with open arms and lightning French. I could not get it all, but we knew she was glad to see us. She turned around on her chair and faced us as we sat on an old stuffed sofa surrounded by our suitcases.

"You must not worry," she exclaimed, "you must not worry *du tout, du tout, du tout, du tout*. . . . If you don't pay me I'll keep the baby, *pauvre chou*."

Mademoiselle's voice went up the scale and down again, dying away only when she opened her mouth wider to laugh.

Mademoiselle ran the *pension* single-handed in those days. Now she is Madame and the mother of two little girls. Monsieur is a mechanical genius and has himself installed many conveniences. He can paper a room, rig up a table lamp at the head of a bed, carry in the coal, forage for provisions with a hand-cart and a cheerful *jusqu'au boutisme* that stops at nothing. He is also able to make a quick change in clothes and bobs up serenely within fifteen minutes after unloading the potatoes, quite ready to make you a cock-tail.

Mademoiselle handled her clients with cheerful firmness. She used to marshal the forces of her house with a strong and capable hand. You could not put one over on her then any more than you can now, as some

PARIS VISTAS

transients discovered to their confusion. The regulars knew better than to try. On the other hand if your case was good and your complaint justified, she defended you with energy. *Liberté, égalité, fraternité* were realities in the Rue Madame.

The clientele was French for the most part: elderly people who had got tired of keeping house. Folks from the provinces who had come to town to spend the winter after Monsieur retired from business. Young people, mostly men, some of them long haired who were studying at the Sorbonne or elsewhere. And a sprinkling of transients whose chief effect upon the regulars was allowing them to shift about until they had possession of the rooms they wanted to keep at a monthly rate. When we went to the pension we were the only Americans. We paid five francs a day for room and board like everybody else excepting the old lady who had come to the house years ago when the rate was four francs fifty. German Hausfraus may be marvels in management, but I defy any lady Boche to beat Mademoiselle's efficiency. She got all the work of kitchen and dining-room done, and well done too, by Victorine the tireless, Louis the juggler and François the obsequious. Guillaume and Yvonne, a working menage, looked after the rooms until they got a swell job at the Ritz Hotel, where tips would count. The other three were fixtures.

In spirit the Rue Madame *pension* has not changed.

THE PENSION IN THE RUE MADAME

The atmosphere to-day is as it was in nineteen hundred and nine. The table is good, plentiful, appetizing—and, oh, what a variety of meats and vegetables! The potatoes are never served in the same way twice in a week, and Madame Primel, as Mademoiselle is now called, cooks as many different *plats de jour* as her number in the street, which is forty-four. There the reader has my secret! But five francs a day no longer holds. In nineteen hundred and nineteen five francs will barely pay for a single meal. Not only has the price of food more than doubled, but the traveler is beginning to demand comforts that cost. We used to have buckets of coal brought up, and make a cheerful fire. We used to grope in the dark when we came home, strike a match, and look for our candle on the hall table. We used to have a lamp—the best light in the world—in our room. But now the *pension* in the Rue Madame has yielded to the demands of a discontented world. Steam heat, electric lights—these have had their part in making five francs a day disappear forever. The five franc *pension* exists only in the memory of Paris lovers, or in story books like mine.

At our table were Mrs. Reilly, a sprightly Irish woman called by the pensionnaires Madame Reely; Monsieur Mazon, a law student with an ascetic blond face and hair like a duckling; an elderly couple from Normandy who had adopted Madame Reely, swallowed her at one gulp of perfection, only to discover after-

PARIS VISTAS

wards that they did not understand her; a Polish doctor and his wife from Warsaw; and others. Madame Reely made a pretty speech the first night at dinner, proposing that our table volunteer to help us take care of the baby.

"To-morrow is the Fête Dieu," said she. "I'll go to the early mass so that I can come back and stay with the baby while you two go to the later mass. You will see the priests in their robes of ceremony, the Holy Relics, and a thousand children in the procession. It is too lovely,—all those little things with their baskets of flowers, throwing petals in the path of the priests. Who can tell," she went on in a whispered aside to her neighbor, "it may impress them. One never knows when new converts are to be added to the blessed Church!"

"And I shall look at the baby," said the Doctor from Warsaw. "Children are my specialty. That is why I am here, observing in the clinics of Paris, you see. I shall come to your room to-morrow after breakfast. Being an American mother, I suppose you give your baby orange juice?"

"Certainly I give her orange juice," said I; "it is good for her."

"*Au contraire! au contraire!*" cried the Doctor, waving his hands. The Doctor was always "au contraire" no matter what was said and who said it. Polish character.

THE PENSION IN THE RUE MADAME

In a corner was a tiny table for one. It was for the starboarder, a young Roumanian, who wore a purple tie held together by a large amethyst ring. Possibly he wore it because he believed in the ancient legend about amethysts being good to prevent intoxication. When we entered upon the scene he was still in high favor. His downfall came later and had to do with a wide-awake concierge and a luckless kiss at the front door.

The food we had was the kind we used to have in Paris when many visitors came here with no better excuse than to enjoy the *cuisine*. Mademoiselle gave us two meat dishes for each meal. If you did not like calves' liver, Louis would do a trick that landed a steaming plate of crisp fried eggs (fried in butter, you remember) before you. And that without being told. Behind the scenes was Victorine.

Victorine invited me into her kitchen to learn how to make *sauce piquante*.

"Are you married, Victorine?" I queried.

"My cookstove is my husband," she laughed; "his heart is good and warm and he never leaves me."

During meals Mademoiselle was to be found in the kitchen. She did the carving herself and tasted everything before it was passed through a window to Louis.

There was no felt covering under the table-cloth. The serving of the meal competed with piping, high-pitched, excited voices. Perhaps I ought n't to say excited, but the Frenchman in his most ordinary matter

PARIS VISTAS

of fact conversation sounds excited to the Anglo-Saxon. He asks you to pass the bread in the same tone you would use in announcing an event of moment. At each place was a glass knife-and-fork rest. In France, unless the first dish happens to be fish, you keep the same knife and fork. This is the custom in the best of homes. We are prodigal of cutlery where the French are prodigal of plates. The same knife and fork did n't matter, because the food was so good. Nor does it matter to-day, because now there is only one meat dish. Times have changed.

If fruit or pudding ran out, Mademoiselle opened a section of the wall, finding the key on a bunch that was suspended from her belt on a piece of faded black tape. From the cupboard she took tiny glasses filled with confiture or perhaps a paste made of mashed chestnuts and flour slightly sweetened. The glasses, to the touch, were cylindrical, but when you had broken the paper pasted across the top and had eaten half way down, the space was no wider than the fat part of your tea spoon. If your glass was a cylinder outside, on the inside it was an inverted cone.

The quantities of bread consumed in that house would be appalling to anybody but a Frenchman. A Turk can live on bread and olives. But a Frenchman can live on bread alone. If he had to choose between bread and wine he would forget the wine. When the basket was passed around, the *pensionnaires*, with a de-

THE PENSION IN THE RUE MADAME

lightful absence of self-consciousness, would cast their eye over it in order to select the biggest piece. There was always one person who would look around the room furtively, take the biggest piece on the plate, slip the second biggest piece into the lap under the serviette, and then, gazing far away in ostrich fashion, glide the bread into pocket or reticule. If the dessert happened to be fruit, an orange or an apple would follow the bread for private consumption later in the day. Perhaps these people came in for luncheon only and the bread and fruit was devoured at twilight at some little café where it is permitted to customers to bring their own supplies, if they buy a drink. This stretching of luncheon procured the evening meal. If necessity is the mother of invention, the students of Paris are necessity's grandmother.

Louis, the arch-juggler, was forced by public opinion to alternate day by day his point of departure when passing the steaming *plat du jour*. *Egalité*, you remember, is one-third of French philosophy. It would never do for the same end of the dining-room to enjoy for two days running the little privilege of having the first pick at the best piece of meat in the plate.

François helped in the dining-room. But he was everywhere else too. He was useful for Louis to swear at and to blame. He was bell-hop, scullery-boy, errand-man, who needed all of his amazing reserves of cheerfulness. I wondered when François slept. He

PARIS VISTAS

was on hand with his grin and his *oui, madame*, early and late. Once when we slid out of the house at five in the morning to go on an excursion, we found him in the lower hall surrounded by the boots of the house. Back of his ear was a piece of chalk used for marking the number of the room on the soles of the boots. He was polishing away, moving his arm back and forth with a diminutive imitation of the swing his legs had to accomplish when his brush-clad feet were polishing the waxed floors. As a concession to the early hour, he was whistling softly instead of singing. The whistling of François fascinated everyone because it came through a tongue folded funnel-wise and placed in the aperture where a front tooth was missing. And we would often find him up and about when we came home late at night. It was a pleasant surprise, when, after calling out your name, you made ready to walk back to the candlestick table, hands stretched out before you, to have François suddenly appear with a light. He would hold out over the table his little hand lamp with the flourish a Gascon alone can make. You picked out your candlestick by the number of your room cut in its shining surface. The number had an old-fashioned swing to its curve, suggesting that the solid bit of brass might have been dug up from the garden of some moss-grown hostelry after a passage of the Huns.

Mademoiselle Guyénot insisted that the flagged pave-

THE PENSION IN THE RUE MADAME

ment be washed every day. François used to fill with water a tin can in the bottom of which he had punched half a dozen holes. He swung it about the court until figure eight shaped sprinkle-tracks lay all over the twelve-by-twenty garden. Afterwards he would take a short-handled broom, bend himself over like a hair-pin, and sweep up the flag-stones. The dirt he accumulated was made into a neat newspaper package and set aside to wait until early to-morrow morning when it was put out on the street in the garbage-pail. François' thin high voice sang incessantly and sounded for all the world like the piping of a Kurdish shepherd above the timber line in the Taurus Mountains. In those days woe betide you if you put trash or garbage on a Paris street later than 8 A. M. It was as unseemly an act as shaking carpets out of your window after the regulation hour. Now, even if you are a late and leisurely bank clerk or fashionable milliner and you don't have to show up at work before 10 o'clock, you will see garbage-pails along curb-stones and likely as not get a dust shower furious enough to make you wish you had n't left your umbrella at home. The old days—will they come back?

When the band plays soft Eliza-crossing-the-ice music, my mind flies to several Home-Sweet-Homes. I think of Tarsus, Constantinople, Oxford and Princeton. But there is no twinge of homesickness. Paris and my present home there satisfy every want and longing.

PARIS VISTAS

Among the homes of the past, however, I think of others in Paris as well as of those of other places. I never forget the *pension* in the Rue Madame. Thankfully it is still a reality. During the past decade it has housed our mothers and sisters and cousins and friends. We have gone there to see them. And we go there to see our first warm friend in Paris and her husband and children. From time to time we have a meal in the old dining-room. We hope the *pension* will not disappear or will not be converted into too grand a hotel. For us it is a Paris landmark.

CHAPTER VI

LARES AND PENATES IN THE RUE SERVANDONI

WE spent the first anniversary of our wedding in Egypt. A week later we arrived in Paris. For prospective residents as well as for tourists, June is the best time of the year to reach Paris. You have good weather and long days, both essentials of successful home-hunting. It is an invariable rule in Paris to divide the year in quarters, beginning with the fifteenth of January, April, July and October. Whether you are looking for a modest *logement* on a three months' lease or a *grand appartement-confort moderne*—on a three years' lease, the dates of entry are the same. One rarely breaks in between terms. If you have passed one period, you must wait for the next *trimestre*. The person who is leaving the apartment you rent might be perfectly willing to accommodate you, but he has to wait to get into his new place. So when we went to the *pension*, we had before us the best home-hunting weeks of the year, with the expectation of being able to get settled somewhere on July 15th.

At the *pension*, our room faced on the court, and the *personnel*, from Mademoiselle Guyénot down to Victorine and François, assured us that we need not feel bound to stay at home on the days Marie could not

PARIS VISTAS

come to us. Marie for years had been sewing four different days of the week for old *patrons*, and we did not feel certain enough of our own plans and purse to accept the responsibility of her giving up a sure thing.

“Go out all you want to,” urged our friends. “You only have to think about meal times for the baby. Someone is always in the court sewing or sorting the laundry or preparing vegetables. Your window is open. We cannot fail to hear the baby.”

But a chorus of *bien sûr* and *parfaitement* and *soyez tranquille* did not reassure what was as new born as Christine herself—the maternal instinct. A letter from Herbert’s father solved the problem. He inclosed the money for a baby carriage. We carried Scruppie down the Boulevard Raspail to the little square in front of the Bon Marché. I kept her on a bench while Herbert went in to follow my directions as well as he could. In a few minutes he came out and said he would rather take care of the baby. It was the first time I had seen him stumped. So I had the joy I had hoped would be mine all along but of which I did not want to deprive my husband, seeing that we could not share it. The reader may ask why we did n’t take the baby inside. But it will not be a young mother who puts that question! With one’s firstborn, one sees contagion stalking in every place where crowds gather indoors.¹

¹ The critic would have me insert a modification here. Why con-



The Rue de Vaugirard by the Luxembourg

LARES AND PENATES IN THE RUE SERVANDONI

We did not intend to consider a home that was not within baby-carriage distance of the Rue Madame. In fact, after a few days in the Luxembourg Quarter, we were determined to live as near the Garden as possible. There we were within walking distance of the Bibliothèque Nationale and the Sorbonne and the Ecole Libre des Sciences Politiques. Marie, whom the fact that I was my Mother's daughter did not blind to the extent of the Gibbons family resources, urged the Bois de Vincennes. But we would not hear of it.

It is strange how rich and poor rub elbows with each other in their homes. Paris is no different from American cities in this respect. The kind of an apartment we *wanted* would cost more than our total income, as rents around the Luxembourg for places equipped with electric lights and bathtubs and central heating seemed to be as expensive as around the Etoile. Then in the same street—sometimes next door—you had the other extreme. Our finances pointed to a *logement* in a workingmen's tenement. Care for Scrappie's health made our hearts sink every time we were shown a place that seemed within our means.

Of course there were reasonable places: for many others who demanded cleanliness had no more money
fine the fear of the young mother to *indoors*? The critic insists that I used to be afraid of taking Scrappie into any sort of a crowd, and that my supersensitive ear translated the bark of every kiddie with a cold into whooping cough, while I saw measles in mosquito bites on children's faces.

PARIS VISTAS

than we. But the Latin and Montparnasse Quarters are the Mecca of slim-pursed foreigners. People foolish enough to study or sing or paint are almost invariably poor. Perhaps that is the reason! We had lots of exercise, and came to know every street between the Luxembourg and the Seine. Our good fortune arrived unexpectedly as good fortune always arrives to those who will not be side-tracked.

Between the Rue Vaugirard and Saint-Sulpice are three tiny streets, the houses on the opposite sides of which almost rub cornices. The Rue Férou is opposite the Musée de Luxembourg. On the Rue de Vaugirard is the home of Massenet. We used to get a glimpse of him occasionally on his *terrasse*—a sort of roof-garden with a vine-covered lattice on top of the low Rue Férou wing of his house. The other two streets paralleling the Rue Férou from the Palais du Luxembourg to the Eglise Saint-Sulpice are the Rue Servandoni and the Rue Garancière.

On the morning of the Fourth of July we had been diving in and out the side streets of the Rue Bonaparte and the Boulevard Saint-Germain. At Scrappie's meal time, we came to a bench in the Square in front of Saint-Sulpice. It was n't a bit like a holiday. It was sultry and looked like rain. We were wondering whether we had better not hurry back to the *pension* for fear of getting the baby wet. Just then people

began to stop and look up. A huge balloon was above us. And it carried the American flag.

"You can't beat it," said my husband. "And we are Americans. Ergo, you can't beat us!"

Did the sight of the flag do the trick? Anyway, it was our Japanese "last quarter of an hour." We had come down through the Rue Férou. We went back for the twentieth time in twenty days through the Rue Servandoni. Grey houses, topped with beehive chimneys, leaned amicably against each other and broke the sky line as well as the municipal *réglement* (made long after they were) concerning the distance between houses on opposite sides of streets. Our hearts nearly stopped beating when we reached Number 21. There was the magic sign (it had not been there yesterday): *Appartement à Louer*. We stopped short in the middle of the street. The sidewalks are not wide enough to walk on, much less wheel a baby-carriage along. The grocer on the ground floor saw us take the bait. Out he came. Did Monsieur and Madame care to see the *appartement*? If so, he was concierge as well as grocer. He would show us the place. We drew the new baby-carriage into the dark vestibule and went up one easy flight of oak balustraded stairs. The grocer pulled a red-braided bell rope.

A man in shirt-sleeves opened the door. We stepped into a tiny dining-room where the gas was lit although

PARIS VISTAS

it was noon. The wall-paper was yellow, and had sprawling brown figures like beetles. A dark passage led into an immense room with a generous fireplace. Two windows opened on the Rue Servandoni. It was a paper-hanger's shop with ladders, brushes, buckets, rolls and rolls of paper and barrels of flour-paste around. But the fellow in shirt-sleeves assured us that when his fittings were out, we would realize what a handsome room it was. "The dining-room is dark," he admitted, "but you can't match this room for light and size in any two-room apartment in the Quarter. I know them all. I am leaving because I have found a ground floor shop. I'll put new paper on here very cheap."

The *locataire* assumed that we would take it. So did the grocer-concierge. Without our asking, Monsieur Sempé told us that the rent would be one hundred and fifty francs a quarter. We did not have to make a troublesome lease, just a little agreement involving three months' notification on either side.

"Don't forget," said Sempé, "that this old house sits between two modern apartment buildings. The walls are warm. Your neighbors have steam heat."

"True," confirmed the paper-hanger. But he did not want us to think that we could be altogether vicariously heated. "Possibly you may not have noticed," he added, "the fireplace in the dining-room. It heats

LARES AND PENATES IN THE RUE SERVANDONI

almost as well as this one. I'll sell you my grates. *Boulets* make the best fire."

The thrill of admiration I had for my husband's magnificent courage when he signed the paper, and paid out fifty of his last hundred francs "on account" is with me still.

"We are sure to be able to pay our rent," said he, as we went back to the *pension*. "We could n't expect to get anything for less than ten dollars a month. The first installment of the fellowship money will come next week, and before then I shall certainly get something out of the *Herald*. It will have to be enough to buy our furniture."

It never rains but it pours. At the *pension* we found a letter from Mr. James Gordon Bennett, asking Herbert to call that afternoon at three o'clock at 104 Avenue des Champs-Élysées. It was in a blue envelope with a little owl embossed on the flap, and was signed "J. G. BENNETT" in blue pencil almost the color of the paper. How often we were to see this envelope and this signature, and what luck it was going to bring us! We thought the occasion demanded a celebration. I did Scrappie and myself up in our best, and we set forth for the Champs-Élysées in an open *fiacre*—our first ride since we came from the Boulevard Diderot to the Rue Madame. We waited in the carriage while Herbert went in to collect his money for the Adana massacre stories.

PARIS VISTAS

I watched the door of the big apartment house anxiously. Our furniture and the rest of the rent for the apartment depended upon the success of the visit. Half an hour later Herbert's face told me that all was well. He had sent in a bill of four hundred dollars, and fifty dollars expenses. Mr. Bennett, he told me, began by scolding him for not making it in francs, and then gave him a check for twenty-five hundred francs, which more than covered what Herbert asked for. The Commodore then offered Herbert a position at five hundred francs a week, and was surprised when it was declined. He seemed much amused when Herbert explained that he had come to Paris to study. "But you will go on special trips in an emergency," said Mr. Bennett. It is enough to say that the "emergencies" occurred often enough to tide over many a financial difficulty during years that followed.

Provided with funds after passing by the bank, we took Christine to Rumpelmayer's to tea, and then drove back the Rue Servandoni to pay the rest of our rent. When Monsieur Sempé gave us the *quittance*, he admonished us that we must put enough furniture in the apartment to cover six months' rent, that is to say, we must be prepared to spend at least sixty dollars to set up our Lares and Penates. Bubbling over with good will, Monsieur Sempé and Madame Sempé (who appeared on the scene the moment it was a question of a receipt for our money) gave us splendid advice about

furniture-buying. They urged us to go to the Rue de Rennes to some good-sized place where we would see second-hand furniture on the side-walk, and not to a small *brocanteur* or dealer in antiques.

The amount ticked up on the fiacre's taximetre was larger than we had dreamed we should ever spend gadding about Paris. A few hours before it would have worried us. We knew this could not keep up—in spite of the crisp hundred franc notes. Wealth brings a strange sense of prudence. We drove back to the *pension*, dismissed our *cocher*, and pushed the baby-carriage around to the Rue de Rennes.

MOBILIERS COMPLETS PAR MILLIERS. "Household furniture sets by the thousand." That sign read promisingly. We entered, and found a salesman—excuse me, the proprietor and salesman and cashier—who took in my clothes and hat, and then assured us that he did not mind the baby crying and could fit us up in anything from Louis Quatorze to the First Empire, real or (this as a feeler) imitation. *Salle à manger* from eight hundred francs to four thousand; *chambre à coucher* from four hundred francs to two thousand six hundred; *salon* from one thousand francs to six thousand; splendid *garnitures* (which means clocks and candlesticks or vases) of all epochs for our *cheminées*; hatracks for the hall; kitchen and servants' furniture—all, everything, anything we needed.

PARIS VISTAS

I knew what was in Herbert's reproachful look. He always did ungraciously blame my mother for the fact that he had so frequently to counteract my trousseau by embarrassed words. Mostly I let him stumble along. But as this was his day and as I had n't taken off the pretty things worn in honor of the visit to the Champs-Elysées, which was a break on my part, I thought it was up to me to let the furniture man see how things stood.

"We have a little apartment," I said, "bedroom and living-room combined, a very small dining-room and a kitchen. I expect to buy the baby's crib and mattress aside, but the rest must come out of five hundred francs—I mean all of it. What can you give us for that?"

I often think the French are essentially poor salesmen. They do not know how to show their goods and they are too indifferent or too anxious. But the blessed virtue of chivalry! The blessed sense of proportion! The blessed instinct of moderation! Our furniture man rose to the occasion with a grace that made me want to hug him. He kept his smile and bow and changed with perfect ease from Louis and Napoleons to pitchpine. It would require figuring. But it could be done. Yes, of course it could be done. Down into the cellar he took us, and in half an hour he had arranged to give us all we needed for Francs 532.70. I remember those figures. And he agreed to

LARES AND PENATES IN THE RUE SERVANDONI

take the whole lot back at half-price at the end of a year!

The furniture man bore a striking resemblance to some one I knew. I watched him, and tried to place him, as he made out our bill in the office—seven square feet of glassed-in suffocation surrounded by *armoires* and buffets. Dust clung to pages and blotters and yellowing files; no air ever came in here to blow it away. Where had I seen the double of our friend? Full forehead, closely-trimmed, pointed beard, soft black tie—and the eyes. Where *had* I seen him before? Writing with flourishes in purple ink, slightly bending over the high desk, he certainly fitted into some memory picture. Then it came to me! His pen ought to be a quill. It was William Shakespeare..

“Will-*yum* Shakespeare!” I cried.

My husband did not think I was crazy. For he was looking at the furniture man when I made my involuntary exclamation.

“What does Madame say? Is she not content?” asked William Shakespeare. Herbert’s hand shot out behind his back and grasped mine. “Shades of Stratford-on-Avon,” he murmured. We had passed a honeymoon day there just a year ago.

It was hard to wait until July 15, and then two days longer for the necessary cleaning by a *femme de ménage* hired for us by the Sempés. July 17th was the magical day of our first housekeeping. Never before had we

PARIS VISTAS

been together in a place where everything was ours. Tables and chairs and beds and mattresses, and even the piano rented at ten francs a month, arrived at Twenty-One on hand-carts drawn by men who pulled only a little harder against the greasy harness that bound them to their job than did the dogs under the carts.

Turkish women say that if you must move, abandon the furniture and dishes; they can be had anywhere. But take with you the rugs and brass that you love, and you have your home. During the previous winter in Tarsus, we managed to buy several good rugs, a cradle-shawl, some candlesticks and Damascus beaten-brass trays out of our eight-hundred dollar salary. Don't ask me now how we did it. In retrospect it is a mystery. But we had these things in two big boxes. They were as butter is to bread with our pitch-pine. No, I'm not going to belittle that pitch-pine. Years of usage had modified its yellowness, and it took to our rubbing with a marvelous furniture polish. The floors could have been better. The wood was hard, however, and we got some sort of a wax shine on them. The Shakespeare furniture plus rugs and brasses—and candle light—made a home than which we have never since had better. Never mind if the dining-room was dark. Never mind if we had to sleep in our study, and study in our bedroom. Never mind if Scrappie's nursery was the *salon, cabinet de travail* and *chambre à*

LARES AND PENATES IN THE RUE SERVANDONI

coucher combined. Never mind if we were compelled to take our baths at the foot of our bed in a tin basin. It was Paris, our dream city.

We were fully installed by six o'clock. The *femme de ménage* volunteered to stay with Christine while we went out for supper. Before finding a restaurant, we climbed the north tower of Saint-Sulpice. Between us and the mass of verdure that marked the Jardin du Luxembourg was our home. Up there near heaven, with the city at our feet, we danced the Merry Widow Waltz, for sheer joy that we had a home of our own in Paris.

CHAPTER VII

GOLD IN THE CHIMNEY

HOW can two young people, with a baby and three hundred dollars in cash, able to count upon a one-year fellowship yielding six hundred dollars, live a year in Paris? The answer to that question is that it cannot be done. But we were not in the position to answer it that way. We were in Paris, and we had the baby. Pride and ambition are factors that refuse to be overruled by the remorseless logic of figures. If you put a proposition down on paper, you can prove that almost anything you want to do is impossible. Successful undertakings are never the result of logical thinking. Herbert and I would not have had a wedding at all if we had thought the matter out and had considered the financial side of life.

Herbert was keeping, however, some prejudices and some prudent reserves, remembering his father's caution that life has a financial basis. Sitting there on the packing-case we had picked out for a coal-box in our study-bedroom, he hauled out an account-book and was fussing over a missing franc. Our first year was one of constant change of scene, and we had not "kept house." Now, declared my husband, was the time to

GOLD IN THE CHIMNEY

turn over a new leaf. If we knew where and how our money went, financing the proposition would be easier. With tears in my eyes and biting a pencil with trembling lips, I rebelled. I could not get interested in that missing franc.

“I want you to realize now, once for all, that I’m not going to keep this old cash account. I don’t believe in worrying about money. I’m not going to worry about money and neither are you. There are only three financial questions: (1) how much money is there? (2) how long is it going to last? (3) what are we going to do when it’s all gone? Two follows one, and three follows two—one, two, three—just like that!”

I was laughing now, and raised three fingers successively under my boss’s nose.

“As long as we are in one, we are not in two; and when we are in two, we have not reached three. Let us wait for three until we are in three, or at least until we know we are about to leave two.”

After paying a quarter’s rent, the bill for the furniture and cleaning up sundry little expenses, we had left fifteen hundred francs of the Gordon Bennett capital. A thousand francs was deposited with Morgan, Harjes and Company. The other five hundred, in twenty-franc gold-pieces, the bank gave us in a shiny little pink pasteboard box. Our chimney had a big hole in the plaster. The wall paper was torn but in-

PARIS VISTAS

tact. An ideal hiding-place. I put the box in the hole and smoothed down the paper.

"This hole is our bank," I announced. "We shall keep no account, and you and I will take the gold boys when we need them."

Herbert saw a great light. From that moment to this day we have been free from a useless drudgery and have been able to conserve our energy for our work. Herbert said, "Agreed! And when the pile gets low, I'll be like the little boy the old man saw digging."

"What was the little boy digging for?" I chuckled.

"Ground-hogs," answered my husband. "An old man came along and told him he would never catch a gopher like that, for they could dig quicker than folks. 'Can't get him?' said the boy. 'Got to get him, the family's out of meat.'"

Now that the financial credo of the home-makers in the Rue Servandoni is set forth, I shall not have to talk any more about how we got our money and how much there was of it. But I had to take my readers into my confidence, for I did not want them to labor under the misapprehension that persisted among our neighbors of the Rue Servandoni throughout our year there. They took it for granted that *les petits américains* were living at Twenty-One because that sort of fun appealed to us. We were just queer. Of course we had plenty of money, and could have lived at Nineteen or Twenty-Three if we had wanted to! The Parisian, the

GOLD IN THE CHIMNEY

Frenchman, the European, of whatever social class, believes that America is El Dorado and that every American is able to draw at will from inexhaustible transatlantic gold-mines. During the war the Red Cross, the Y.M.C.A., and the officers and men of the A.E.F. confirmed and strengthened this traditional belief. I do not blame my compatriots for what is a universal attitude among us towards money. On the contrary, my long years of residence abroad have made me feel that we get more out of life by looking upon money as our servant than Europeans do, who look upon it as their master.

The first thing—the practical and imperative thing—when you set up a home in Paris is to make friends with the concierge. Without his approval and co-operation, your money, your position, your brains will not help you in making living conditions easy. The concierge stands between you and servants, tradespeople, visitors. You are at his mercy. Traveling in Russia, they used to say to us: lose your pocket-book or your head, but hold on to your passport. In Paris, dismiss your prize servant or fall out with your best friend, but hold on to the good-will of the concierge.

Our first skirmish with the Sempés was an easy victory. We could not keep the baby-carriage in our apartment, even if we had been willing to haul it up and down a flight of stairs. Boldly we announced that we wanted to leave it in the lower hall. "Of course,"

PARIS VISTAS

agreed Monsieur Sempé. "I was just going to suggest that and to tell you that in my shop I carry everything, fruits and vegetables as well as dry-groceries."

We took the hint, and seldom went farther afield to do our marketing. Madame Sempé was the first to call us *les petits américains*. She was capable and kindly, and our friendship became firmly rooted when she discovered that we intended to patronize her shop. The Sempé commodities were good. This was lucky in more ways than one. For the mice knew it too, and never came upstairs to bother us.

Sempé himself was a genial soul, partly because he always kept a bottle uncorked. Hard work and temperament, he explained, made him require a stimulant. He took just enough, you understand, to affect his disposition pleasantly. If you had a little complaint to make or a favor to ask, much as you deplored his thirst, you found yourself casting an eye over the man to make sure of his mood before you spoke. If you caught him when the bottle was not too full or too empty, he could fix a lock or put a new mantle on the dining-room gas-jet most graciously.

Our friendship became undying when Monsieur found out that we were the solution of his financial pinches. He came up one night, and, hooking his thumbs in his purple suspenders, asked for a loan of "*shong shanquante francs shusqua sheudi*." *Jeudi* never came. To Sempé's intense relief, we agreed to

GOLD IN THE CHIMNEY

take out the debt in groceries. This was the beginning of a sort of gentlemen's agreement. A paper, thumb-tacked to a shelf in the shop, kept the record of our transactions. When I came to make purchases in the morning or when Herbert dropped in of an evening to buy a supplement to our dinner for unexpected guests or our own good appetites, we could see at a glance whether to pay cash for what we bought or whether we should do a sum in subtraction. It was generally subtraction, and Sempé, wagging his head, would say, "This goes well—soon I shall be square with you." But the satisfaction of being square with the world was never Sempé's for long. The arrival of a barrel of wine or a load of potatoes would send him running up the stairs for the money to help finance his business. In spite of our slender resources we did not feel this to be a hardship. Not infrequently it was an advantage. First of all things one has to eat. We always began to get our money back immediately in the necessities of life. Instead of having our money out in an uncertain loan we took the attitude that our board was paid for two or three weeks in advance.

In another connection, we had the benefit of the advantageous side of the Golden Rule.

In our study of Turkish history we had constant use of Von Hammer's *Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman*. This meant much transcribing by long-hand at the Bibliothèque Nationale where the typewriter could not

PARIS VISTAS

be used. If only we had Von Hammer at home! But it was a rare book—eighteen volumes and an atlas—far beyond our means. One day we were browsing at Welter's, the most wonderful bookshop in Paris, on the Rue Bernard-Palissy off the Rue de Rennes near Saint-Germain-des-Près. Monsieur Welter, who took pains to become acquainted with and discover the specialty of every passing *client*, told us that he had a set of Von Hammer, recently purchased at a London auction. He sent a boy to bring it out. Oh how tempting it looked, beautifully bound in calf! We handled it fondly, but turned regretfully away when he said that the price was two hundred francs.

“Do you not want it?” asked Monsieur Welter, astonished. “It is indispensable for your work and you do not get a chance often to purchase a set of Von Hammer. Never will you find it cheaper than this.”

“I do want it, and it is n't the price. I'll come back later, hoping you will not have sold it.”

We each had a volume in our hands. I poked my nose between the pages of mine to sniff the delightful odor to be found only in old books. Monsieur looked at us, smiled, and said, “You mean that you have n't the money. You will have it some day. No hurry. Give me your address and the books will be sent around this afternoon.”

The delightful relationship thus began lasted until August, 1914, when Welter (who never became natur-

GOLD IN THE CHIMNEY

alized although his sons were in the French army) had to flee to escape internment. His business was sequestered. German though he was, we never cease to mourn the only expert bookman in Paris. We have tried a dozen since, some of them charming men, but none with the slightest idea of how to sell books. Welter had book-buyers all over the world. Whenever he came across rare books in your line, he mailed them to you with the bill. If you did not want them, you sent them back. Every three months, a statement of the quarter's purchases came, and you sent a check when you had the money. One's attention was brought to many valuable sources, and one was able to buy books of immense value, the possibility of whose acquisition one had never dreamed of.

Monsieur Welter told me years later, when I recalled the Von Hammer incident, that he did n't lose five hundred francs a year in bad bills. "The dealer in old books who does not give all the credit the buyers need is crazy," he said. "What man interested in the things I deal in would think of cheating me? Your husband wanted Von Hammer. I saw that. Any man who wanted Von Hammer would pay for it in time."

We had never had a French book-seller offer us credit, much less send books on approval when we had not ordered them.

When I think of the hundreds and hundreds of books

PARIS VISTAS

we bought from Welter, I realize one of the secrets of the inferiority of the French to the Germans in business. The French cannot bring themselves to give credit: they have an innate fear of being cheated, and understand commercial transactions only in terms of cash. For years I have made a point of watching French shopkeepers. Invariably they arrange that the money is in their hands before they give you your package.

The other night I went to the Champs-Élysées theatre to see a show given by American soldiers of the 88th Division. One act opens with Hiram Scarum bringing a military trunk into his hotel. Staggering under the weight, Hiram hobbles across the stage, plants his trunk on the floor, and sits down on it to mop his brow. He spies a paper across the room, and investigates to find it is the tag belonging to the trunk. Pulling himself together, Hiram spits on his hands, wearily shoulders the burden again, and carries it across the room where he ties the tag to the handle of the trunk. Then he picks up the trunk and carries it back where he had first put it down. Hiram is like French commerce. The Frenchman, with a sense of self-congratulation on his own industry, carries the trunk to the tag. He is surprised to discover that while he has been carrying the trunk to the tag, his German competitor has carried a great many tags and has tied them to a great many trunks. We hear much in these days about the war after the war. We are told by Paris newspapers how

GOLD IN THE CHIMNEY

the French business men are going to capture trade from Germany. How can the French win in the commercial game? I'm sure I don't know. One is concerned lest the inability to take the large view end in disappointment and disaster for the Frenchmen we love. We are just as sure that our French friends will continue to carry the trunk to the tag as we are that they ought to get a hustle on, give up their old ways, and win the game.

CHAPTER VIII

AT THE BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE

THERE are many libraries in Paris. Some of them are so famous that I ought to hesitate to call the Bibliothèque Nationale simply "the library." But I do call it that, not because it is the largest in the world (a fact that calls forth instinctively admiration and respect from Americans), but because we love the Bibliothèque from long and habitual association. It is a part of our life like our home.

In the beginning of the fellowship year, Herbert came to realize that books could do more for him than lecturers. A magnetic and enthusiastic lecturer communicates his inspiration: but most professors are decidedly non-conductors. And then, with rare exceptions, university professors are not sources themselves. What they do is to stand between you and the sources. When they have something original and suggestive to say, why not let them speak to you from the covers of a book? If a book does not hold you, you can throw it aside and take up another: the lecturer has you fast for an hour, and you often suffer because his baby did not sleep well the night before. But when the professor speaks from the printed page, he has had a chance to

AT THE BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE

eliminate in his final revision whatever effects of insomnia there may have been in the first draft. If he has n't done so, you do not need to read him.

When students become full fledged post-graduates, they are at the parting of the ways. Either they go directly to the sources, form independent judgments, and produce original work as a result of constructive thinking, or they continue to remain in intellectual dependence upon their teachers. The latter alternative is the more pleasant course. It requires less effort, and does not make one restless and unhappy. The pleasant days of taking in are prolonged and the agonizing days of giving out are postponed. But if a youngster is face to face with books all day long every day, he either stops studying or commences to produce for himself. Then, too, he is constantly under the salutary influence of being confronted with his own appalling ignorance. Whatever effort he makes, the volumes he summons from the shelves to his desk keep reminding him that others have given years to what he hopes to compass in days. The Bibliothèque teaches two lessons, and teaches them with every tick of the clock from nine a. m. to four p. m.—humility and industry.

There was, of course, much to be learned at the Sorbonne. But my husband had already passed through three years of post-graduate work, and was tired of chasing around from one lecture to another. There were hours between courses that could not be utilized,

PARIS VISTAS

and the habit of loafing is the easiest formed in the world. It was because we were jealous of every hour in the Golden Year that Herbert and I first turned from the Sorbonne to the Bibliothèque. Later we came to realize that the only thing in common between Salles de Conférences of the Sorbonne and the Salle de Lecture of the Bibliothèque was the lack of fresh air—the universal and unavoidable torture of indoors everywhere in France.

Nine to four, five days in the week, Herbert lived in the Bibliothèque, and I went there mornings—when Scruppie was not on my conscience! One did not have to go out to lunch, as the fare of the *buvette* was quite acceptable to those interested in books and manuscripts. The old law of the time of Louis XIV holds good in this day. No light but that of heaven has ever been introduced into the Bibliothèque. After gas was discovered, the law was not changed. Even when electricity came, presenting an infinitesimal risk of fire, the Government refused to have the vast building wired. The prohibition of lights extends, of course, to smoking. You cannot strike a match in the sacred precincts. So, after lunch we used to go across the street and sit for half an hour in the Square Louvois.

Do you know the Square Louvois? I'll wager you do not. For when one passes afoot up the Rue Richelieu, he is generally in a hurry to get to the Bourse or the Grands Boulevards. If you go on the Clichy-



Château de la Reine Blanche: Rue des Gobelins

AT THE BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE

Odéon bus, you whizz by one of the most delightful little green spots in the city of green spots without noticing it. The Square Louvois has on the side opposite the Bibliothèque Nationale a good-sized hotel, which was named after the square. The boundary streets on the north and south are lined with modest restaurants and coffee bars, within the purse of *petits commis* and *midinettes*. In Europe there is not the hurry over the mid-day meal that seems universal in America. Dyspepsia is unknown. The humblest employee or laborer has from one hour and a half to two hours off at noon. There is competition for benches and chairs in the Square Louvois between twelve-thirty and two. Mothers who are their own nursemaids have to resist the temporary encroachment of the Quarter's business world. We from the Bibliothèque make an additional demand. We must have our smoke and fresh air. And we never tire of the noble monument to the rivers of France that is the fountain in the center of the Square.

"Funny, is n't it," said I, "how things turn out to be different from what you expected—your thesis for instance. Gallicanism is simply a closed door for the present."

"I tackled too big a subject," admitted Herbert.

We were smoking in the Square after lunching in the buffet of the Bibliothèque Nationale with the Scholar from Oxford.

PARIS VISTAS

"I'll wager," said Herbert, "that those greasy fellows in the *salle de travail* discovered long ago what I have just learned. You start with a general subject and a century. You narrow down until you have a phase and a decade. If I ever do Gallicanism, it'll be limited to the influence of the conversion of Henry of Navarre upon the movement. I could work till my hair was grey developing that. But I should be narrow-minded and dry as bones when I finished."

"Ah! You must not quarrel with the greasy fellows," put in the Scholar from Oxford. "That is research. They are not narrow: they are specialists." The Scholar is a canny Scotchman who gives his r's their full value, and then some.

Allowing the letter r to be heard for sure is another point of contact and sympathy between Scott and Frank. Just as the cooler Teutonic temperament seeks the sun, and has been seeking the sun right down through history, in trying to reach the Mediterranean, the cooler Scotch temperament seeks the sun where it is nearest to be found—in France. It is the attraction of opposites.

"You Americans," said the Scholar, "with your Rocky Mountains and your Niagaras naturally approach research from the general to the particular. It is far easier for men born in an older civilization to begin with a specialist's point of view."

"I know, I know," said Herbert, "I had to work that

AT THE BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE

out and I had to change my whole subject, too. I wobbled from Gallicanism to Ottoman history.”

“That’s no sin,” declared Alick. “A man engrossed in research is human. Going to Turkey was bound to influence your thinking. The traditions of France still hold you, but the memory of Turkey is strong enough to change the trend of your work. Go on with your origins of the Ottoman Empire and be thankful you have discovered a line off the beaten track.”

“Yes,” I cried, “and for goodness’ sake stick to constructive ideas. You research-fiends waste too much time trying to prove that the other fellow is wrong. Instead of remaining scientists you get to be quibblers. But I must leave you now. I cannot put my whole day into the Bibliothèque. I have to mix up tea-kettles and dusting with pamphlets and cards for the file.”

As Herbert and the Scholar from Oxford passed by the solemn guard at the door of the *salle de travail*, I lingered in the lobby musing about what we had been saying. I leaned for a minute against the pedestal of the Sèvres vase and watched Herbert and Alick take their places side by side at the old inked desks. I looked through the great polished plate glass that makes the *salle de travail* and the *travailleurs* seem like a picture in its frame. I knew from experience that once the two men had got their noses in their books they would not look up. There was no use in waiting for a smile.

PARIS VISTAS

“Boc ou demi?” asked the waiter.

Herbert and I and the Scholar from Oxford were lunching together in the Quarter. The Bibliothèque was closed for cleaning, so it was an off day.

Herbert and the Scholar asked for *bocs*, and I thinking to be modest chose a *demi*. My eyes nearly dropped out of my head when the men got glasses of beer and before me stood a formidable mug that held a pint. Emilie told me afterwards that if I wanted that much beer again the waiter would understand better if I ordered “*un sérieux*.”

The Scholar from Oxford had the habit of living in our apartment when he came to Paris. Memories of hospitality on the part of himself and his wife when we were on our honeymoon in Oxford were fresh, and when the time came for the Scholar's next look at manuscripts in the Bibliothèque Nationale, there was no question in our mind—nor in his, for that matter—as to where he should stay. We set up a folding-bed in the dining-room and tucked him in. No matter if we did not come back to the Rue Servandoni at meal time. If we did not want to bother getting up a meal, we put the apartment key into our pocket and sallied forth on what we called a baby-carriage promenade. There was always some little place where we could eat when we got hungry. Once we dined in a *crémérie chaude* for no better reason than the attraction of a diverting sign on the window—*Five o'clock à toute heure*.

AT THE BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE

To-day we had decided against Brogart's, our usual haunt, on the rue de Rivoli. At Brogart's you could lunch for Fr. 1.25 with the *plat du jour* and a satisfying range of choice in the fixings that went with it. It was 1.20 if you invested in tickets. Then you were given a napkin-ring to mark your serviette, and a numbered hole in the open-face cupboard screwed to the wall beside the high desk where Madame sat while she raked in the money and kept a sharp eye on her clients. There was a division of opinion between Mother and me during a flying visit she made us just before Christmas. We took her to Brogart's. She saw a fellow, some kind of a wop with a greasy face and long hair, pick his teeth with a fork. She never went back to Brogart's again. They don't do that in Philadelphia. At least if they do, Mother had never happened to see them. Herbert and Alick and I were less difficult to please. To-day it was only because we had wandered far afield that Brogart's did not see us. We had found a table that pleased us in a restaurant that bore the sign "Au rendez-vous des cochers." We were not looking for a novel experience. We were not tourists, you understand. It was on account of the budget.

Everybody knows that the cochers of Paris are no fools. They can drive a horse, but they can drive a bargain too and afterwards settle down on their high box and fling you shrewd observations about art or politics or what not. But there is more to it than that.

PARIS VISTAS

When you have lived a while in the Latin quarter you know who are the expert judges of cooking. In the old days, the meal you could buy in a tiny dark *rendez-vous des cochers* was as tasty as anything you could enjoy on a Grand Boulevard at ten times the price. Minor details like a table-cloth and clean forks and knives with each new plate are not missed when the *gigot* is done to a turn and the *sauce piquante* is just right. The *rendez-vous des cochers* restaurant has one distinct advantage over the swell place on the Boulevards. If you are in a hurry to go to the Concert Rouge and have had no dinner, you can stop for a second at a cab driver's restaurant while you buy a portion of *frites*. The luscious golden potatoes, sprinkled with salt, are wrapped in a paper, and you consume them as you walk up the Rue de Tournon. They don't mind babies there. Scrapie was asleep in her carriage. Monsier le Patron came out and rolled the carriage ever so gently under the awning beside the glass screen by the restaurant door. He beamed at us benevolently, then stepped over to explain that he was a *père de famille* and that *courants d'air* inflame babies' eyes.

The Scholar from Oxford is a Scotchman with the Scotch affection for France. Before the war he came to France and Italy every year to make enigmatical notes in his own handwriting reduced to cramped proportions. The notes were placed within columns that were inked out years ago when he began the monu-

AT THE BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE

mental work. The columns are drawn across the short dimension of the paper, so that you have to turn the thing sidewise to read it.

There is a variety of ink. The row of notes at the top is all in the same color. Three quarters of an inch in black mark the first year's hours spent in the Bibliothèque. Run your eye down a space the width of your thumb and the ink changes. Count how many ink colors you see, and you'll know how many times the Scholar from Oxford has come abroad on his grant. He carries his papers in a shiny black oil cloth *serviette*. He was modestly imperturbable when with my usual vehemence I gave him a good scolding because he confessed he had no copy of the precious sheets.

"So worked the old monks in the days of the Reformation," said I, "when a fellow spent his life time laboriously copying the Bible with his own hand."

"Ah," mused the Scotchman with his eyes far away, "they were great scholars, the monks."

"But it was slow," I protested, "often a man did not live long enough to illuminate the device at the end of his chapter. Only a great enthusiasm carried his successors to the end."

"Without them, think what we should have lost!"

"But they worked like that, you stubborn one, because there were no typewriters or secretaries. You cannot persuade me, Alick, that there is any extra virtue in using their methods today. You should adopt mod-

PARIS VISTAS

ern methods so that you could accomplish more. You don't seem to realize that thirty years from now the world will call you what you are, Britain's greatest Latin scholar."

Unconvinced that mediaeval methods belong to mediaeval times, the Scholar from Oxford lit another cigarette. He still persists in carrying around Europe, in spite of wars, his priceless record of years of labor. But he has since become Professor of Humanity at a great University. The chair that he holds dates back to the day of the methods to which he remains faithful.

Home again, I was making the coffee. But I was not out of the conversation. Our kitchenette was six feet from the dining-room table. Herbert started to light his cigar.

"Ah, my lad," said the Scholar from Oxford, staying Herbert's hand, "you haven't asked the lady's permission!"

"I guess I can smoke in my dining-room," answered Herbert.

"You have to ask my permission then," laughed Alick, "before you smoke in my bedroom."

Thank heaven, the Bibliothèque Nationale does not make my husband and my guest stupid. If I could not look forward to jolly evenings, I should make war upon research work, much as I like Bibliothèque Nationale.

CHAPTER IX

EMILIE IN MONOLOGUE

“CARROTS cost money!”
“Yes, Emilie?”

“I had to throw several sous’ worth at your window before you got awake this morning, and when they rolled back some of them fell in the gutter. Old Sempé saw me take them, and I’m sure he’ll ask you to pay for them,” said Emilie, nodding her round head with its well-oiled straight black hair. Emilie was no more gifted hirsutely than in other feminine adornments. Since the day we found her cleaning our apartment, at the request of the Sempés, I had been studying her carefully to decide whether new clothes and soap would help her appearance. Clean and togged out in some of my things, she was not radically changed. But her heart of gold shone in her eyes, and I was not long in learning to love her.

“You never hear that bell,” continued Emilie. “What a conscience you must have to sleep that way. The carrots are cheaper than paying me from eight o’clock when you sleep on.”

“Never mind about the carrots,” I laughed. “We

PARIS VISTAS

need you for an alarm clock, and we did not wake up until one fell on the bed.”

Emilie was my first servant, and I did not have her all the time. All my life I had been demanding things from servants, but I had never bossed one in her housework. I dreaded tackling the problem. Emilie was the easy solution. The *femme de ménage* system is one of the advantages of life in Paris. You do not have to house your servant, and she is not in the way in a small apartment when you do not want her there. You can have as much or as little of the *femme de ménage* as you like, or (as was more often the case in my first year of Paris housekeeping) as you can afford to pay for. I put Emilie out of the house when the clock showed the number of times forty centimes per hour that I could spare. Forty centimes per hour, did I say? Yes, and that was ten centimes more than others paid in our street. Now it is a franc per hour, and the *femmes de ménage* of 1919 growl most of the time and stop work when they want to whether your house-cleaning or laundry is finished or not. Emilie set in deliberately to attach herself to me and accepted all my vagaries. I flatter myself that it was not so much for the extra two sous per hour as for the fact that she liked me. My queer ways interested her. She could never understand why I washed Scruppie's silk-and-wool undershirts myself, but was willing to pay her several francs for sitting on the coal-box read-

EMILIE IN MONOLOGUE

ing a newspaper or dozing for hours while I went to the opera.

Emilie was a vaudeville singer and dancer who had lost her figure and most of her teeth before the bi-decennial of her stage career.

“To think, Madame, that a few years ago the posters on the *Kiosque* at the corner of this street used to announce my number at the music-halls, and to-day I’m down on the floor washing your tiles!”

I was pulling the baby’s wool stockings on drying-boards.

“You say you used to be on the stage?” I led on sociably.

“Yes, Madame, *comique excentrique*. That is why I cannot cook. My profession required me always to eat in restaurants, but I can wash dishes, clean rooms and build fires. Thanks to God, for the service you need, I know how to mind babies. I never had anyone to help me with Marcelle.”

Marcelle was a fifteen year old girl, hare-lipped and cross-eyed, but her mother loved her dearly. Emilie did not say who Marcelle’s father was. But she was not as reticent as the woman of Samaria, and would have scorned to come to me under false pretenses. *Tout savoir est tout pardonner*. If you cannot live up to the spirit of that motto, do not plan a life without worry for yourself in Paris.

“Last year, before I found you, Madame, Marcelle

PARIS VISTAS

and I were out of work. When you came in here in July we had earned only fifty francs in two months. Marcelle did not get her job as laundry apprentice until October. Oh no, we did n't exactly starve. You can get cold-boiled potatoes and they sell bits of bread and left over coffee very cheap at night when the restaurants close."

Here she sat up to wring her floor-rag into the brown water of the pail.

"I hope you 'll not regret spoiling me the way you do. You let me talk, but you can trust me not to forget myself. Take this afternoon when those ladies are coming for tea. You know how I wait on the table. That is a rôle. I get my happiness in considering everything a rôle. I play at being *femme de ménage*. These dirty old clothes are my costume: the bucket and mop are stage properties."

"Do you like having company at tea?" I broke in.

"That depends."

"On what?"

"On who they are." Here Emilie made up her mind to speak with firmness. "Now, without indiscretion, Madame, the ladies you asked for this afternoon are not interesting. I was here when two of them called and you told them to come to tea."

"Why not?"

"The Latin Quarter is full of women like that. I know. I have worked for them. I have been cleaning

EMILIE IN MONOLOGUE

at studios and apartments like yours in this neighborhood ever since I left the stage. I have seen what these women paint. Oh la! la! Sometimes you cannot tell the canvas from the palette, Cubism they call it, to hide the fact that they cannot draw and could not reproduce a figure or any recognizable object to save their lives. No, I'm not talking of beginners. I'm talking about the old ones, the women, Americans and English, who do not know how to paint kitchen chairs or carry a tune, and yet art schools and music academies flourish on their fees. They were misfits where they came from. It pays their relatives to send them money every month so they won't come home. But why should Paris—that is, our part of Paris—be the dumping ground? You say that there are more men of that kind than women? Yes, oh yes, many more. But then, after a certain time men give up posing. They do not mind being taken at their real value. When they are failures, they admit it. The women keep on pretending.”

Emilie was as good as her word. With a shining face and hair well slicked back from her ears she appeared at tea time. The ample front was covered by a clean white apron. She stood at my elbow, her black beady eyes keen to see what I needed before I asked for it. *Oui, Madame* and *voilà, Madame* came as softly as though, born in a pantry, she had always served tea. But she could not keep up the play with-

PARIS VISTAS

out the relief of an occasional entr'acte. When she brought me a pot of fresh tea and guests happened to be looking the other way, she would give a broad wink and bolt from the room. When the guests left, the kitchen door was closed.

"I ought to have made one more appearance, Madame," said Emilie a few moments later as she settled herself comfortably in the steamer-chair and took a pinch of snuff. "The model servant would have helped them on with their coats. But I had all I could stand."

"But you did very well, Emilie."

"I got more fun out of it than you did. I said that you were wasting your time on those people. What did they do? Told you you looked badly. Asked why you were so tired. Advised you to get a doctor for the baby's cough. And you think they meant well? That it was solicitude?"

Here Emilie laughed heartily and wiped the snuff off her hands with the greasy blue apron that now replaced the white one.

"You are *naïve*, dear Madame. Women love to tease each other that way, especially those who are not well or strong themselves. They hate you for not having ills. If you told them that you had a physical examination last week and the doctor said you were in perfect condition, they would shake their heads gravely

EMILIE IN MONOLOGUE

and warn you that you are underweight for your height.”

“They did make me mad, I confess, when they volunteered advice about Scruppie. They used to scold me for nursing my baby and they scolded me to-day when they heard I had stopped nursing her.”

“That ’s it! That ’s it!” cried Emilie. “Next time they talk like that, show them the little thing, beautiful *rose de mai* that she is, and ask them in what way she looks badly.”

Throughout the year at Twenty-One, Emilie was a tower of strength to me. When we sent our pitchpine back to William Shakespeare and packed our rugs and brasses, she was on hand as she had been the day we set up our Lares and Penates in the Rue Servandoni. She urged that we take her to Constantinople with us. We did, and never regretted it—if only for her comments on the Turks and Greeks and Armenians. When she realized that we needed other care than she could give us, Emilie quietly dismissed herself and went back to France to live in Bordeaux. We see her there occasionally. She still wears my old hats and blouses. She is still a *femme de ménage*. And Marcelle has continued to wield the flat-iron.

CHAPTER X

HUNTING APACHES

I WAS bathing Christine before the fire. Gabry and Esther came in. The two girls settled themselves in steamer chairs.

"We want to know if you will let us come and sleep in your dining-room to-night," asked Esther.

"Sure," I answered, "but, mercy me, the bed in there is a little bit of a narrow one. . . ."

"That does n't matter," said Gabry.

"No, indeed," agreed Esther. "We can cuddle up close and we shan't be in it very long."

The baby began to howl. I had been listening to the girls and the side of the tub had got hot.

"Poor little dear," said Esther. "Her mother forgot her and she began to parboil."

I had the baby safely on my lap now wrapped in towels. Emilie carried away the bath tub.

"What's going on to-night?" I asked.

"Well, it's a fling," said Esther. "You know how it is up at the Hostel. They are so fussy—you would think it was an old ladies' home. Two boys that came over in our ship have been studying forestry in some German school. They are here for the holidays. We

HUNTING APACHES

got them to promise to take us with them to-night to see the town—café stuff, you know.”

“Where are you going?” I asked.

“To a cellar where they do the Apache dance.”

“You don’t want to see that,” I suggested. “It is n’t real. Just a plant to catch parties like you. Why Herbert and I saw that stunt done in a cinema the other night. There was a French couple back of us. They giggled over it. The man said, ‘Wait a minute. The police are sure to come in after that party of Americans are comfortably settled with some drinks.’”

“You don’t mean it,” said Esther. “Don’t take the edge off our spree.”

“I’m not taking off edges. Only in the cinema the other night it was instructive the way the policemen came in. After they had driven out the most murderous dancing Apaches, the Americans thought it was too hot and fled. You ought to have seen the way fake Apaches and barmaids laughed at them afterwards. What is your plan for the night?”

“First to dinner in some spicy café, then the theatre. We’re going to see *Chantecler*. Everybody’s crazy about it.”

“Excepting people who think it is silly,” put in Gabry.

“Well, if it’s silly to see actors dressed up in peacock feathers,” cried Esther, “we’ll have a good time. And there’ll be supper somewhere afterwards.”

PARIS VISTAS

“Going to make a regular night of it, aren’t you?”

“That ’s just the point. Helen, you ’re a dear to be so sympathetic. Up at the student Hostel. . . .”

“Did they object there to your going?”

“They don’t know a thing about it. It would never do to tell them.”

“Why?”

“They ’d begin to preach,” protested Esther. “A pack of school teachers anyway. That ’s why we want to spend the night here. We ’ll just explain, you understand, that we ’re going to spend the night with their dear lovely Mrs. Gibbons. And they ’ll never know a thing about the fun.”

The girls were moving towards the door.

“The boys will come here to get us,” called Esther. “We ’ll come down about half-past six. Herbert won’t mind, will he?”

“We must move along now,” said Gabry. “I have a singing lesson.”

“And I have a fitting at the dressmaker’s,” added Esther. “Ta, ta, Helen.”

I felt in my bones that I did n’t quite know what to do about it and would wait until Herbert came home.

When Herbert returned from the Bibliothèque Nationale at noon, I told him about my visitors.

“Why on earth—” he began to comment.

“Oh, they are going to do the Grand Boulevards with

HUNTING APACHES

a couple of young American fellows who are in Paris for a vacation," I said.

"What's the matter with those girls," exclaimed Herbert. "What's gotten into their heads? Do they think they can come here and start off on an expedition like that? If they were older, it would be different. If they're afraid to tell the Hostel people, it shows they know well enough it is n't just the thing for them to do."

"I thought so myself."

"Well, why did n't you right up and say it from the beginning?"

"Girls would n't take it from me. My game was to be absorbent and get the whole story. They're nearly as old as I am. I could n't dictate to them. I don't know how to get out of it."

"I see," mused Herbert.

The girls came in about six o'clock to dress for dinner. They had their suitcases and some flowers, and Esther brought her light blue hat in a paper bundle. I had told them to telephone their boys to come to dinner with us before starting out for the theater. This was the only way I could think of to manage things so that Herbert could see them before they started away.

Esther put on the pretty bright blue dress she had bought at the model shop to go with the light blue hat. She placed the hat, still in its paper cover, on the top

PARIS VISTAS

of the wardrobe in the dining-room. Gabry played with Scruppie, sitting on the floor beside her, where she was tied in her papa's steamer chair. Esther perched herself on the stool in the kitchen and watched me frying sausages. Herbert came in after a bit and wheeled right around from the front door into the kitchen. He didn't have to walk. It was n't far enough.

"Hello, Esther, what are you up to?" said Herbert.

"Hello, Herb."

"Come on in the other room. I want to talk to you," said Herbert.

He closed the door and I heard them talking hard.

"Gee!" said Gabry. "Esther sounds mad, does n't she?"

"Herbert's telling her what he thinks of the party," I said.

"He does n't want us to go, does he?" said Gabry.

"Oh, he's not breaking up the party. Not a bit of it. He only says that seeing nobody of your crowd knows French and seeing that your mother made us promise to look after you, he wants to know what café and theatre you're going to."

Just as a rather mad-looking Esther and a smiling Herbert appeared, there was a ring at the bell, and in came the boys, two rosy-cheeked American youngsters. They came into the kitchen to talk to me a moment, and then Herbert took them into the dining-room to

HUNTING APACHES

explain things. I heard him talking with them, nice American chaps they were, not looking for trouble a bit. Not the type out for the booze, just bright youngsters who were going on the boulevards out of curiosity.

We lighted up the candles in the bedroom-study. Herbert put some new ones in the candlesticks on the piano and we soon got things going. One of the boys was taken into the bedroom-study to play a tune on the piano, and soon Esther cheered up with a face more or less of an April one.

"Hello, boys," said Herbert. "The girls have been telling us—Mrs. Gibbons and I want you to have dinner with us here first so we can talk over the party."

"Sure," said John. "We have tickets for *Chantecler*."

We sat down and tackled *coquilles Saint-Jacques*.

"You don't want to get in any trouble over this game," Herbert went on. "Not speaking French and all that. . . ."

"That's so, too," said Joe.

"*Chantecler* is fine and dandy," said Herbert. "If you want supper afterwards, here's the address of a nice little café."

"Sunday school picnic," moaned Esther.

"Esther's inconsolable. She thinks I'm spoiling the fun. But these boys don't want to get into a doubtful little hole. You don't know what you're doing, Esther," said Herbert.

PARIS VISTAS

"I'm as old as your wife, so there."

"You fellows do not want to spend a terrible lot of money. I know you don't. Esther is mad as a hornet at me because I am going to squelch her idea of going to Montmartre or Les Halles for a hot old time. I don't want to seem a poor sport, but you know some of those cafés are fakes, others are what I shall not mention, and there is a third category of really dangerous ones. The entire business is carried on to catch and mulct tourists. If you happen to drift into the fake places, nothing more serious would happen than getting stuck good and hard. You would simply have to pay the waiter whatever was on the bill. If you were considerably older and knew how to speak French, the slumming might prove interesting—for one evening. But for you the game is not worth the candle. I don't mind your going for a jaunt along the boulevards, and I can tell you some of the cafés that are all right. But as for Les Halles—that does n't go."

The boys were sensible. They fell in with our suggestions without discussion. After dinner the four went off to their show. Next morning I heard Esther telling Scrapie all about it.

"The W.C.T.U. was n't in it, baby. *Chantecler* was written to please kids of your age. There was nobody in that Y.M.C.A. café your daddy sent us to. My blue hat was the most conspicuous object in the place. We did n't see a thing. No *types*, no wicked-

HUNTING APACHES

ness, no models, more than we ordinarily see around the Quarter."

Gabry's eyeglasses were shaking on her nose.

"Tell her what Monsieur Sempé said," urged Gabry.

"Yes, baby," said Esther, who was laughing in spite of herself now. "Our mama boys wanted to be polite in the American way last night. They brought us here and didn't want to leave us until they saw us inside your saintly doors. But Monsieur Sempé stopped them down at the street door. He simply yelled at the boys, '*Ca ne se fait pas à Paris, Messieurs.*'"

"No," concluded Esther, "from start to finish, baby, there was nothing about our party that would have hurt your lily-white soul."

CHAPTER XI

DRIFTWOOD

I WAS nursing Scruppie. Herbert came into the bedroom and started to speak slowly as if he was n't sure how I would take what he was going to say.

"Fellow out here who is hungry. What shall I do?"

"Feed him," said I. Herbert did not have to tell me that he had no money to give the man to buy a meal. "Could n't you ask him to dinner if he is all right?"

"Well, he is sort of an old chap," said Herbert doubtfully.

I lighted a candle and put it on the end of the mantel-piece nearest to the baby's bed. She was perfectly contented to go to sleep alone if she could watch a candle flicker.

When I had settled Scruppie and opened the window and closed the door gently, I went into the dining-room and found Mr. Thompson. Sparse grey hair, watery blue eyes, a talkative individual who hoped he was not bothering us too much. He wore a frock coat with shiny revers. His cuffs were unstarched and frayed, but they were clean. Herbert had brought in some cold boiled potatoes. In those days you bought them

DRIFTWOOD

cooked at the *charcuterie* for the same price that you got them raw at the greengrocer's. It was a good scheme. You could peel them and slice them in a jiffy,—then warm them with eggs broken up and scrambled in the pan beside them. This with cheese and nuts and liqueurs made a meal without using too much gas. You did it yourself, using no more energy than would be taken out of you if it had been done by a cook.

Mr. Thompson did not lie when he told Herbert he was hungry. He had three helpings of everything. He said little during the meal, but he did not eat with his knife. When it came to cigars, he pushed back his chair and spread out his hands to the *boulet* fire. Casting his eye from the molding to the floor, he included the dining-room and all the rest of the apartment with a sweeping gesture and a couple of "Ha-Has."

"From the looks of this joint, you two youngsters have n't any more money than you need. This is a good joke on me, too good a joke to keep to myself. You have given me a square deal along with a square meal, and I appreciate it. I have lived for years in this Quarter and have earned precious little money. Sort of a down-and-outer. I am, I suppose, one of the Quarter's charity patients. Don't worry. I am not going to beg of you. First time I came to Paris, it was by way of England. I stayed a long time in Oxford and made friends with the Cowley Fathers. Then I

PARIS VISTAS

buried myself in the Bibliothèque Nationale, for I was starting a thesis in church history."

"Indeed," cried Herbert. "I have a fellowship in Church History myself. What is your subject?"

"Religious orders after the Reformation," said Mr. Thompson.

"Have you published anything?" asked my husband.

"No," said Mr. Thompson. "Queer thing life is. We get loose from our moorings when we least expect it. You won't believe me, but American generosity was my undoing!"

"How could that be?" I put in.

"Don't you know," said Mr. Thompson, "that we are not as much the captain of our souls as we like to think?"

He was in a steamer chair now, and lying back, he blew smoke at the ceiling.

"But you were saying, Mr. Thompson," said I.

"I was saying more than I ought to," he mused.

He had forgotten his cigar. Herbert twisted a bit of newspaper, touched it to the glowing *boulets* and held it out to Mr. Thompson. Matches are expensive in France.

"Oh!" he started. "I was away back years ago. Thank you. I was wrong a minute ago when I told you I had said too much. I have said too little. You have made me feel at home, and I shall be frank with you. It sometimes wrecks a fellow's career

DRIFTWOOD

if he receives just a little too much help. What I am talking about is quite a different thing from what I may have suggested just now. Not a person spoiled with too much money. But I was spoiled by the fact that at a certain time, I was able to put my hands on ever so little money when it was not good for me. Not the money itself, you understand, but the fact that the game is so easy."

"But I don't understand," I protested.

"Of course you don't," said Mr. Thompson.

He threw the butt of his cigar on the floor, put his foot on it, and took another from Herbert's box.

"Sorry I have n't better cigars to give you," said my husband. "These *carrés à deux sous* just suit my speed."

Alas for the *carrés à deux sous*! Of them as of many of our joys we must say Ichabod.

"The time came when I ran out of money—but altogether out of money, you understand. I waited until I was pretty hungry before I told anybody. Then the American Consul did something for me. Somebody gave me a pair of shoes. Other persons gave me money, and the day was saved. Again I became absorbed in my work, to be interrupted by poverty. This time I went to the pastor of the American Church. He looked me over. Must have thought I was a good case, as he saw to it that several people did something for me. After all, it comes easily, and I have lived like that

PARIS VISTAS

for years. Sometimes my clothes don't fit very well, but what is the difference. It has grown upon me until I am utterly unfit to earn my living. You get nothing twice from the Consulate, and churches are not good for much. Besides, the churches keep a list of dead-beats. It is the individual Americans one meets that give away their money carelessly. I found somebody who listened sympathetically to my hard-luck story. The story itself was no lie the first time. But it was so easy—there was the temptation. I tell you frankly that I fell. I discovered that I could do it again when the hard-luck story was not true."

"I hunted you up," continued Mr. Thompson, "with the idea of getting something out of you. I suppose if I put as much energy into holding down a job as I do this, I could earn my living. But the habit of living on the kindness of other people has me in its grip, and I do not stick to work when it is given to me. I have been pretty faithful to the Bibliothèque all these years, for it is heated there. I can read my paper, write some letters and study a little on my church history. The thesis is growing slowly, but that is all I can say I have done these twelve years.

"There are other people who do the same thing, you know. You have met them without knowing it. Artist fellows, youngsters as well as old ones, understand the game. Do you know how they work it? It is known now, for instance, that you receive in-

DRIFTWOOD

formally every Wednesday. There are other days and hosts of women. So it goes. A fellow can get along very cheaply like that. Pay thirty or forty francs a month for a place to live and work, two sous each morning for *café au lait* passed across the zinc—good coffee too, as you perhaps know. They let you bring your roll with you if you like. It will cost a sou. One roll and a cup of coffee is enough after you get used to it. Your only large expense is the noon meal.

“Generally the evening meal you can pick up. You find in the social register the names of all the ladies, kind and unobservant, who have days at home. You stick a big paper on your wall and mark it off in seven columns, one for each day of the week. You make a list of the woman who have receiving days, and you drop in somewhere every afternoon about five-thirty. The tea party is pretty well finished, but there is usually plenty of food left. The ladies have to provide for more than really come. You do that yourself, Mrs. Gibbons. The ladies do not notice that you eat more than one or two sandwiches and plenty of cake. If they do notice it, it makes them feel happy, and there is your supper. If you do it systematically with a list like mine, you do not have to go to Mrs. X’s house more than twice in the winter. A lot of people in the American colony have receiving days. It is easy enough to know them. All of the boys know a few, and we take each other around. The artist fellows have a cinch.

PARIS VISTAS

All they have to do, if they have a conscience, is to present the hostesses to whom they are the most indebted, with a couple of worthless sketches. Nobody ever suspects anything.

"You can slide in and out in the Latin Quarter and meet any number of charming people. They never stay too long and there are always new ones coming in. No hostess is superior to the flattery implied when her tea is appreciated. I have learned to praise sandwiches so that I can get a fair supply. I write an article occasionally, and that covers my rent. Clothes are an easy matter. Any number of people in Paris will give away clothes. You see I am a deadbeat. I was a deadbeat to-day when I saw in the *Herald* that Mrs. Gibbons was going to be at home this afternoon."

Mr. Thompson got up to go.

"Where did you put your overcoat," asked Herbert.

"I have none," said my guest.

Herbert's eyes met mine. I telegraphed "Yes."

Certainly we gave Herbert's old overcoat to Mr. Thompson. As we talked about it afterwards, Herbert observed,

"We could not help giving him the coat, could we?"

"No, of course not."

We never saw Mr. Thompson again. It is n't in the picture. Driftwood!

CHAPTER XII

SOME OF OUR GUESTS

THE best fun of having a home is sharing it with your friends. But you deprive yourself of this fun—in a very large measure, at least—if you make entertaining a burden or a great expense. In the Rue Servandoni we tried out theories about hospitality that have become firmly rooted family principles. Guests are *always* welcome, and we never feed them better than we feed ourselves. Company is the rule: not the exception. I suppose my Irish temperament made this possible in the beginning. Now we would not give up our way of living for anything in the world. By the standards of my own family I am not regarded as a good housekeeper. I am finicky only about cleanliness and the quality and quantity of food. The rest does n't matter. That is, I have no almanac to show me when to put away the winter clothes and when to do Spring house-cleaning. I do not get "all out of kelter" if the wash is done on Thursday instead of Monday: and I never "put up" fruit or bake. I buy my preserves from the grocer and my bread and cake from the baker.

When I look back on Rue Servandoni days and try to analyze my attitude towards housekeeping, I think

PARIS VISTAS

first that I may have been demoralized by living through the Armenian massacres just before going to Paris. It was enough to make me happy in the morning to realize that my husband and baby were alive. Did I have a new sense of values, born of suffering? Or perhaps it was n't anything as high-brow or pious as that. Perhaps it was the inheritance of shiftlessness that came down to me from the ancient Irish kings. This curious form of original sin persists and makes me able to agree with one who sang when things all got messed up,

“The cow 's in the hammock,
The baby 's in the lake,
The cat 's in the garbage:
WHAT difference does it make?”

Now I do not claim that my way is altogether right and that my maternal Pennsylvania Dutch strain does not occasionally assert itself, though feebly. I enjoy formal and well-ordered entertaining when it is not a pretense—when I do not have the uncomfortable feeling that my hostess has worn herself out getting the meal ready or is offering a meal beyond her income.

The alternative in the Rue Servandoni was to have friends take us as we were or to make an occasional splurge. The latter was thoroughly distasteful to us both. We held that what was good enough for ourselves was good enough for our friends, and that they would rather come to our simple meals than not come



Where stood the walls of old Lutetia

SOME OF OUR GUESTS

at all. How could we hope to compete with the Café de Paris or Arménonville? And we knew that many who came to us paid their cook more than our total income.

Is not the question of entertaining a good deal like the question of other people's wealth? If you are continually striving to keep up with friends richer than you, you are bound to feel poor. We could put our heads out of our window, and pity ourselves because we were not living in steam-heated, electric-lighted Number Nineteen or Number Twenty-Three. But then, across the street, Number Twenty and Number Eighteen had *logements* beside which our apartment was a palace.

Shortly after setting up our Lares and Penates in Number Twenty-One, a friend from Denver dropped in just before supper. He was a judge and silver-mine owner, the father of one of my Bryn Mawr collegemates. I urged him to stay. He was excusing himself, when I volunteered the information that our supper consisted of cornmeal mush with milk, and that was all. He stayed, and told us that it was the best meal he had eaten in Paris. "I just love cornmeal mush, and I cannot get it at my hotel," he said. We believed him. He spoke the truth.

There was always room at our table for friends. An extra plate, and a little more of what we were having for ourselves—that was all there was to it. In a big

PARIS VISTAS

city, especially a city like Paris where shops are in every street, getting more food quickly is no problem. Herbert would just slip downstairs to Sempé's for eggs, another chop, another can of peas, an additional bottle of wine. Next door was the bakery.

The best friends of our married life have come to us through unpretentious entertaining. The contact of the home is different from the contact of the office or club or formal gathering, and it has enabled me to take every step forward with my husband. Our broadened vision, our intimate sources of information, the steps upward in our profession are largely the result of the dinner-table and the after-dinner smoke before the fire. One illustration shows how chance influences the whole life.

Early in the autumn of 1909, we received a letter from a Paris lawyer who had just returned from settling insurance claims in massacre-stricken Cilicia. He had been in Tarsus just after we left, and wanted to meet us. I wrote back to him, as I would have done to anyone with an introduction like his, "Come to dinner, and if there is a Mrs. K. bring her with you." He sought us out in our little street. There was no Mrs. K., but the spontaneity of the invitation and its inclusiveness had prompted him to break his rule of not accepting dinner invitations. He was a charming man, full of information and inspiration. When I brought on the asparagus, he said that in Poland they put burnt

SOME OF OUR GUESTS

bread crumbs into drawn-butter sauce. I jumped right up, and exclaimed, "Nothing easier! We shall have *asperges à la polonaise* right away." In three minutes the asparagus was to his taste. The lawyer thought out, and made a suggestion that would certainly never have occurred to him had I arranged a formal meeting in response to his letter. He told us that the experience we had in Turkey we should not regard as accidental. "Why did the massacres occur? You must have asked yourselves that. Now drop your research into Gallicanism and French ecclesiastical history. A thousand men are as well equipped for that as you. Turn your attention to the Turks and the Eastern Question, and from that go into the study of the contemporary diplomacy of Europe. The Russian and Hapsburg Empires are built upon the Ottoman Empire. Study the relation of Turkey to Poland. This is the field for you!"

In the last few years I have often thought of that evening. We followed the lawyer's advice. He helped us. He encouraged us. He used to come to dinner every Tuesday night. We went back to Turkey and came again to Paris before the Great War. During the years of absence, there had been frequent correspondence. When we returned, the Tuesday evenings were resumed. If my husband was ready for the work that came to him with the war, it is thanks to the Paris lawyer. *The Foundation of the Ottoman*

PARIS VISTAS

Empire, The New Map of Europe, The Reconstruction of Poland and the Near East, are the outcome of table-talks with the lawyer that began in the Rue Servandoni.

In the *pension* of the Rue Madame we met people whom we invited to come to see us in the Rue Servandoni. We asked them to our table. They came. And they have been dinner guests in our different Paris homes during the past decade.

There was the Catholic Archbishop of Cairo, an Arab who had the story-telling gift of his race. You do not know what it is to hear a story told until you have listened to an Arab. The Archbishop unfolded to us the lore of the East. There must have been something about *les petits américains* that interested him, for our meals could not compete with Mademoiselle Guyenot's. He used to sit in the steamer-chair, with his arms folded over his gold crucifix, his cape thrown back on both shoulders (which gave a dash of red), the end of a long white beard rubbing the most prominent buttons of his cassock front, and eyes twinkling in unpriestly fashion. He was the reincarnation of Nasreddin Hodja, prince of Anatolian story-tellers. Herbert pokes in his bath. One night, when Scruppie went to sleep earlier than usual, Herbert started to make his ablutions before the dining-room fire while I was busy in the kitchen. The door-bell rang. In came the archbishop. There was a swift change of persons and rooms. Herbert finished his bath in the kitchen in an incredibly short time. He

SOME OF OUR GUESTS

did not want to miss a moment of the archbishop.

Michi Kawai was with me in school as well as in college. Imagine my delight at finding her one day looking at old furniture in the Rue des Saints-Pères. If I ever thought of Michi, it was in Tokio. And I never would have thought of Michi in connection with French antique furniture. But that is Paris for you. Sooner or later all your friends come to Paris. You run across them accidentally and invariably they are doing something you would never have dreamed of associating them with. During her months in Paris Michi was a frequent visitor in the Rue Servandoni. She was one of those delightful combinations of Occident and Orient that Japan produces better than any other nation. She was equally at home with French and American friends, and, when Emilie was not there, knew how to juggle my eight cups and saucers and spoons back and forth between the tea-table and the kitchen, without guests catching on, more dexterously than any of my American girl friends.

We started our married life among the peoples of the Near East, and we found them out there just like other folks, when we took the trouble to come into intimate contact with them. Racially of course they are different from us as they are different from each other. Greeks, Bulgarians, Turks, Armenians, Syrians, Egyptians, Persians—each one of these names calls up faces of people I love. I have known in them in their homes

PARIS VISTAS

and in my home. A strong tie binds us to the Armenians. When you have shared the sufferings, dangers and hardships of a people, they belong to you and you belong to them in a peculiar way. Armenians came to the Rue Servandoni, poor boys with no money and no home who had escaped from Turkey, struggling students, successful painters, brilliant musicians, wealthy merchants. Every collector of Egyptian curios, of Turkish and Persian rugs, of Oriental pottery, knows Kelekian of the Place Vendôme. His small shop is wedged in between a florist and a ticket-scalper. In the window you never see more than half a dozen objects. There is always a bowl as a *pièce de résistance*, a bowl that only a Morgan could afford to own. Pause and look over the curtain, the chances are that you will see Monsieur Kelekian sitting by a glass case of Egyptian scarabs. He will be smoking, and his right hand will be on the case. To know Monsieur Kelekian is to have faith in the resurrection of Armenia and in the future of one of the oldest races of history. We came to know him through his interest in the Adana massacres. He had never heard of the Rue Servandoni, and the street was hardly wide enough for his automobile. But he came to dinner with his wife—in spite of a disapproving *chauffeur*, who thought there must be some mistake and who insisted on inquiring for us first at Number Twenty-Three and then at Number Nineteen. Although his nose never turned

SOME OF OUR GUESTS

down, he became accustomed to stopping in front of the grocery!

Other *chauffeurs* and *cochers* learned during that winter a new street in Paris, and the first time they, too, made the mistake of stopping next door. Mrs. Evans, sister-in-law of the famous dentist, had a pair of black horses that shone like the varnish of her victoria. "Dear Mrs. Evans," as all the women called her, was interested in every good work. She approved of my husband, because he was a parson, and of me because I had lived in a missionary college. She knew we had no money and did not expect us to have any. Her carriage was ours for afternoon rides in the Bois de Bologne. Scrappie, "that darling missionary baby," must have her weekly outing. Mrs. Evans, I am sure, believed that the air was not what it ought to be in our quarter of Paris and that God had intrusted her with the responsibility of seeing that we were occasionally transported elsewhere. During that year we made other friends in the American Colony, who, like Mrs. Evans, cared for us for what we were. They made Paris home to us in the old-fashioned sense of the word, and the intimacies then formed have never been broken.

Gypsy Smith was an English evangelist who came to Paris that winter for a series of revival meetings in the English-speaking community. He had been traveling all over the world for twenty years. His wife had had to stay at home to look after the children. Now, for

PARIS VISTAS

the first time, she was free to accompany him, and came to Paris with him. We showed the Smiths some of the principal tourist points of interest one morning, and they came home to lunch with us. In the way of entertaining, they had been "touching the high spots" in Paris, as Gypsy Smith was sought after by the substantial people of the British and American communities. Our little home was a revelation to them of the fact that there were other foreigners living in Paris than the rich. Mrs. Gypsy was greatly pleased with the novelty of finding "just folks" in Paris. "A cozy little nest you have here," she said, giving me a nudge with her elbow.

There were so many people to see in Paris, old friends from home as well as new friends, that I soon began to have my afternoon. On Wednesdays I received in that tiny dining-room, with my eight cups and saucers and spoons, just as if I were mistress of a large establishment. At first, our neighbors thought it was a christening or funeral. When they realized that *les petits américains* over the *épicerie* were having a weekly "at home," they were confirmed in their impression of our wealth. I confess that it was crowded at times and that the party had to overflow into the bedroom. But it was fun, especially when one of my girlhood friends, who had known me in Germantown days in my mother's home, would bring her whole family along to

SOME OF OUR GUESTS

see me, and exclaim, "Why, Helen Brown—!" But I would get them all in.

Two days after Christmas, my husband urged me to go walking with him. He pointed out that no one would come. But I refused. I had more conscience when I was young than I have now. Being "at home" meant sticking by the game. I had cheered up the *boulet* fire in the dining-room. The cups were on the table. My china platter held a *gâteau mocha* of dear memory. Shall we ever again be able to buy layer-cakes with coffee icing an inch thick done in the delectable ups and downs like a wedding cake? And that at one franc-twenty-five?

"Run down, dear, and get me some hot crescents. It's after four o'clock, so they'll be ready."

"Now, look here. You've got to be sensible. Everyone has hosts of things to do Christmas week. Nobody will come. We'll eat the cakes for supper. Let's go over the river."

"No, that would n't be fair. Somebody might come."

Herbert got the crescents, put more *boulets* where I could get them easily, and was gone.

I settled myself in the steamer-chair. No sound except the ticking of our little traveling-clock, and the dropping of a *boulet* on the hearth. An hour slipped by, and I began to realize that I might just as well have

PARIS VISTAS

gone out. A ring at the bell. When I opened the door, there was my husband holding a bouquet of roses big enough for a bridesmaid.

"Good afternoon," said he, bowing low; "do Mr. and Mrs. Gibbons live here?"

"To be sure," said I, stifling a giggle. "I am Mrs. Gibbons."

"Indeed." My visitor shook hands with me and explained, "Mrs. Gibbons, I am delighted to meet you. I knew your husband years and years ago—before he was married, in fact. The first pleasure I have allowed myself in Paris is to look up my friend Gibbons and his wife."

He hung hat and overcoat in the hall, and handed me the flowers. "What a charming dining-room? Dear me, have I intruded? You were having a party?"

"Just my day at home."

We chatted for a full hour, discussing the fate of the House of Lords, about which my new friend confided that he was writing an article. He hoped some editor would publish it. We talked of the possibilities of next year's Salons and disagreed on the subject of futurist painting. I told my visitor about the many American friends that were turning up, and how the Gibbonses realized that if they wanted to get any work done in Paris they would have to stop acting as guides. What did he think about adopting a policy of telling

SOME OF OUR GUESTS

people that Thomas Cook had mighty good guides at ten francs a day? Perhaps, however, we should make the last exception with him, and show him the town.

We talked of Christmas, and then I was asked if I had a baby. I replied that of course I did. She was over in the Luxembourg Garden with Marie, who kept her out late on my at-home day, but who would soon bring her in.

“People that see resemblance in coloring say she looks like me, but those that see resemblance in contour say she ’s the image of her daddy.”

“So!” said my visitor.

I put my arms around the contour.

CHAPTER XIII

WALKS AT NIGHTFALL

THE Prince whom Tartarin met in Africa had lived a long time in Tarascon, and knew remarkably well one side of the town. He knew nothing of the other side. This puzzled Tartarin until he found out that his noble friend's residence in Tartarin's native town was a compulsory one. The Prince had ample time to study a certain aspect of Tarascon in detail from the little window of his penitentiary cell. We do not all have the privilege of devoting ourselves, as the Prince did, to a minute study of just one view from just one vantage-point. And yet, in certain things we share the Prince's experience. We become accustomed to a definite aspect of the things we see to the exclusion of other aspects. Thus it is that I know many parts of Paris familiarly as they appear at nightfall. I could go to these quarters at other times, but I never have. I fear the breaking of the spell. I fear disillusion. And if you want to follow me in Paris walks through this chapter, plan your strolls from five to seven during the winter months.

It began this way. In the Bibliothèque Nationale, as in the Paris of parks and gardens, the closing hour

WALKS AT NIGHTFALL

follows the sun. The Bibliothèque has no lights. It turns you out at four, half-past four, five or six according to the season. During the months of longer days, we stayed until the last bell. In the winter we were put out before the afternoon was over. One did not feel like making for home immediately. It was too late to go far afield. We started in to explore Paris in a widening circle from the Rue de Richelieu. My husband had covered much of this ground in summer months with the Scholar from Oxford. When the light held out until late, they had time to visit old Paris with the books of Georges Cain for guides. In the winter months Herbert took me over this ground again. But I saw it all at nightfall or after dark.

It was a wonderful discovery, to combine exercise with interesting sight-seeing at the end of the day. The habit of walks through city streets, thus formed, has been persisted in through many busy years. I recommend it, even to tourists. Use your precious days for churches and museums and palaces. After they are closed, walk for an hour or two each night. You will find diversity, and, like Horatio, things you never dreamed of. And no matter how long you live in Paris, there is always something new to explore and something equally new when you follow beaten tracks.

You have to be—or grow—catholic in your tastes if you want to enjoy what Paris at nightfall offers. Of course in the beginning you look for certain things.

PARIS VISTAS

You have a goal: tracing the city walls from old Lutetia to Henri IV; seeking traces of mediaeval days; spotting Renaissance architecture; visiting historic spots or buildings associated with famous names or events; reconstructing Paris of the Revolution; or following the characters of Victor Hugo through *Les Misérables*. Before long you join all these goals, and jump from architecture to history, from history to literature. In the end, every walk you take is the observation of living people inseparable from an incomparably picturesque setting. It may take a long time to realize that your primary interest is humankind. But when you do the world is a kaleidoscope presenting new pictures, wherever you may be, each more fascinating than the one that preceded it.

“Seek and ye shall find” is a promise with a condition attached to it. You have to look before you see. An effort of the will is required. Without that effort, impressions are false or transitory or give no reaction that sinks deep. We passed close to Messina just after the earthquake. The captain of our ship obligingly slowed down to quarter-speed. Passengers crowded against the rail on the Sicilian side of the straits.

“Why, Messina is all right!” someone cried. “The newspapers have been exaggerating again.”

“Wait,” suggested a lawyer. He got out his opera glasses. Others did the same. As we studied Messina from the sea, and looked for the deep fissures, the

WALKS AT NIGHTFALL

crumbling walls, we found them all along the coast. The American soldier who told me, "Since I been in France I ain't seen nothing but kilometres and rain," was not looking for anything else.

Strolling after dark helps to bring into the foreground the human element in the picture of Paris streets. Your field of vision is limited. You do not see too many things at once. And you have to keep your eyes open. Many a quaint corner, many a building, is less often missed at nightfall than during the day.

Paris is divided into arrondissements, each one with its local administration, its *maire*, its *mairie*, its postal service, and its police. The postal authorities have tried in vain to insist upon the placing of the arrondissement indication upon the letters. But they have never had much success. It is enough to remember where your friends live without having to keep in mind twenty different arrondissements! Before the war your arrondissement meant little to you, and you often did not know its number if you wanted to be married, to register the birth of a new baby, or got into difficulties with the police. Since the war, residents in Paris came to know their own arrondissements because of bread tickets, passports, income-tax declarations and other annoyances. But in planning your walks at nightfall, it is helpful to take a map of Paris and know something about the divisions of the city. We started our ex-

PARIS VISTAS

plorations by hazard, and then found to our astonishment that we had been going from one arrondissement to another, practically following the numerical order.

The Bibliothèque Nationale is just on the border between the First and Second Arrondissements. Arrondissements One to Four are the old city on the Rive Droite between the Grands Boulevards and the Seine. Arrondissements Five to Seven include similar quarters on the Rive Gauche. Some of the most interesting strolls are in the outer arrondissements. But the seven inner arrondissements provide enough for years without ever having to take the subway or tram.

The four Rive Droite arrondissements stretch from the Place de la Concorde to the Place de la Bastille, and include the Ile de la Cité and the Ile Saint-Louis. The three Rive Gauche arrondissements stretch from the Eiffel Tower to the Jardin des Plantes. On the Rive Droite the Place de l'Opéra and the Place de la République, and on the Rive Gauche the Place de Breteuil and the Place de l'Observatoire, are the outer corners of the inner arrondissements. The Boulevard de Sébastopol on the Rive Droite and the Boulevard Saint-Michel on the Rive Gauche form the only straight route, cutting through the mass of tangled streets of succeeding centuries. Running north and south, this central line divides the arrondissements as the Seine does, running east and west.

I have a horror of guide-books, partly because I do

WALKS AT NIGHTFALL

not know how to use them (I never have learned!) and partly because I love to find my way without premeditation and by accident. But many of my readers will never have the same opportunity I have enjoyed of discovering fascinating spots at nightfall. Why should I resist the temptation of indicating some of the strolls that make the late winter afternoons delectable?

Everyone knows the Rue de Rivoli as far as the Oratoire or perhaps to the Tour Saint-Jacques. At the crossing of the Boulevard Sébastopol, the Rue de Rivoli leaves the familiar heart of Paris and enters the Fourth Arrondissement. It becomes the Rue Saint-Antoine a couple of blocks before the Eglise Saint-Paul. There the first break in the straight line from the Place de la Concorde occurs. You deflect a little bit to the right, and before you is the Bastille column. The Rue de Rivoli and the Rue Saint-Antoine are the main artery of the Fourth Arrondissement. No quarter of Paris affords more variety in walks at nightfall. Starting from the Boulevard de Sébastopol, the streets on the left, at angles and parallel to the main artery, are a labyrinth. Here is the Ghetto in a setting incomparably more picturesque than the Ghettos of London and New York. I doubt if even the oldest Paris *cocher* finds his way here unerringly. Through some of the streets no carriage can pass. The narrowest street in Paris, the Rue de Venise, is here. Beginning opposite

PARIS VISTAS

the Hôtel de Ville, the Rue du Temple cuts through the Ghetto all the way to the Place de la République. Then come the equally interesting right-angle streets, the Rue des Archives and the Rue Vieille du Temple. On the latter faces the Imprimerie Nationale. And do not miss the parallel streets, Rue de la Verrerie, Rue du Roi de Sicile, Rue Sainte-Croix de la Bretonne, Rue des Rosiers. Further along (now we are in the Rue Saint-Antoine) the Rue de Birague leads one short block into the Place des Vosges, one of the rare bits remaining of Paris of Henri IV.

On the right hand side we have the Hôtel de Ville, the old buildings behind the Lycé Charlemagne and the Quai des Célestins. Several bridges cross to the Ile de la Cité and the Ile Saint-Louis. The Pont Saint-Louis connects the two islands. There is nothing more wonderful in Paris than to cross the Pont Sully from the eastern end of the Quai des Célestins, walk through the Rue Saint-Louis-en-l'Île, and come suddenly upon the apse of Notre Dame, protected by its flying buttresses.

In the Second Arrondissement, start from the Place des Victoires at the end of the Rue des Petits-Champs, and find your way through the various tortuous routes that bring you out on the Grands Boulevards to the Boulevard Poissonnière, the Boulevard Bonne-Nouvelle and the Boulevard Saint-Denis. A few hundred feet from the Grands Boulevards, to the right of the Rue Saint-Denis, as you go toward the river, Paris of the

WALKS AT NIGHTFALL

Revolution remains in almost as full measure as in the Sixth Arrondissement.

We must not leave the Rive Droite without mentioning two walks at nightfall in the outer arrondissement. From the Place de la République, the most interesting glimpse of a crowded workingmen's quarter can be gained in an hour by walking up the Rue du Faubourg du Temple, which becomes the Rue de Belleville. There is a steep climb until you reach the Eglise Saint-Jean-Baptiste. To the right is Ménilmontant, dominating the famous Père-Lachaise cemetery, and to the left you can climb still farther to Buttes-Chaumont. The second walk is along the Quai de Jemmapes, which you reach by turning to the left from the Rue du Faubourg du Temple just after crossing the canal. A few blocks up, on the right, through the Rue Grange aux Belles you pass the Hôpital Saint-Louis, a group of seventeenth-century buildings which continue to do blessed work in the twentieth century.

Dear me! I have forgotten Montmartre, where you climb endless flights of stone steps and find—despite the tourist *réclame*—probably more of old Paris than in any other part of the city.

On the Rive Gauche, the walks at nightfall are more difficult to indicate. You can go anywhere in the three inner arrondissements, and you will not be disappointed. Walk year after year and you will begin to wonder whether you ever will follow out the oft-

PARIS VISTAS

formed resolution of returning to America to live. In the Seventh Arrondissement the region between the Quai d'Orsay and the Rue de Sevres, the Rue des Saints-Pères and the Invalides is the Faubourg Saint-Germain, where are to be found the finest residences in Paris, far ahead of anything in the Etoile Quarter. But unless you are lucky enough to have the *entrée* to aristocratic and diplomatic Paris, you can only guess at the beauty of the gardens whose trees thrust alluring limbs over high walls and at what is behind the stately portals of the *hôtels*.

In the Sixth Arrondissement the Boulevard Saint-Germain and the Rue de Vaugirard are the best streets to take as guides in your wanderings. Between the boulevard and the river, and between the boulevard and the Rue de Vaugirard, most of the streets are thoroughfares, a swarming mass of autos and wagons and push-carts, between five and seven.

What shall I say of the Fifth Arrondissement, most fascinating of all to me because I know it best at nightfall, I suppose? My favorite nightfall walk in Paris is behind the Panthéon. Start at the Place Maubert, on the Boulevard Saint-Germain, climb the Rue da la Mont Sainte-Geneviève. Turn to the left through the Rue Descartes, and you will find yourself in the Rue Mouffetord. Here you are as far from modern Paris as you will ever get. You walk for nearly a mile with no interruption of trams and omnibuses. No taxi cab

WALKS AT NIGHTFALL

or truck would dream of using the Rue Mouffetard as a thoroughfare. And yet, on the Rue Mouffetard, to eat and drink and dress yourself and furnish your house, you can buy all you need. You do not have to hunt for it: it is displayed before your eyes. The Rue Mouffetard. Here you are as far from modern Paris time, and I might shrink from some of the foodstuffs, if not all, it offers, were I to buy by sunlight. But by flickering torch-light the Rue Mouffetard is Araby to me. And I never come out at the Avenue des Gobelins without a sigh. Why is n't the Rue Mouffetard just a bit longer?

CHAPTER XIV

AFTER-DINNER COFFEE

A VISITOR once asked me how it was possible for Paris to maintain so many cafés, and said how distressing it was to see so many women in them and there was more drinking than in New York or London—question and inferences all in one breath, just like my sentence. My friend was bewildered because he did not understand the *raison d'être* of the café in French life. He thought that a café was a place to drink according to the American notion of drinking. The women were bad women in his eyes and the men on the downward path. To one who holds this curious notion the number of cafés in Paris and the crowds in them and at the little tables in front of them are inexplicable and alarming. Cafés, restaurants, *brasseries* and *zincs* line the boulevards, and there are at least two or three to a block in every street. Owing to the intensive apartment house life shops of all kinds are more frequent in Paris than elsewhere, but you may have to walk to get anything you want. To drink or eat, no. The place is right under your nose.

All restaurants serve drinks. I know of only one

AFTER-DINNER COFFEE

non-alcoholic restaurant in Paris: that is the vegetarian place on the Rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs! If you did not eat in a "drinking-place," you'd pretty soon starve. Many of the big cafés do not serve food. Some have one dish, called the *plat du jour*, with cheese and fruit afterwards. Others have oysters and snails and their own *specialités*. Others, while not advertising meals, serve a *table d'hôte* or a very limited *à la carte*. In all, however, hot coffee is to be had at all hours and every kind of a drink is on tap. The *zincs* are little bits of places where you get hot coffee, beer or a *petit verre*. Coal and wood merchants also serve alcohol. In the more humble streets (which are to be found in every quarter), cafés are dirty stuffy places, known as *débits*. Rare is the "drinking-place" that has not its *terrasse*. This may be only a chair or two and a single table on the side-walk.

The *terrasses* of restaurants as well as of cafés are maintained throughout the winter. It is a familiar sight to see a table-cloth flapping in the wind, held down by a salt-cellar and a mustard-pot. The days are few that you cannot sit out. It does not get very cold in Paris and an awning protects you from the rain. In some of the boulevard cafés the *terrasses* are actually heated by stoves!

The Paris café is wholly different from the American saloon. None thinks it is wrong to drink in France. Total abstinence is a funny American idea to our

PARIS VISTAS

friends overseas. Taking a drink in public is as natural as putting your arm around your girl in public. Everybody does it. You rarely see a drunken man or woman just as you rarely see poverty. Alcoholism (by which is meant poisoning the system and breaking down the health by excessive use of alcohol) is an evil France has to combat as much as any other country. But the French have never had it preached to them that the evil can be overcome by prohibiting the use of wines and liquors or by the example of a part of the community voluntarily abstaining for the sake of weaker brothers. The anti-alcohol movement in France does exist. As the maintenance of war legislation against absinthe and kindred spirits proves, it has public opinion behind it. But the connotation of *alcoholic* is limited in France. The Gallic sense of proportion prevents the French from extremes in anything. Since they do not drink to excess, they have no reason for regarding beer and wines as alcohol. Often your French friends tell you that they never touch alcohol. In the same breath they offer you delicious wine.

Scruples understood and appreciated in America are often meaningless when you live in another country. Stick to your white ribbon principles if you will, but do not persist in your notion that cafés are places where it is not respectable to be seen. Why cut yourself off from an indispensable feature of Paris life?

The hour of the *apéritif* finds the *terrasses* of the



The Panthéon from the Rue Soufflot

AFTER-DINNER COFFEE

cafés crowded. You may have difficulty in getting a place outside. Having worked all day and perhaps having walked home, the Parisian saves a half hour before dinner for his appetizer. He sits at the little table in front of his favorite café and watches the passing crowd. It is no hastily swallowed cocktail, leaning against a bar and shut off from eyes like mine by a swinging screen door. It is no prerogative of man. Sometimes on week days and always on Sundays, his wife and children are with him.

When we were living in the Rue Servandoni, we got into the habit of going out for our after-dinner coffee. The reason was probably the same as that of most Parisians. Living quarters were small. The baby was asleep in the front room. Toward the end of the month especially we were not always in a position to keep the tiny dining-room fire replenished all evening. We thought of the gas bill. We liked to get a little air. We were fond of music. Arm in arm we would walk along the Rue Vaugirard to the Boul' Miche. From the Closerie des Lilas near the Observatoire to the river you had plenty of choice for your after-dinner coffee. At the foot of the Rue Soufflot is the Café du Panthéon. On the corner of the Rue de la Sorbonne is the Café d'Harcourt. Just off the boulevard, on the Rue de l'Ecole de Medecine, is the Taverne Pascal. These were our favorites. Pascal has no *terrasse*. We went there when it rained or when we thought of

PARIS VISTAS

Munich beer. Harcourt used to have a red-coated orchestra, and was the gayest place on the Boulevard Saint-Michel. At the Panthéon you paid two sous more, but the coffee was better. We never had to spend more than a franc for the two of us. A checker-board or cards could be had of the waiter. If you wanted to write letters, you asked for a blotter and pen and ink.

Just around the corner from us, on the Rue de Tournon, was the Concerts-Rouges, the blessed institution to make unnecessary the tragedy of would-be musician and singer failing to get a hearing. Pianists, violinists, cellists and future opera stars had a place to put on their own concerts at little cost. We were the audience. Of course it was not all amateurs: the management had to promise an audience. A good orchestra gathered around the stove in the middle of the room. You sat in a chair such as they have in school rooms, whose right arm spread out generously to give space for your notebook. There was room, too, for coffee-cup or stein. The only rule of the Concerts-Rouges was silence. You could move your chair away from the music. When you were not interested in the number, you read or wrote. Many theses and dramas and poems have been worked out in the Concerts-Rouges.

The Boulevard du Montparnasse, which has since become our home, was not too far from the Rue Servandoni to be frequented for after-dinner coffee. The

AFTER-DINNER COFFEE

Dôme, on the corner of the Boulevard Raspail, and Versailles and Lavenue, opposite the Gare Montparnasse, were after-dinner coffee haunts where friendships that have lasted through the years were formed. We still sit there. Lavenue, after five years of silence, again offers music. But we miss Schumacker, beloved of the Quarter, who fell, they say, in the ranks of the enemy. His face is one of those I cannot forget. I see him now, blue eyes and bright smile and bushy hair, bending over his violin on the little platform by the piano. He seemed to play his heart out and never tired. I always like to write my letters at Lavenue. When I called for "*de quoi écrire*," the waiter brought a tiny bottle of ink, spillable and square, sheets of ruled writing paper and the cheapest quality of manila envelopes in a black oilcloth folder, whose blotter never blotted. But you did not care. You listened to the music after each page until it dried.

CHAPTER XV

REPOS HEBDOMADAIRE

IN Philadelphia you still find shutters with the rings at the middle of their closing edge. To one of the rings is tied a piece of tape. In my grandfather's house of a Sunday the shutters were together almost to the touching point and held that way by the tape tied to the other ring. A vertical bar of sunshine filtered through the slit. The parlor was cool and quiet. Nothing moved. My father told me that when he was a little boy he had to sit at one of those windows all Sunday afternoon memorizing passages from the Bible. I wonder if in America there are still many families who install in their children a repugnance for the Scriptures by this sort of torture, whose observance of Sunday is reached by a process of elimination of everything a normal person would instinctively choose to do on a day of rest, and where there are more don'ts for the children on Sunday than on Monday. Sunday seems to me a happier day in America now than it was twenty-five years ago. But for all that we do not enjoy it the way the French do. Until I lived in France I never knew the full meaning of what I was singing in the hymn, "O day of rest and gladness."

REPOS HEBDOMADAIRE

The French dress up for Sunday as we do. I suppose as large a proportion of the Parisians go to church as of Americans in any large city. But once mass is over the day is given to recreation—and recreation out of doors. What is more depressing than an English or American city on Sunday? Sunday in Paris is the most animated day of the week. The French word *endimanché* is translated in dictionaries "in Sunday best." It has a wider connotation. A place as well as a person can be *endimanché*. The word brings up to the mind of one who has lived in Paris crowds, laughter, fun, open air. How different from sitting on a chair in a room with bowed shutters when common sense would dictate getting your lungs filled with fresh air and worshipping God in communion with nature!

In the Rue Servandoni days we came to know the joy and benefit of the Continental Sunday. And ever since we have brought up our children to look forward to Sunday as the best day of the week, the out-of-doors day, when the family could be together from morning to night.

The great thing about Sunday in Paris is that fathers and mothers and children go out together, all bound for the same place, and stick together. The family includes grandfathers and grandmothers, who are always given the best places in the train, the choicest morsels to eat and who to the day of their death are the adored center of the family party. Mother carries the

PARIS VISTAS

filet, a big net with handles filled with good things to eat, and the baby too small to navigate alone is held in father's strong arms. You can tell little sisters—and even big ones—for they are dressed alike. Trams and trains for Versailles, the Bois de Boulogne, Saint-Germain-en-Laye and a dozen other equally attractive suburbs are not taken by assault. The family waits in line at the tram station, young and old clutching the precious little tickets that tell them when it is their turn to get places. Everybody has his chance, and there is no need to worry about grandmother or the baby. Trams are not overcrowded: there are seats for all. If there is not the money to go far from home, or if the weather is too threatening, each quarter has its park, the Luxembourg, Montsouris, Monceau, Buttes-Chaumont, Jardin des Plants, Vincennes, or the simple *squares*. For two cents you have the right to sit on chairs near the band-stand. First come, first served. The only restriction here is that baby-carriages must stay outside of the enclosure for music-lovers. In the baby-carriage zone, nobody minds if a baby howls: you may be in the same condition at the next minute.

Merry-go-rounds, Punch and Judy, swings and donkey-carts are everywhere to be found for the children. At four o'clock the woman with fresh rolls goes by. Hot *gauffrette* and hokey-pokey venders are always near at hand. If you do not want hokey-pokey, there is *coco* to drink. The innocent Sunday fun is not

REPOS HEBDOMADAIRE

“the kind of thing no-one would think of doing.” Once I was waiting for the wife of a professor of the Ecole de Guerre, who was later a brilliant general on the Marne. It was Sunday afternoon. She excused herself for being late. “I stopped in the square to listen to the band, and I had to have some *coco*. I never can pass a *coco* cart,” she explained. More than once have I seen a mother, elegantly dressed, come hurrying to the garden, sit down on a bench, and nurse a baby handed to her by a nurse in cap and ribbons. I have done that myself. Is there anything shocking about this? It is the natural out-of-doors instinct. Distinguished looking gentlemen wearing rosettes of the Legion of Honor head family excursions. They do not mind pushing baby-carriages, either.

On a good day the Seine boats are crowded. From Charenton to Saint-Cloud, there is an endless procession of boats on a Sunday. Parisians never tire of the spectacle of their city from the river. They name the bridges as they pass under them and tell their stories to the children. River clubs abound, and all Paris seems afloat in row-boats and canoes. From one end of the city to the other the banks of the Seine are lined with fishermen who seem never to become discouraged. Seine boating is not without its dangers. But in the Bois de Boulogne the most inexperienced learn to row and paddle in the shallow water of the lakes. A miniature railway crosses a corner of the Bois from the Porte

PARIS VISTAS

Maillot to the Jardin d'Acclimatation, where kiddies can ride on elephants and camels or be drawn by ostriches and zebras.

No park is too small to have its ducks and swans with unlimited capacity for bread-crumbs, its band-stand, its open-air restaurant where drinks are served and you bring your own food, and its place without grass where you can stretch your own tennis-net between trees.

The Seine boats, the subway, and many tram lines land you at the foot of the Eiffel Tower. An elevator quickly takes you above Paris for a view that was unique before the days of aeroplanes. Near by is the Great Wheel, always revolving from morning to night on Sundays. Parisians do not feel the lack of the roofs of skyscrapers when they want to look down on their city.

For several hundred yards around the fortifications of Paris the law forbids the erection of permanent buildings: at least, if you do build in stone and mortar, you risk having your house destroyed, as many found to their cost in 1914. This enormous land surface, between the city and suburbs is covered with wooden shacks of rag-pickers and junk-dealers. Everyone seems to have a very small holding, as the ground is of little value either for residential or manufacturing purposes. Here thousands of Parisians own cabins and have miniature vegetable gardens, which they cultivate on Sunday, dreaming of the day when there will be

REPOS HEBDOMADAIRE

enough money in the bank to retire permanently to some quiet country spot. They come home with arms filled with vegetables and flowers.

In the year at the Rue Servandoni Herbert and I started to explore on Sundays the *banlieue* of Paris. Despite increasing "encumbrances" of different ages, we have managed to keep up our delightful excursions from early spring to chestnut time, and often on winter Sundays. But we do not pretend to have exhausted in ten years the possibilities of Sunday afternoons. We are always discovering new excursions for the *repos hebdomadaire*.

CHAPTER XVI

“MANY WATERS CANNOT QUENCH LOVE”

HIGHER than 1883; higher than 1879; higher than 1876; higher than 1802; higher than 1740; higher than 1699; equalling the flood of 1658, the worst in the history of Paris; finally breaking all records, both as to height attained and as to damage done, such was the daily crescendo of the press in recording the progress of *la Grande Crue* during the last week of January, 1910. No investing army, no Commune, no revolution, threatened Paris this time. The best friend of Paris had turned against her. For several days the older generation, who passed through the trials of 1871, recalled painful memories and feared a worse peril from the Seine than from the German invaders or the Internationalists.

In the third week of January, from Tuesday to Friday, we were concerned over the news of devastation wrought by floods in different parts of France. There was much damage and suffering in our own suburbs. Sympathetic editorials appeared in the newspapers: relief funds were opened. On Friday afternoon, when we were taking a walk along the *quais* of the Rive Gauche, we had no suspicion what was going to happen.

"MANY WATERS CANNOT QUENCH LOVE"

Only on Saturday did Paris begin to worry for herself. Neuilly and Courbevoie were flooded. Loroy reported ten drowned. The Seine, within the city limits, suddenly rose ten feet. The first subway tunnel, that of the "Métro" from the Chatelet under the Cité to the Place Saint-Michel, was filled with water. The river spread into the original "Métro" line under the Rue de Rivoli. The second tunnel, that of the "Nord-Sud," was an easy prey because it was still in the course of construction. The Gare d'Orléans was invaded. Its tracks, which parallel the left bank of the river under the *quais*, disappeared. The Gare d'Invalides, whose line runs the opposite direction along the Seine, was also flooded.

On Sunday morning we heard that in the Rue Félicien-David people were rowing around in boats. We thought this interesting enough to invest in a *fiacre*, and took Scruppie in the afternoon to Auteuil. On the way, we got out and wormed ourselves through the crowd to hear the waters swishing around the staircases down to the train levels at the two flooded stations. When we reached the Rue Félicien-David and actually saw people in boats, we bought photographs from an enterprising hawker, wanting to preserve this souvenir of Paris. Little did most of the crowd dream that within a few days they would not have to go farther than their own front windows to see such a sight!

PARIS VISTAS

On Monday evening everyone realized that the flood was not a curious spectacle but a disaster. The river had been rising at the steady rate of an inch an hour, and by nightfall was sixteen feet above its normal height. Herbert decided to report the flood. This justified a taxi-cab by the day. As this was an unheard-of luxury for the Gibbons family, which had few chances to ride in automobiles at that stage of its evolution, of course the baby and I decided to profit by the opportunity, even though it was winter and not the best time of the year for joy-rides. Anyway, I was interested in the great drama that was being enacted, and we could tell Scruppie about it later. From notes taken at the time, I am able to reconstruct the story of days as stirring as any of those during the Great War.

On Monday afternoon we went up and down the *quais*. All the river industries, with their wooden buildings squatting on the river bank under the shelter of the solid ramparts of the *quais*, were swept away. Freight and customs stations and depots came within the grasp of the river. At the Entrepôt de Bercy and the Halle aux Vins, barrels of the spirits and wine were first gently floated and then drawn out into the angry stream. The water in the Nord-Sud tunnel was threatening the Gare Saint-Lazare. The Eiffel Tower moved slightly.¹ The cellars of the public buildings

¹ My critic says this is not true. He did not see it, and he does n't

"MANY WATERS CANNOT QUENCH LOVE"

along the river front—Palais de Justice, Chambre de Deputés, Hôtel de Ville, Monnaie, Institut, Chancellerie de la Légion d'Honneur, Grand Palais, Louvre—were gradually flooded until their furnishings were extinguished. At Billancourt we saw the inundation of the Renault automobile works and the Voisin aeroplane factory. The effect of the latter disaster reached as far as Heliopolis in Egypt, where an Aviation Week was scheduled. In those days aeroplanes were in their infancy and depended upon a single factory for their motors.

Tuesday morning a heavy snow was falling. Awakened early by an explosion, we thought that the Pont de l'Alma was being blown up. This heroic measure had in fact been contemplated by the city engineers in order to prevent the backing up of the water into the Champs-Elysées district. The flood was rapidly gaining street after street in Auteuil and Charenton. A rumor was afloat that we would soon be cut off from the outside world. This meant a run on provisions and profiteering by shopkeepers. We yielded to the common impulse and laid in kerosene and potatoes for ourselves and condensed milk for Scruppie,

think it is possible that the Tower would have remained standing, if it had moved during the flood of 1910. But I find this statement in my notes. Why shouldn't the Eiffel Tower move? I reminded my critic that we had seen together on our honeymoon at Pisa a tower that had been leaning for centuries. I do not intend to cross out this statement about the most striking landmark of Paris, the participant in most of my vistas.

PARIS VISTAS

paying double prices and thinking we were lucky in having a chance to buy.

On Wednesday morning commenced what we regarded at the time as a real reign of terror. Underground communication ceased. Owing to the inundation of their power houses, electric-trams stopped running. The subway station at Bercy collapsed. Sewers began to burst in all quarters of the city. A subterranean lake formed under the Rue Royal from the Place de la Concorde to the Madeleine, and the street was closed to traffic. In front of the Louvre and at the Pont de la Concorde soldiers worked night and day raising the parapets higher and building barricades with paving-stones and bags of cement. By evening the water had reached a height of thirty feet, breaking all records since 1799. Refugees began to pour into the city by the thousands and were lodged in the old Seminary of Saint-Suplice near us, the Panthéon and other public buildings. The Red Cross began to be displayed throughout the city. Boats and sailors arrived from seaports. The markets required substantial police protection to prevent mobs from taking them by storm.

On Thursday and Friday the fight against the ever-rising waters was continued with desperate energy. In spite of all that human skill and labor could accomplish, the Seine pushed its way over parapets and through barricades, flooding rapidly the *quais* and ad-

"MANY WATERS CANNOT QUENCH LOVE"

joining quarters. By means of subways and sewers (channels opened to the river by man's hand and that had not existed in the seventeenth-and-eighteenth-century floods), districts far from the river suffered equally. Auteuil, Grenelle, Charenton, Bercy were submerged. On either side of the Trocadéro the palatial private homes of the *quais* were in the Seine up to the second story. The river appropriated to itself the entire length of Cours-la-Reine from the Pont de l'Alma to the Pont de la Concorde, reached the fashionable restaurants at the foot of the Avenue des Champs-Elysées, and partly surrounded the two palaces of Fine Arts, souvenirs of the Exposition of 1900. The streets between the Avenue des Champs-Elysées and the river formed a transplanted Venice.

Hotels and stores on the Rue de Rivoli, the Théâtre Français—and even the Opéra—found their heat and light cut off by the attack of the Seine. Far away from the *quais*, in the neighborhood of the Gare Saint-Lazare, the Seine, following the subway tunnel, burst forth into the Place du Havre and the Cour de Rome. Hasty barricades were of no avail. One could hardly trust his eyes when he looked up the Boulevard Haussmann from the Opéra and saw boats flitting back and forth as far as Saint-Augustin and the Boulevard Malesherbes. On the Rive Gauche the aspect of Paris grew even more alarming. The Esplanade des Invalides and the Quai d'Orsay joined the Seine. Sol-

PARIS VISTAS

diers threw a pontoon bridge across the Esplanade for pedestrians. But taxi-cabs and buses were compelled to plunge into the water hub-high. We saw motor-drawn vehicles stalled because the water had reached their engines, while the old-fashioned *cochers* went merrily by, proud of their superiority. All the people in *fiacres* had to do was to put their feet up on the *cocher's* box. The Chamber of Deputies and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were approachable by boat. The angle formed by the Boulevard Saint-Germain, the Quai d'Orsay and the Rue du Bac was all under water. In this angle the Rue d'Université and the Rue de Lille were practically inaccessible. We who lived in the Latin, Luxembourg and Montparnasse Quarters could reach the Seine only by the Rue Dauphine or the Boulevard Saint-Michel. For increasing torrents soon covered the Rue des Saints-Pères, the Rue Bonaparte and the Rue de Seine. We had never realized before how the early builders of Paris, in their determination to stick to the river for purposes of defence, had reclaimed ground much lower than the flood level of the Seine, relying upon the masonry of the *quais* to keep back the river. In modern times we have undetermined the natural defences of the Rive Gauche by bringing our railways to the center of the city, by our sewers and by the subways. When you are on a Seine river-boat, you can see all along the river how we have opened up the city to floods. Paris,

"MANY WATERS CANNOT QUENCH LOVE"

honeycombed underground, fell an easy prey to the fury of the river. The very skill that added to the material comfort and well-being of the city made Paris vulnerable when the unexpected and unprecedented happened.

The Jardin des Plantes, set apart originally for botanical purposes as its name indicates, has gradually become the Paris "Zoo." Many American tourists go there because it is the place where Cuvier worked and do not realize that it is the home of wild animals also. The Jardin d'Acclimatation in the Bois de Boulogne is more visited, and I have often heard my compatriots express surprise at the paucity of what they think is the Paris "Zoo." The Jardin des Plantes is less fashionable but much richer in its variety of animals. As it is on the river, it was invaded by the flood. In the first days, before we realized the calamity of the rising waters, the Jardin des Plantes was thronged with visitors. Interest centered around the bear-pits. The polar bears alone seemed to enjoy splashing in the icy waters. The climbers were soon treed. It was an engineering feat to rescue them with planks and prod them into portable cages. The non-climbers narrowly escaped drowning. We watched them lifted out by cranes, caught in sturdy nets. This was the only means of rescue as they tore with their claws the bands that were first placed around them by men whose only experience had been lifting horses and cows from pits.

When the river broke all records, the whole garden

PARIS VISTAS

was flooded. Many keepers were prevented from reaching their posts. The police took charge. Food supplies were lacking, and the few keepers on hand did not dare to let their dangerous charges loose. The furnaces were flooded and there was no heat. In the monkey-houses the shivering animals, perched high, scolded and growled with chattering teeth. We saw them form a swinging bridge to lift out of the water's reach one of their number who seemed unable to climb. Lions and tigers, cold and hungry, roared and dashed themselves against their bars until the belated order arrived to shoot them. The hippopotamus, contrary to tradition, drowned. Only the birds, proud possessors of the secret of aviation, were superior to the calamity. Here was the occasion for a new Noah. But alas, not even an ark arrived, and it took Paris many years to restock the garden. Even now there are no giraffes like those that used to look at us from their sublime heights.

On the River Droite, the Gare de Lyon was an island. Nearer the flood took possession of the Quai des Grands Augustins with its famous book shop, and, on the other side of the Place Saint-Michel, the quaint old streets up to the Place Maubert. A depression there, where the walls of old Paris once stood, brought the flood up to the roofs of some little houses.

In the Rue Servandoni we escaped the flood: for the ground rises steadily from the Boulevard Saint-Germain

"MANY WATERS CANNOT QUENCH LOVE"

to Montparnasse. This put us considerably above the reach of the river. On Friday afternoon, when we were facing a danger that stupified all, the flood was at its height. We conceived the idea of viewing it from the top of Notre-Dame. It was a long process for us, as hundreds of others thought of the same thing, and we could not both go up together. I waited with the baby in the taxi while Herbert *faisait la queue* (if you do not know what this expression means it would be well to learn it before visiting Paris!) After he came down I had my turn. I was cold enough to enjoy the climb. The view from the top of the tower was unique. The next day would have been too late. We caught the flood at its flood. Paris was swimming. On both sides the cathedral had become an angry menacing rush of water. Debris and wreckage was choked against the bridge piers. One realized that habit had given us a sense of proportion to the cityscape. The effect of diminished ground-floors and abbreviated lamp-posts and trees was sinister. It was as if elemental forces, subdued and imprisoned when the earth's surface cooled, had escaped. As I looked down on the scene, I felt that abysmal water was breaking forth. Where would it end?

After leaving Notre-Dame we rode up one side of the river to Auteuil and down the other, frequently forced to make long detours. Our remorseless enemy was making sad inroads upon the Ile-Saint Louis, and it

PARIS VISTAS

seemed as if it would soon sweep away the Cité. The Sainte-Chapelle was almost afloat, as were the Conciergerie and the Tour de l'Horloge. The river surpassed the parapets. The arches of most of the bridges had vanished. The colossal statues of the Pont de l'Alma were submerged to their chins. At the Pont d'Auteuil the water reached the wreath around the letter N. Although the newspapers warned us that they might be swept away, the bridges were crowded with sightseers. Curiosity is stronger than fear. The current carried every conceivable object. At the Pont d'Arcole the calamity was forgotten in the sport of watching huge barrels sucked one by one under an arch and jumping high in the air as they came out on the other side.

Returning from Auteuil as darkness was falling, we had to pass above the Trocadéro, the Rue de Bassano and the Champs-Élysées. Newsboys were crying extras: "The river still rises!" We were in darkness. No lights on the Avenue des Champs-Élysées. An engineer regiment was fighting the water in the Place de la Concorde by the light of acetylene lamps. The wheezing of an old pump taking water out of the cellar of Maxim's was the only sign of life on the gay Rue Royale. To return to the Rive Gauche we had to go down to the Pont-Neuf. The other bridges were now barred. Does it not speak eloquently for the genius of our ancestors that, with bridges every few hundred

“MANY WATERS CANNOT QUENCH LOVE”

feet, the only one that could be trusted—the sole link between Rive Droite and Rive Gauche—was the work of Henri IV at the end of the sixteenth century?

Our *chauffeur*, keeping up a running comment in which the hint as to his expectation of a substantial *pourboire* was uppermost, picked his way as best he could back to the Rue Servandoni. We saw strange sights that night, wooden paving-blocks floating in a messy jumble; a few restaurants endeavoring to dispel the gloom with candles; soldiers with fixed bayonets guarding the inundated quarters. It was bitter cold and the glare of their fires was weirdly silhouetted in the rising waters, mingled with the shadows of deserted houses.

The river reached thirty-one feet seven inches at midnight Friday. During the rest of the night and Saturday it remained stationary. Saturday evening it began to fall slightly, and on Sunday all Paris was out in gay holiday attire to view the damage and to celebrate the retreat of the enemy. Lightheartedness returned immediately. Why worry about what was over? This is the credo of Paris. But we had seen during the dark week of flood-fighting a prophetic revelation of the real character of the people among whom we lived. Little did we dream that the precious qualities shown in the flood crisis were to be brought out more than once again in future years. In 1914 we were not surprised at the courage, persistence, unflagging energy and

PARIS VISTAS

solidarity with suffering of the Parisians. The flood, as I look back on it, did more damage to Paris than was done during the war by German bombs. It was a more formidable enemy than the Germans. I remember the comment of my old Emilie: "*Mon Dieu*, this thing is worse than fire. You can fight fire with water, but with what can you fight water?"

When the newspapers Sunday morning assured us that the danger was over, I realized how wonderful had been the struggle of civilians and soldiers against the elemental. It was a manifestation of their love for their city. And in the quick and generous relief given on all sides—and unostentatiously—to those who were driven from their homes was the proof that hearts beat fast and firm to help fellow-citizens as well as to save the historic monuments that line the banks of the Seine. That is why, when Herbert went out to preach in the Rue Roquépine church, I gave him his text from the Hebrew songster: "Many waters cannot quench love; neither can the floods drown it."

CHAPTER XVII

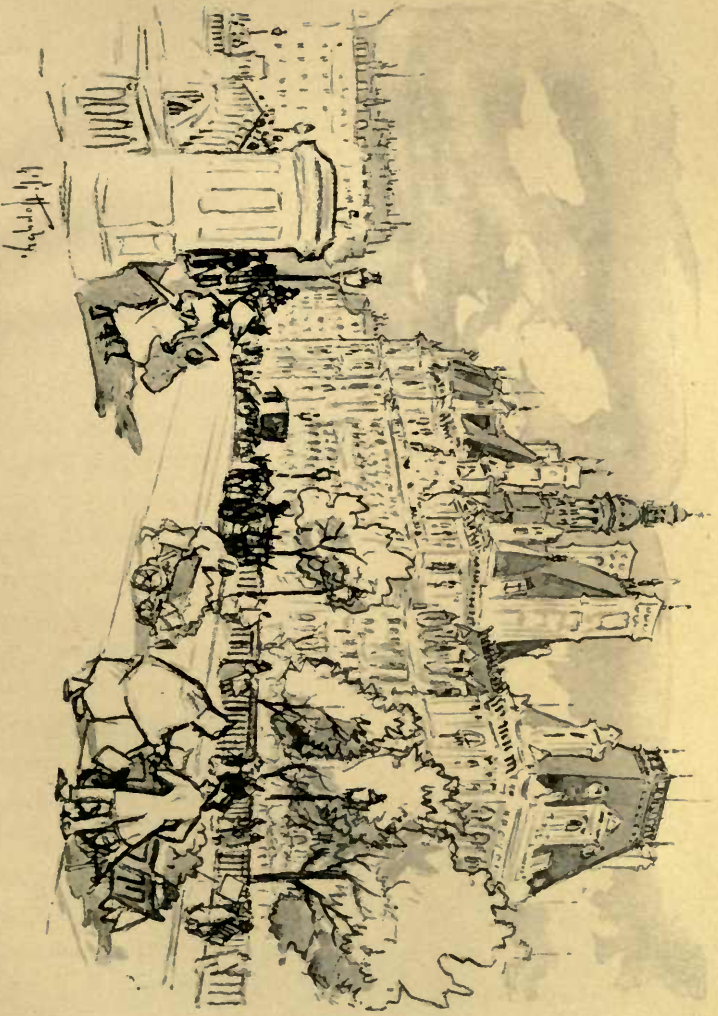
REAL PARIS SHOWS

FOR many years the old expression that we can't get rid of, "the Salon," has been a misnomer. There are five Salons, and, as going to see the season's pictures and statues is a form of amusement and distraction in Paris on a par with theatrical productions, all five are equally important. Even if one desires to judge by the standard of art, establishing categories of excellence and importance is impossible. The longer one lives in Paris, the more one realizes the absolute lack of criteria in judging artistic achievement. Painters and sculptors, poets and playwrights and authors, singers and actors do not acknowledge the existence of the jury of public opinion, much less newspaper critics, art juries, *premiers prix*, medals, and organizations. Schools are legion: standards are the taste and liking of the individual. So we let those who claim temperament and genius have their chance, and we go to the five Salons with equal zest, just as we look constantly for lights under a bushel to please us far from the Académie Française and other bodies of the Institut. In June the two "regular" Salons exhibit separately, although simultaneously, in the Grand Palais. There is an

PARIS VISTAS

autumn Salon of the progressives. The humorists and cartoonists have their own Salon. Last, but not least (in numbers!) the independents exhibit what they please in wooden buildings erected on Cours-la-Reine.

On a late June afternoon in 1914, I stood on the steps of the Grand Palais, after an afternoon in the two big Salons—I mean to say principal Salons—no, in order to escape criticism let me put it “most universally accepted as important” Salons. It was raining hard. I never saw the water come down in sheets the way it did that afternoon. Cabs were of course unobtainable. The wind made umbrellas no protection. And I was wearing my best frock. What a bother! Hundreds waited as I did, preferring the additional fatigue of standing herded almost to suffocation to spoiling their clothes. Suddenly, the rumor spread of a flood, a flood as disastrous as 1910. Only this time the water came from above. So heavy was the rainfall that sewers were bursting and new excavations for subway extension were caving in. Enterprising newsboys brought us the evening papers with scare headlines. Not far from where we were an hour earlier choirboys, going home from practice, were swallowed up in the earth in front of Saint-Philippe-de-Roule. A taxi-cab hurrying along the Rue du Faubourg-Saint-Honoré disappeared. The earth opened up under a newspaper *kiosque* and a shoe store at the corner of the Boulevard Haussmann and the Rue du Havre. *Eboulements*



Hôtel de Ville from the Pont d'Arcole

REAL PARIS SHOWS

everywhere. The Place de l'Alma was a gaping hole, tramway tracks and pavements falling into the new subway station.

My mind went back to the dark week of 1910, which I have just described. Comments of the Salon crowd were identical in reaction to those we heard after the flood. "Outrageous, the *incurie* of the municipal authorities! Something should be done to protect us against this constant digging. Why, it won't be safe to stick your nose out of doors. These awful accidents—in Paris, mind you! Something *must* be done!" For an hour it went on like that. Then the storm stopped. The sun, still high at six in June, broke through the clouds. The wind died down. I started up to the Champs-Élysées with the crowd. More newsboys! This time the principal headline announced the trial of Madame Caillaux. The Parisians—and I with them—went down into the Métro. An hour ago such a risky undertaking would have caused us to shudder with horror. No more underground for us! As I waited in line for my ticket, the man in front of me said to his wife, "Now do you really think that Madame Caillaux—"

I laughed to myself. The Medes and Persians boasted of not changing their laws. The Parisians could boast of not changing their mentality. A danger over is a danger forgotten. Hurrah for the new sensation! My readers may think me guilty of skipping

PARIS VISTAS

suddenly backwards and forwards in this book from one thing to something entirely different. But remember that I am writing in Paris and about Paris. Paris is like that. I went forward to 1914 to get an illustration for 1910. The very day after we were sure the flood was going down, we lost interest in the Seine. Our great project of an emergency channel for turning the Seine at flood-time died in twenty-four hours and will not be revived until Paris is actually being once more submerged. *Actualité* is a word for which we Anglo-Saxons have no equivalent. It means the thing-of-the-moment-which-is-of-prime-interest. And the press can create a new *actualité* overnight.

The Government did this several times during the war in order to relieve a tense internal political situation. During the last German drive we had the affair of the false Rodins, and we turned to read about the new statue exposed as a fake each day before we looked for the new German advance. When the Clemenceau Cabinet was threatened, a twentieth-century Bluebeard, with the police daily discovering new wives, was dished up to us every morning in all the papers.

Back in 1910 we turned from the flood to *Chantecler*. After seven years of heralding and "puffing," after many mysterious delays that whetted the appetite, the management of the Théâtre de la Porte Saint-Martin announced that the curiosity of Paris would be rewarded at the end of January. The flood was the last

REAL PARIS SHOWS

postponement. The waters had hardly begun to recede before public interest was again centred upon *Chantecler*. When the *répétition générale* was given on February sixth, oldest inhabitants and historians of the French theatre were agreed that not even *Hernani* nor yet *Le Mariage de Figaro* had created so universal an anticipatory interest. Was *Chantecler* merely an eccentric literary endeavor or was it to prove a practical theatrical venture? More than any living writer Rostand had been able to win for his plays recognition as literature and recognition as "money-winners" in the theatres of foreign countries as well as his own.

Looking back over a decade I may be wrong in comparing a past with a present event. But I honestly believe that there was far more interest in Paris in what was going on at the Porte-Saint-Martin on the evening of February 6, 1910, than in what took place at Versailles on the afternoon of June 28, 1919. Interest was lost in the Treaty of Versailles before it was signed. *Chantecler* had a fighting chance to succeed. Just as the curtain started to rise before the cream of French literary and theatrical circles there was a cry of "*Pas encore!*" M. Jean Coquelin sprang up from the prompter's box in conventional evening dress. Was there to be another postponement—a fiasco in the presence of the invited guests? No: for M. Coquelin began to recite a prologue, inimitably phrased. He told the audience that they were to be introduced to a

PARIS VISTAS

barnyard as soon as the farmer's family had gone. It was Sunday afternoon, and when the chores were finished, the animals would be left to themselves. As he spoke, numerous illustrative sounds came from the stage. We heard the young girls going off with a song on their lips, the wheels of a receding carriage, the bells of the village church, and shots of hunters out for their Sunday sport. Then M. Coquelin disappeared, and the curtain went up.

The first two acts were wildly received. The third act was too long and modernisms marred the beauty of the verse. The lyrical continuity of the play was broken by the introduction of a purely satirical effect. The real reason for lack of sustained interest was the mental confusion and weariness of having to imagine the actors as animals. The human mind is incapable of receiving through the sense of vision a representation of the unreal, where the real is at the same time glaringly evident, and keep clear, harmonious, concordant images. No ingenuity could make an actor's figure like a bird's. And then humans do not differ in size like birds. There was no way of approximating widely different proportions of the rooster, the black-bird, the pheasant and the nightingale.

In watching *Chantecler* I had the same painful impression of how we are handicapped by the multiplicity of necessities we have created for ourselves in modern days as I had in watching the flood. Our evolution

REAL PARIS SHOWS

has bound us fast with chains of our own forging. Physically and mentally, we have manufactured so many props to lean upon that we can no longer stand on our own feet. *Chantecler* cannot be compared with the animal plays of Aristophanes for in Greek drama there was no attempt to present to the spectators a visual image in harmony with the audile image. Nor even in Shakespeare's time was the dramatist limited by the difficulties of a *mise en scène*. A Midsummer Night's Dream was an easier proposition for the Elizabethan actor than for Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree, despite the properties of Her Majesty's Theatre, the hidden orchestra playing Mendelssohn's music, and the magic aerial ballets.

Our next "real show" was the political campaign for the new Chamber of Deputies that was to inaugurate the fifth decade of the Third Republic on June first. Herbert spent an inordinate amount of time, I thought, in puzzling out the voting strength of the Ministerialist and Opposition groups, and patiently wrote articles for American magazines about Radical Socialists, Clemenceau and Caillaux, to vary his Turkish articles. But whether he treated of French leaders and politics or of Venizelos or of the Young Turks, his articles invariably came back with a polite rejection slip. We put them away and sold them later, when they were out of date, for more than we would have gotten then. Our money for writing came from the *Herald*, and we realized that

PARIS VISTAS

if you want to make your living by writing the anchor to a newspaper is not lightly to be weighed.

But though I was not even mildly interested in Radical Socialists, Republicans of the Left, Independent Socialists, Progressists and what not, I did like to go to political meetings. They were good for your French and good for the opportunity of studying the influence of politics upon the Latin character. How the French love meetings! They use our English word instead of *réunion*, just as they always speak of self-government. But they are not at all like us in politics. There are as many parties as there are leaders, and their campaigns center around personalities, not principles.

In 1910, the first round of the election was on April 24, and the final round on May 8. It just happened that May first was a Sunday, and fell between the two election Sundays. Throughout the Third Republic, Labor Day has been a time of fear and trembling for the Paris *bourgeoisie*. The Cabinet is always anxious on May first. You never can tell what is going to happen when crowds gather in Paris: so the wise Government does not allow trouble to be started. Encouraged by the success of their Ferrer demonstration on the Boulevard de Clichy a few months before, the revolutionary elements decided to make May Day a big event with the hope of influencing the second round of the elections. Premier Briand decided there would be

REAL PARIS SHOWS

no May Day parade. Believing that the Government would not dare to come into conflict with them in the midst of their election struggle, workingmen's unions plastered Paris with boastful posters announcing a monster demonstration in the Bois de Bologne, followed by a parade to the Place de la Concorde. This was in open defiance to the law, which requires a permit for gatherings in the open air and for parades. But M. Briand was equal to the occasion. Saturday night he threw twenty thousand troops into Paris. They bivouacked in the Place de la Concorde, the Place de l'Etoile, and in the Bois. I took Christine to church. After the service, we went to the Bois for lunch. There were troops on every road in the part of the Bois indicated in the posters as the workingmen's rendez-vous. Here and there little tents with the Red Cross flag were pitched, and to make the picture more impressive doctors in white coats stood before the door. This scared the workingmen more than the soldiers did. We saw many of them in their blue blouses. But they took care not to stop or to walk in numbers.

The *bourgeoisie* were able to rest easy. Assured that order would be kept, fashionable Paris flocked in great numbers to the Longchamp races. Of course we went, too. As Herbert had a story, he bought the best seats. We were not far from President Fallières, and we saw the spring fashions. Scrappie created as much of a sensation as some of the gowns. People who fre-

PARIS VISTAS

quent Longchamp are not in the habit of bringing babies with them. But with me it is always, "love me, love my child."

The unions did not have good luck in the spring of 1910. But no more did the clericals and monarchists. Hopes of a clerical reaction were dissipated. Briand was as bitter against the orders as against the unions. The royalists no longer count. We had many royalist friends. Some we knew well enough to ask, "How goes the propaganda?" And they knew us well enough to answer, "*Pas de blague! C'est à rire!*" "Stop teasing me: it's a joke!" The Duke of Orleans has about as much chance of being King of France as he has of being President of the United States. In our estimates of political conditions are we not too apt to judge France by her checkered past? There is no government in Europe more assured of stability than the French Republic: and this was as true in 1910 as it is in 1919.

Public lectures are a source of diversion to Parisians. We Americans think that we are great on listening to ourselves and others talk. But crowds in France do not need a political campaign, a religious revival or a return from near the North Pole to come together for a lecture. The most surprising topics, treated by men who are not in the public eye, draw attentive and assiduous audiences. Every day you have a wealth of choice in free lectures in Paris. Some newspapers

REAL PARIS SHOWS

publish the lecture program of the day just as naturally as they publish the theatrical offerings. At the Sorbonne, the Collège de France, the Ecole des Hautes-Etudes, the Ecole des Sciences Politiques, the Ecole des Chartes, the various Musées, and a host of other organizations offer single lectures and courses of lectures, week days and Sundays, either free or for a very slight fee. Many of the best courses in the various Facultés of the University of Paris are open to the public. Just to give one instance of popular interest in a rather technical subject, we used to attend the courses in physical geography of Professor Brunhes at the Collège de France. That year he was treating the formation of the mountainous center of France. If you did not go early, your chances of a seat were slim. There were always people standing thronged at the doors way out into the hall. This was not unusual. Any man who knew his subject and who could treat it with vigor and wit was sure of a *salle comble*. His subject did not matter. One did not have to spend money: free courses were as attractive as those for which a fee was charged. We discovered that Parisians never cease going to school. One is accustomed to see only young faces in the class-rooms of American universities. In the Sorbonne and the Collège de France there are students from sixteen to seventy.

If music is your passion, you can indulge it to the full in Paris. With the Opéra and Opéra Comique

PARIS VISTAS

and Opéra Municipal, there is something that you really want to see every day, and when the music does not particularly attract you, you can be sure of an excellent *divertissement*, as the ballet spectacle is called. Parisians love choregraphy. And there is choregraphy for all tastes and all moods. Paris is the mother of the spectacle called *revue*. We have borrowed the name but not the thing. No *revue* can be successful in Paris unless it possesses distinct quality in dances, costumes, *mise en scène*, and especially in the dialogue. The *revue* must reflect what Parisians are thinking about, take into account *actualités*, and interpret the events of the day. This means constant change in the dialogue, suppression of old and introduction of new scenes, to the point where you can go to the same *revue* in the third month of its run and find something entirely different as far as the lines go. For six months of the year the bands of the Garde Républicaine and of the regiments stationed in Paris play in the gardens and squares on Thursdays and Sundays. The Tuileries offers from April to October open-air opera and concerts in the heart of the city. You pay only for your chair.

The foreigner resident in Paris soon becomes aware that he does not have to leave his own quarter to find a good evening's entertainment. Real Paris shows are perhaps best to be found far from the Grands Boulevards, Clichy and Montmarte. From the heights of

REAL PARIS SHOWS

superior opportunity one does not want to look down upon the tourist and tell him that he does n't really see Paris. But the fact remains that when theatres and music-halls and restaurants become rendezvous for foreigners they insensibly lose their distinctive local atmosphere. They begin to cater to the tourist trade and give their audiences what they come to see. This is so true of the Folies-Bergère, the Casino de Paris and other large music-halls that the program has become half English and the actresses and choruses and clowns are as often of London as of Paris origin. The same foreign invasion on the stage, following the invasion in the audience, is to be found at the Ambassadeurs and Marigny on the Champs-Élysées. Alas! even the Concert Mayol type of music-hall has succumbed to the temptation of catering to the big world. English and American "turns" are dragged in by the ears to enliven *revues* for those who do not understand French, and the spectacle has become a totally un-Parisian jumble of vaudeville. But in the little music-halls of the quarters one still finds the atmosphere that Parisians love and a program offered to their taste. Herbert and I used to go to a theatre on the Boulevard Saint-Germain, just off the Boulevard Saint-Michel, where plays were typically Parisian. Another such theatre exists in the Rue de la Gaité. In the same street are three music-halls that put on songs and stage *revues* for Parisians. There are probably a hundred theatres

PARIS VISTAS

and music-halls of this kind whose names do not appear in Baedeker, and which have resisted successfully the first decade of cinema competition.

Last of all among real Paris shows the *foires* must not be forgotten. But I speak of these in another chapter because visiting them is a goal for a *promenade* and not the deliberate seeking of an evening's entertainment. You take in a *foire* as incidental to a walk, just as your *apéritif* or your after-dinner coffee is most often the price you pay for a seat to watch the passing crowd, which, when all is said and done, is the real Paris show.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE SPELL OF JUNE

MY critic points out that after having been so enthusiastic about walks at nightfall and having put myself on record as to the exceptional advantages of seeing Paris in the dark on winter afternoons, rain or shine, I shall be inconsistent in extolling daylight Paris. Why the spell of June, when your walks are wholly in daylight? If it were inconsistency, being a woman I should be within my rights to ask the critic what he expected. But is it inconsistent? I think not. If I love to go out in the rain, if I enjoy city streets at night time, it does not follow that I do not enjoy good weather and the long days of June. It is another aspect of Paris that we get in our walks. We have time to go on longer excursions. We "do" the river and open spaces more than old quarters. And, best of all, in the two Junes of our early married life, we took the baby with us on our strolls. I felt the spell of June when we returned to Paris from Turkey in 1909. I felt it more when we were going back to Turkey in 1910. And ever since, the Paris June has had a charm all its own, deepening with the

PARIS VISTAS

years. However I may like autumn and winter and spring, June is the best month. The spell is partly due to the knowledge that one is soon going off to the shore or mountains for the summer, and partly to the thought that it might be the last June. Each year we have felt that we ought to return to America in the autumn.

In the Rue Servandoni year, April and May were cold, wet months. Spring fever did not get us until June. Then we decided that all the wisdom and profit of our Paris year was not to be found in the Bibliothèque Nationale. We began to divorce ourselves from daily study by the excuse that we ought to get together a small library on Turkish history. Where could the books be bought more advantageously than on the *quais*? From the Pont des Saints-Pères to beyond Notre-Dame the parapets of the Rive Gauche are used by second-hand booksellers for the display of their wares. The *bouquinistes* clamp wooden cases on the stone parapets. You can go for more than a mile with the certainty of finding something interesting at an astonishingly low price. There is no more delightful form of loafing in the open air. The books are an excuse. They become a habit. In order to prevent the habit from growing costly, you must make out a budget. Some days you are only "finding out what is there"; other days, before leaving home, you divest yourself of all the money in your pocketbooks and wallet except

THE SPELL OF JUNE

what you feel you can afford to spend. Then only are you safe! I do not know of a more insidious temptation to buy what you do not need than loitering along the *quais* of the Rive Gauche. In a few days we spent all we could afford for Turkish history. But the afternoon walk started earlier and ended later. We never tired of the *quais* and the river. We watched fishermen and the barges. We were amused by the men who bathe and clip dogs. We explored the streets between the Seine and the Boulevard Saint-Germain. We stood on the Pont des Arts and watched the people coming home from work. We went often into Notre-Dame. We glued our noses to the window-glass of the art print shops around the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. We selected furniture (from the sidewalk!) displayed in the numerous antique shops of the Rue des Saints-Pères, the Rue Bonaparte and the Rue de Seine. We always came back at sunset, with the westward glow before us. That was when our oldest daughter got the taste of going to bed late.

The narrowest street in Paris is the Rue de Venise, which runs from the Rue Beaubourg across the Rue Saint-Martin to the Rue Quicampoix. But neither in itself nor in its location is it as picturesque as the Rue de Nevers, luring you from the Pont Neuf as you cross to the Rive Gauche. Nowhere else in Paris is one so completely held by the past as in the Rue de Nevers. Here stood the Tour de Nesle. The Mint now comes

PARIS VISTAS

up to one side of this street for a few hundred feet, but elsewhere it is on both sides as it was in the time of Henri IV. Massive doorways, with bars of iron and peep-holes covered with grating, tell the story of a time when one relied upon himself for protection. No *agents* in the Paris of the fifteenth century! Going down to the river from the Rue Servandoni, we always took the Rue de Nevers. In it Scrappie's carriage seemed like a full-grown vehicle. There was always the nervous fear that something would be thrown out on us from upper windows, not unjustified, as more than one narrow escape proved. We used to say that when the baby was grown up, we should enjoy taking her on one of the promenades of her infancy, and especially through the Rue de Nevers. We have shown Christine the street, and hope that she will remember it. But she will never show it to her children. Some sanitary engineer, successor of Baron Haussmann, has conceived a project of widening the Rue Dauphine. The Rue de Nevers will soon disappear. Our only hope is that the war will have delayed a long time the fulfillment of projects that mean the disappearance of what remains of mediaeval Paris.

The Parisian who goes to New York marvels at our skyscrapers. He is properly impressed with the hustle and bustle of the New World. But it does not take him long to note the absence of wide boulevards and the lack of *ensemble* in the cityscape. Then he will in-



Market day in the Rue de Seine

THE SPELL OF JUNE

variably make two comments: "There are no trees," and "There is no place to sit down." Except the Eiffel Tower, Paris does not boast of a "biggest in the world." It will take Americans centuries to acquire a sense of harmony and proportion in city building. But shall we ever learn to bring the out-of-doors into city life? Until we do learn the big American city will be intolerable in the summer months. Paris, built on ancient foundations, has increased to a city of millions, and one still feels that an outing does not mean going to the country. Boulevards and *quais* are lined with trees. Every open spot has grass and flowers. Best of all, when you want to sit down to read your paper or look at the crowd, there is always a bench. You do not have to go home or indoors to rest, and wherever you live, a park or boulevard is near at hand. Parisians are as closely huddled together as New Yorkers. But they can spend all their leisure time in the open. The privilege of sitting down on a bench is a blessing. All the year round you can eat or drink out of doors. I have often marveled at the criticism that the French dislike open air, simply because they, like other Europeans, do not keep their windows open at night. The Parisian lives far more in the open air than the American does. To be out of doors day and night is a natural instinct from the cradle to the grave. Trees and benches are a large part of the spell of June in Paris.

PARIS VISTAS

Then there were the omnibuses with their *impériales*. When we did not have the price of a cab, we could get on top of the Montsouris-Opéra or Odéon-Clichy bus, and go for a few sous from south to north across the river through the heart of Paris. We climbed to the *impériale* of the tram at Saint-Sulpice and rode to Auteuil, on the horse-drawn omnibus from the Madeleine to the Bastille, from the Place Saint-Michel to the Gare Saint-Lazare, from the Gare Montparnasse to La Villette, from the Bourse to Passy, from the Panthéon to Courcelles. Alas! horses and *impériales* disappeared before the war. The last omnibus with three horses abreast was the Panthéon-Courcelles line. It was replaced by closed motor-bus in 1913. Each year, when June comes round, I long for these rides. Horses, I suppose, are gone forever. But we still hope for the revival of an upper story on our motor-buses. There never was—or will be—a better way of having Paris vistas become a part of your very being.

Foire means fair. But the term is used for a much more intimate and vital sort of a fair than we have. The French have big formal fairs in buildings and grounds, where a little fun is mixed in with a lot of business. But they have also small street fairs, solely for amusement, and selling street fairs, where amusements have their full share. The Paris *foires* are a distinct institution. There is a regular schedule for them, as for Brittany *pardons*. From the end of March to the

THE SPELL OF JUNE

beginning of November you can always find a *foire* in the city or the suburbs. They are held out of doors, generally in the center of a boulevard. Some of them are important institutions. In the business *foires* you range from scrap-iron, old clothes and nicked china and disreputable furniture at the Porte Saint-Ouen and on the Boulevard Richard Lenoir to the costliest Paris has to offer on the Esplanade des Invalides and building materials and engines in the Tuileries. The purely amusement *foires* on the Quai d'Orsay, the Boulevard de Clichy, and at Saint-Cloud stretch for blocks and are attended by all Paris. To go to them is the thing to do.

But each quarter has its *foire*, underwritten by the shop-keepers and café proprietors of the neighborhood. They are never widely heralded, you stumble upon them by chance. And if you want to see real Paris the little *foires* give you the closest glimpse it is possible to get of Paris at play. At the *foires de quartier* there are no onlookers. Everybody is taking part. If you do not feel the impulse to get on the merry-go-round, the dipping boats, the scenic-railway; if you are averse to having your fortune told; if you feel doubtful of your ability to throw a wooden ring around the neck of a bottle of champagne; if you are indifferent to the mysteries of the two-headed calf and the dancing cobra; if your stomach does not digest *pain d'épice* and candy made of coal-tar; if you think your

PARIS VISTAS

baby ought not to have a rubber-doll or a woolly lamb or a jumping rabbit made of cat's fur—for heaven's sake stay away from the *foires*!

Most of the neighborhood *foires* are held in June. Whatever direction you take for your evening walk, your ears will give you a goal towards which to work. The merry-go-rounds have the same class of music as in America, and the tricks of the barkers—their figures of speech even—are the same. But the difference between our amusement parks and the Paris *foires* is the spontaneous atmosphere of the *foires*, their setting improvised in the midst of the city, and the amazing child-like quality of the fun. Seven or seventy, you enjoy the wooden horses just as much. And there is no dignity to lose. You do not care a bit if your cook sees you wildly pushing a fake bicycle or standing engrossed in the front row of the crowd watching a juggler.

The glorious days of June, when we put work deliberately out of our scheme of things, furnish opportunities for excursions of a different character than those of Sunday. At the risk of being ridiculed again by my critic, who has read my praise of *repos hebdomadaire*, I must confess that Sunday has its drawbacks. The whole city is out on Sunday, and every place is crowded. Your good time is somewhat marred all day long by the anticipation of the crowded trains and trams, for a place in which you wait with much less equanimity than when you left home in the morning. On week days

THE SPELL OF JUNE

there are no waits and plenty of room. I can entice my husband from his work—if it is June!

It is surprising how far afield it is possible to go at little drain on your strength and pocket-book on a June week-day. We wanted just the country sometimes. Then it was the valley of Chevreuse, Villers-Cotteret, luncheon in a tree at Robinson, or the Marne between Meaux and Château-Thierry. On a very bright day one could choose the shade of Compiègne, Chantilly, Rambouillet, Versailles, Marly, Saint-Germain-en-Laye, Saint-Cloud, Fontainebleau, forests and parks incomparable. Cathedral-hungry or in a mood for the past, Amiens, Beauvais, Evreux, Dreux, Orléans, Mantes, Chartres, Sens, Troyes, Rheims, Laon, Soissons, Noyon, and Senlis are from one to three hours by train. A good luncheon at little cost is always easily found. And after lunch you have no difficulty in getting a *cocher* to take you to the ruins of a castle or abbey for a few francs.

Inexhaustible as is the *banlieue* of Paris you are always glad to get back. From whatever direction you return, the first you see of the great city is the Eiffel Tower. It beckons you back to the spell of June—in Paris.

1913

CHAPTER XIX

CHILDHOOD VISTAS FOR A NEW GENERATION

IN September, 1910, we went to Constantinople for just one year, as we had gone to Tarsus for one year. But the lure of the East held us. We loved our home up above the Bosphorus behind the great castle of Rumeli Hissar. When the Judas-trees were ablaze and nightingales were singing that first spring in Constantinople, we forgot Paris and rashly promised to stay two years longer. Life was full of adventure, the war with Italy, the war between Turkey and the Balkan States during which our city was the prize fought for, cholera, the coming of our second baby, and a wonderful trip in the Balkans. We would not have missed it, no, but Paris called us again, and we decided to leave the political unrest and wars of the Near East to return to the peaceful atmosphere of the Bibliothèque Nationale.

My husband could not get away from Constantinople until the end of June and then he wanted to pay his way back to Paris by traveling through the Balkans again after peace was signed with Turkey. With my two children, I sailed for Marseilles at the beginning of March and reached Paris just in time to get the last

PARIS VISTAS

weeks of winter. In the calendar seasons are conventional. As in the United States, France frequently has winter until April is well started.

I found a little apartment on the Rue du Montparnasse just north of the Boulevard. From the standpoint of my friends I suppose the Quarter was a bit more *comme il faut* than the Rue Servandoni. I missed the picturesqueness of our old abode with the *épicerie* on the ground floor and the *moyenageux* atmosphere. But the change to the Montparnasse Quarter had its compensations. The air, none too good in the great city, is better around the Boulevard du Montparnasse than in any other part of the city except Montmartre, Belleville and Buttes-Chaumont. You are on high ground away from the heavy mists and dampness of the river. Communications are excellent. You do not have to sacrifice the feeling of being in a real vital part of Paris, either. We still lived in the midst of historical association. If Gondorcet hid in the Rue Servandoni from those who would have chopped his head off during the Terror, Lamartine was hauled from a house on the Rue du Montparnasse by the soldiers of Louis Napoleon at the beginning of the *coup d'état* of 1851, and to the Rue du Montparnasse flocked the cream of Paris on Mondays to hear Sainte-Beuve during the Third Empire.

It was a new world opened for the eyes of Christine and Lloyd to live cooped up in an apartment after the

CHILDHOOD VISTAS FOR A NEW GENERATION

big house at Rumeli Hissar and to have to walk through city streets to find a garden to play in instead of simply stepping out of their own front door. But life has its compensations—everywhere and at all times. You never get anything without sacrificing something else for it. We have to choose at every step, and we must turn away from some blessings to obtain others. I love the country. Theoretically speaking, it is the best place to bring up children. But living in the open does deprive them of the mental alertness, of the broad vision from infancy, of the self-reliance, of the habits of industry that childhood in the city alone can give. And then, the doctor comes right away when you telephone.

Thirty-Eight Rue du Montparnasse was opposite Notre-Dame-des-Champs, and only a door down from the Boulevard. From the windows my tots could see the passing show on the boulevard: and the church was a never-failing source of interest. Just opposite us was the sexton's apartment, tucked into the roof of the church. It is characteristic of Paris that a home should be hidden away in an unexpected corner like this. From the windows Christine and Lloyd could see the little church children playing on their flat roof, and out of the door below the choir boys passed in and out. We went into our apartment at First Communion season. My childhood enjoyed the "little brides of Christ" in their white dresses and veils. Every day

PARIS VISTAS

had its weddings and funerals. The children did not distinguish between life and death. Whenever carriages stopped in front of the church, they would jump up and down and shout, "*Mariage!*"

A little sister arrived at the beginning of May. When June came, I was able to take Emily Elizabeth out to market. Every morning we went down the Boulevard Raspail to Sadla's, on the corner of the Rue de Sèvres, and twice a week to the market on the Boulevard Edgar-Quinet. They were the blessed days, when I had no cook—which meant that I could buy what I liked to eat, and no nurse—which meant that I saw something of my own children. Servants are a necessary evil to the housewife and mother that wants to see something of the world in which she lives. But an occasional interlude, when everything devolves on mother, is good both for her and the children.

During the war Sadla's went bankrupt, and for several years the corner opposite the Hotel Lutetia has been desolate. Probably the firm failed for the very reason that made it unique among the provision-shops even of Paris, where the selling of food is as much a work of art as the cooking of it. We loved Sadla's. Marketing there was always a joy. Your baby-carriage was not an inconvenience: for everything was displayed outside on the street. You started with fish and ended with fruit and flowers, passing by meats and vegetables, canned goods, groceries, pastry, cakes and

CHILDHOOD VISTAS FOR A NEW GENERATION

candies. The fish swam in a marble basin under a fountain. You made your choice, and the victim was netted by a white-clad boy and flopped over the counter to the scales. Live lobsters sprawled in sea-weed, and boiled ones lay on ice. Oysters from fifty centimes to five francs a dozen were packed in wicker baskets, passed by their guardian every few minutes under the fountain. In the *hors d'œuvres* and cold meat section, you had your choice of the cheapest and the most expensive variety of tempting morsels. It made no difference if you wanted a little chicken wing or a big turkey encased in truffle-studded jelly, a slice of ham or a whole Yorkshire quarter, one pickle or a hundred, twenty centimes worth of *salade Russe* or an earthenware dishful arranged like an Italian garden landscape, one radish or a bunch of them. In Paris everybody is accustomed to purchasing things to eat and drink of the best quality: so you do not feel that the quality of what you want depends upon the quantity you ask for. On the meat counters, for instance, single chops, and tiny cutlets and roasts, and chickens of all sizes, are displayed side by side, each with its price marked. Apples, pears, tomatoes, bananas, even plums, are price-marked by the piece. Tarts and cakes are of all sizes. When you come to flowers, you can buy single roses or carnations. I never tired of shopping at Sadla's. Nor did the children.

Vegetables and fruits and nuts are mostly bought in

PARIS VISTAS

the open markets or from the *marchandes des quatre saisons*, who deal also in dairy products and poultry and flowers. The markets are held on certain days in different quarters. The women with push-carts line the streets every day. They go early in the morning to the Halles Centrales and buy whatever they find is the bargain of the day, and hawk in their own quarter, announcing their merchandise by queer cries that even to the well-trained ear of the French woman need a glance at the push-cart to confirm what is at the best a guess.

It is fun to buy on the street, and the commodities and price are sometimes an irresistible temptation. But you have to watch the *marchandes des quatre saisons*. They have a way of throwing your purchase on the scales in the manner of an American iceman, and you want to be ready to put out your hand to steady the needle. Your eye must be sharp too, to watch that some of the apples do not come, wormy and spotted, from a less desirable layer underneath the selling layer. It is a wonderful lesson in learning how to put the best foot forward to watch the push-cart women arranging their wares on the side-walks around the Halles Centrales before starting out on the daily round. From the writings of Carlyle and other seekers after the picturesque, the legend has grown that the *poissonnières*, who knitted before the guillotine, are a race apart. But there is as much truth in this belief as in the belief that our gallant marines did the trick alone at Château-

CHILDHOOD VISTAS FOR A NEW GENERATION

Thierry. Fish women are no more formidable among Parisiennes than the general run of *marchandes des quatre saisons*. And ask almost anyone who has lived in a Paris apartment about her concierge!

Fresh from Montenegro, Herbert reached our new home on the morning of July fourteenth. He explained that he had left the Greeks and Serbians and Bulgarians to fight over the Turkish spoils to their heart's content. He was sick of following wars. He wanted to see his new baby. It had come over him one night in Albania, when sleeplessness was due to the usual cause in that part of the world, that by catching a certain boat from Cattaro to Venice he could get home for the Quatorze.

After he had looked over his new acquisition, we started out for a stroll by ourselves just to talk things over. We walked down the Boulevard Montparnasse to the Place de l'Observatoire. Between the Closerie des Lilas and the Bal Bullier was a big merry-go-round. The onlookers were throwing multi-colored streamers at the girls they liked the best among the riders. In the middle of the street a strong man in pink tights was doing stunts with dumb-bells and the members of his family.

The same thought came to us both. What a pity the children are missing this! We hurried back for them, forgetting that we had promised ourselves a long just-us talk to bridge the months of separation. And we re-

PARIS VISTAS

turned to join in the celebration, my husband pushing the baby-carriage and I with progeny hanging to both hands. Why do children drag so, even when you are walking slowly? Every mother knows how they lean on her literally as well as figuratively.

That Quatorze was the beginning of a new epoch. A new generation was to have childhood vistas of Paris, but parent-led and parent-shown, as it had been for me thirty years before. For that is the way of the world.

CHAPTER XX

THE PROBLEM OF HOUSING

WHEN you are in Paris without children you can get along in a hotel or a *pension*: and you can probably live as cheaply as, if not more cheaply than, in a home of your own. There are several combinations. Inexpensive rooms (in normal times) can be found in good hotels: and there are lots of hotels that take only roomers. You do not, as at a *pension*, have to be tied down to at least two meals where you live. The advantages of a furnished-room or a *pension* are: easy to find in the quarter you wish to live in; no bother about service; and no necessity to tie yourself up with a lease. But if you are making a protracted stay, it is wise to weigh at the beginning the disadvantages with the advantages. You get tired of the food; you have to associate daily with people whom you do not like; and—especially if you are of my sex—you have no place to receive your friends. I think in the end most people who go to Paris and who follow the line of least resistance, either because it is that or because they have the idea that they can learn French quicker in a “French *pension*,” regret having missed the opportunity of a

PARIS VISTAS

home of their own, of a *chez soi*, as the French say. For you really cannot feel that you belong in Paris unless you are keeping house. "Be it ever so humble," you can set up your own home, if you are determined to do so. There are innumerable wee apartments—a hall big enough to hang up your coat and hat, a kitchenette, and a room where your bed can be a couch disguised with a rug and pillows during the day. Studios furnish another opportunity of making a home of your own. Of course, during the war and since Paris has been overcrowded. But there will be a return to normal conditions.

And if you have a family—even one baby—hotel or *pension* life becomes unendurable.

When Herbert came back from Turkey in the summer of 1913, we found the three little rooms and kitchen of Thirty-eight Rue du Montparnasse too small for us. The first thing Herbert did was to "give notice." The Paris system of renting is very advantageous if one is looking for a modest apartment. Your lease is by the term—a term being three months—and can be canceled upon giving one term's notice. This means that you're tied down for only six months in the beginning, and after that for only three months. One can buy simple furniture, as we did in the Rue Servandoni, and sell it at the end of the year without a great loss. It is possible to rent an apartment for a year, furnish it and sell out, at about the same price you would

THE PROBLEM OF HOUSING

pay for a furnished apartment. And you will have had the pleasure of being surrounded by your own things.

The proposition of a furnished apartment looks better than it is. The French are the worst people in the world for biting a penny. They are meticulous to a point incomprehensible to Americans. The inventory is a horror! In taking a villa, whether it be in Brittany, in Normandy, at Aix-les-Bains, or on the Riviera, you are handed sheets of paper by the arm's length, on which are recorded not only the objects in each room but the state of walls, garden, woodwork, carpets, mattresses, pillows and blankets. You wrestle with the agent when you enter. But he is cleverer than you are. And when you come to leave, he finds spots and cracks, nicks in the china, ink-stains, and all sorts of damages you never thought of. He points to your signature—and you pay! You replace what is broken or chipped by new objects. You repaint and repaper and clean. The bill is as long as the inventory. And you find that your original rent is simply an item.

I do not want to infer that you are entirely free from this annoyance and uncertain item of expense when you lease unfurnished. Your walls and ceilings and floors, your mirrors (which in France are an integral part of the building) and your *charges* are to be considered. An architect, if you please, draws up the *état des lieux*, which you are required to sign as you do the *inventaire* of a furnished apartment. But the longer you remain

PARIS VISTAS

in an apartment the less proportionately to your rent are the damages liable to be. As for the *charges*, by which is meant your share towards the carpets in the halls and on the stairs, the lighting, elevator, etc., in many leases they are now represented by a fixed sum, and where they are not, you can have a pretty definite idea as to what they are going to be. The unexpected does not hit you.

Most Paris leases are on the 3-6-9 year basis. You sign for three years. If you do not give notice six months before the end of the three-year term, the lease is automatically continued for another equal period. For nine years, then, you are sure of undisturbed possession, and your *proprietaire* cannot raise the rent on you. Leases are generally uniform in their clauses. You bind yourself to put furniture to the value of at least one year's rent in the apartment to live in it *bourgeoisement* (that is, to carry on no business), to keep no dogs or other pets,¹ and to sublet only with proprietor's consent. On his side, the proprietor agrees to give you

¹ This clause is a dead letter almost everywhere. You are much more apt to be refused an apartment because you have children than because you have dogs or birds. In fact, although you often see a sign or are greeted by the statement NI CHIENS NI ENFANTS, the prohibition, when you press the concierge, is limited to children. My bitter criticism of the people among whom I live is the attitude of a large part of them towards children. They do not like children. They do not want them. And they do not understand why any woman is fool enough to have "a big family," as they call my four. This is the most serious problem of contemporary France. It makes the winning of the war a hollow victory.

THE PROBLEM OF HOUSING

proper concierge and elevator service, to heat the apartment for five months from November first to March thirty-first, and to furnish water, hot and cold, at fixed rates per cubic meter. The lease is registered at the *mairie* at the *locataire's* expense.

You pay the taxes, which are collected directly from you. The municipal tax runs to about sixteen percent of the annual rental, and now includes in a lump sum the old taxes for windows and doors. In addition, you pay a very small tax to recompense the city for having suppressed the *octroi* on wines and liquors and mineral waters. A new tax, which no resident in France who has an apartment can escape, is the income tax. But unless you are a French subject, you are not compelled to make a return of your sources of income. Should you choose to be taxed *d'office*, the collector assesses you on a basis of having an income seven times the amount of your rental. The concierge is forbidden to allow you to move from your apartment until you have shown him the receipts for the current year for all your taxes.

Once you have signed your lease and have arranged to move in, your troubles are not yet over. Proprietors furnish no chandeliers or other lights, not even the simplest. You have to go to an electrician, buy your fixtures, and have them installed, if you have not bought the lights in the apartment from the previous *locataire*. You must sign contracts and make deposits for your gas

and electric light. The gas company will rent you a stove and a meter. You pay the charges for connecting you up. Telephones are in the hands of the government. If you want a direct telephone, you have to sign a contract. If you want to have your telephone through the concierge's *loge*, the telephone service is charged on your quarterly rent bill. In any case, you pay for the instrument and bell box and the charges for installation. A private line is not much of an advantage in Paris. The service is scarcely any quicker. With your telephone by way of the concierge, a message can be left if you do not answer, and the person calling you is informed if you are out of town.

The last of your troubles is fire insurance. Thanks to the solid construction of Paris and careful surveillance, fires are very rare. During all the years I have lived in Paris I remember no fires except those caused by the German bombs. However, you do not dare not to insure. For French law holds you responsible for damage to neighbors' apartments from water as well as fire, if the fire starts in yours. Your insurance policy insures your neighbors as well as yourself. The French law is excellent. It makes you careful. French law, also, by the way, holds you liable for accidents to your servants, of any kind and no matter how incurred. You cannot fall back on the joker of contributory carelessness. All the servant has to prove is that the accident happened while working for you.

THE PROBLEM OF HOUSING

I have forgotten to mention one further formality that was not of importance before the war but is indispensable now. An old French police law requires all foreigners to secure a *certificat d'immatriculation* from the Prefecture of Police as the *sine qua non* to residence in Paris. Before the war, no one ever bothered about this. The only foreigners watched by the police were Russians, due to a provision France ought never to have agreed to in the alliance with Russia. When the war broke out and my husband went to get his *permis de séjour*, he was asked for the first time for this paper. And we had been living in France on and off for six years, and had leased three apartments! This was a reason for loving Paris. Nobody bothered you, and you could live as you pleased and do as you pleased so long as you behaved yourself. Foreigners were never made to feel that they were foreigners. They enjoyed equality before the law with Frenchmen. Paris was cosmopolite in a unique sense. Hindsight blamed the laxity of the French police. But let us fervently hope that the old spirit of hospitality may not have changed with the war and that France in regard to Germany may not be as Rome in regard to Greece. Why be victor if one has to adopt the habits of the vanquished?

I have gone into the question of the housing problem with too much precision and detail, I fear, for a book of Paris sketches. But so many friends have asked me, so many strangers have written me, about taking

PARIS VISTAS

up their abode in Paris that I feel what I have said about it will be of interest to all who are interested in Paris.

We had three months to our new residence. You always have three months at least in Paris. It is not enough if you are undecided or lazy. It is plenty if you go about hunting for a home with the same energy and persistence and enthusiasm that you put into other things. After all, what is more important than a home? We tramped the quarter, as we had done in the summer of 1909. But we now had a large family. And we had realized the fundamental truth of the beautiful old Scotch saying, "Every bairn brings its food wi' it." So we were able to aspire to two salons and three bedrooms, to *confort moderne* (which means central heat, electric light, bath-rooms, elevator and hot water), and to palms and red carpet in the doorway.

For us the heart of Paris at that time was where the Boulevard du Montparnasse is crossed by the Boulevard Raspail. On the Boulevard du Montparnasse, between Baty's and the Rue Léopold-Robert, a new apartment house was being built. Before the stairs were finished we climbed to the sixth floor, lost our hearts to a view of all Paris, and signed a 3-6-9 lease. The war has come and gone. We are still there.

1914

CHAPTER XXI

“NACH PARIS!”

VON KLUCK and I had a race to see who would reach Paris first. It was close. But I won. Lots of my friends thought then and since that I was foolish to take my children back to Paris at such a time. An American woman came to Ty Coz, my little summer cottage at Saint-Jean-du-Doigt in Finistère, to remonstrate with me.

“You must be crazy,” she said in her most complimentary tone, “to take those three children back to Paris now. The Germans are certainly going to capture Paris, and if they don’t do it right away, they’ll bombard the city until it surrenders. My dear Mrs. Gibbons, surely you read the papers and you see what awful things the Germans are doing in Belgium. Paris has no chance against their big guns. And they will cut the railways. You will have no milk, no vegetables. And here you are in Brittany, where they probably will not come, and if you do, you can get off to England by sea.”

I did not argue. It would have been foolish to tell her that the Germans would not take Paris. I was no prophet, and denying a danger is not preventing it.

PARIS VISTAS

Despite the tigress instinct of every mother to protect her own, I simply could not feel that to go home was the wrong thing to do. Herbert wrote and telegraphed approving my desire to return. As my husband could not leave Paris to come to us, it was manifestly up to us to go to him. We were more concerned about the possibility of being cut off from each other than about what the Germans might do to us. I had one advantage in making up my mind over other women around me. War and sieges and bombardments did not loom up when I read about the march through Belgium with the same sense of awfulness as to my neighbors. I knew that things look worse from a distance than they are on the spot. I remembered how normally we lived in the midst of massacre in Tarsus and when the Bulgarians were attacking Constantinople.

The removal of the Government to Bordeaux did not deter me at the last minute. It did not seem to me an indication that the game was up, but rather the decision to profit by experience of earlier wars and not stake the whole war upon the defense of the capital. It was getting cold at the seashore. I was anxious to direct myself the moving into the new apartment we had taken. Yvonne, my cook, and Dorothy, my English nurse, were as eager as I to get back to town. We just did n't let the Germans bother us! The trunks and baby-beds were loaded in one two-wheeled cart and the kiddies on hay in another. We grown-ups

bicycled along behind the seventeen kilometres to Morlaix. The Brest *rapide* carried scarcely any civilians. We broke in on the seclusion of a colonel sitting alone in a compartment.

“I pity you, sir,” I said.

“Why?” He smiled and threw away his newspaper. That was promising. When a man puts down his newspaper for me, I know he is interesting. So few men do. My husband does n’t always. I needed to make friends with the officer. During the all night journey I wanted to manoeuvre for open windows, and you cannot do that in France unless you are on the best of terms with your fellow-travellers.

“Why do I pity you? Because you are invaded by three babies and three grown-ups when you hoped to keep the compartment for yourself. But you may not be sorry when you see the supper you are going to help eat—two roast chickens, salad sandwiches, pears just picked this morning in my garden, and the best of cider. There is plenty of *café au lait* in thermos bottles for breakfast.”

The colonel’s face brightened. Dining-cars had been suppressed since the day of the mobilization. He assured me that a soldier did not mind company at night and always liked food. But he was a bit puzzled about my breakfast invitation. “Surely you are not going to Paris with these children,” he said. “Are you not afraid?”

PARIS VISTAS

"Not as long as there is the French army between my children and the enemy," I answered.

The colonel leaned back in the corner and shut his eyes. Tears rolled down his cheeks. It was a long time before he spoke, and all he said was, "*Merci!* I shall tell that to my regiment to-morrow."

"Monsieur," I insisted, "what I said was nothing. All the women in France feel as I do. We have got to feel that way. You have the strength—we must have the faith. If Paris were not my home, I should not go. But it is my home, and this is the week I always return from the shore."

More than one hysterical person wrote wonderful and lurid accounts of Paris in the autumn of 1914. There was an exodus of *froussards* in the first days of September and during the whole month refugees poured into the city. But the great mass of the population was not affected by the fright of a few. I arrived too late for the most critical days. My husband assured me that there had been no panic except in the imagination of certain individuals and officials. I found that very few of my friends had run away. The *Herald* appeared every morning, and Percy Mitchell's voice over the telephone from the Rue du Louvre was cheery and optimistic. There was no funk in the American colony. Most of the people I knew were helping get the Ambulance at Neuilly started or were launching *œuvres* of their own. I seized on the open-

"NACH PARIS!"

ing for layette work immediately, and I started afternoon sewing for Russian and Polish girls, too, in one of my servants' rooms. I am a quarrelsome wretch when I get on committees with other women. So I did the *layettes* alone in my studio and had only the help of another Bryn Mawr girl, who lived in Paris, in the *ouvroir*—as gatherings for sewing were called.

But the panic? The sense of danger? Suspense and worry over the fighting between the Marne and Aisne? Dread of air raids? I saw none of this. I heard nothing in the conversation of my friends or servants or tradespeople to make me feel Paris was in a ferment of excitement or fear. The anxiety was for loved ones fighting "out there"; the depression was the pall of death over us. No music, no singing, theatres closed, cafés shut up at eight o'clock, dark streets—these were the abnormal features of Paris life in the early months of the war. Whoever writes or talks in a way to make it appear that staying in Paris was a test of personal courage is a sorry impostor. There was no danger. None ever thought of danger.

Nor did we have the discomforts and annoyances and deprivations during the early period of the war that came to us later. Food was abundant and prices did not go up. There was plenty of labor. You could get things done without the exhausting hunt for workers with a willing spirit and knowledge of their job that we have to make now. In the month of the Battle of

PARIS VISTAS

the Marne we moved into 120 Boulevard du Montparnasse. It was a new house, and we had everything to think of, plumbing, heating, fixtures, wiring for bells and lights, painting, paper-hanging, carpentering. All was done without a hitch. The moving-vans worked as in peace times. Things came by freight from Brittany and Normandy—thirty boxes in all—and were delivered to us without delay just as if there were no war. It seems incredible in retrospect that France and Paris should have been normal (after the first confusion of the mobilization) despite the terrific struggle for existence within hearing distance. But it was so. I want to put down my testimony as a housewife and mother of children in Paris that we lived normally and had no dangers or difficulties to contend with when the Germans were trying to finish up the war in a hurry.

On the second Sunday of October we had our first visit from a group of airplanes. Few bombs were dropped. Herbert and I were walking outside the fortifications near the Porte d'Orléans when they arrived. We thought of our kiddies, playing in the Luxembourg, and hurried there. The children and Dorothy described graphically how two planes had been over the Garden. But their feeling was wholly curiosity. At that time Parisians did not realize the danger of air raids.

One Sunday Herbert and I went chestnutting. Despite the swarms of excursionists around Paris, there

"NACH PARIS!"

are lots of places to pick up on the road all the chestnuts you can carry. We walked from Saint-Cyr across country, skirting Versailles, to Marly. With heavy pockets, knotted kerchief bundles, and the beginning of stiffness in our backs, we stopped for lunch at a little country hostelry whose *cave* still has a big stock of Chambertin of golden years. The critic and I are agreed upon the wisdom of censoring the name I unthinkingly put in the first draft of this chapter. Why spoil a good thing? Life is short—and so are stocks of Chambertin. And there are so many roads and so many hostelries between Saint-Cyr and Saint-Germain-en-Laye that the little I have said is a challenge to your love of Burgundy.

Madame told us how history did not repeat itself until the end of the story. What starts the same way does not always end the same way. We hope German professors of history will impress this truth upon the next generation of their close-cropped, bullet-headed students. They are at liberty to use this illustration if they want. Why limit their Paris vistas to the provoking sight of the Tour Eiffel in the distance?

"In Soixante-Dix," said Madame, flipping teamsters' crumbs off our table with a skilful swing of her *serviette*, "I saw my father bury our wines out there in the garden. It took several days, and he had only my brother and me to help him. I remember how he mumbled and shook his head over the possible effect of

PARIS VISTAS

disturbing the good *crus*. 'They will never be the same again,' he said mournfully. Much good it did him! We had our work for nothing. The Germans came. Right where you are sitting, *M'sieu-dame*, the brutes thumped on the table and called for the best in the cellar. My father said he had no wine. They went to the cave. Empty. Then the officer laughed till the tears rolled down his cheeks. He sat in a chair—sprawled in a chair that cracked under his swinging—smacked his thighs, and when he could speak, he told his men to go out into the garden. With their picks and shovels they unearthed all—all, *M'sieu-dame*.

"So this time I remembered—and I thought hard. My husband was off the fourth day of the mobilization. Even if I had help, would not the garden *cache* a second time be foolish? And the old *crus* ought not to be shaken—you are going to taste my Chambertin, and you will agree that it ought not to risk being shaken. It really ought not. What was I to do? When the Germans come, will they know the difference? I asked myself. So I took *vin ordinaire*. I put it in bottles. I sealed it red. I worked two days to put it on the outer racks and the under racks with the good wine between. Then I cobwebbed it and moistened it with dust. I built a fire to dry it. If the Germans were in a hurry they would take the top. If they had leisure, they would fish in the bottom rows.

"But the Germans never came. I had my work a

“NACH PARIS!”

second time for nothing. Do you think, *M'sieu-dame*, they will be fooled? I want to know what is best for next time.”

“Next time,” cried my husband. “Next time! Do you think there will be a next time?”

“*Bien sûr, Monsieur,*” the woman answered without hesitation. “The Germans will come again. They will always come. We are not as big, *hélas!* They will come—unless your country—?”

Suddenly we realized that not the keeper of the inn, but France, France through a wife and mother, was speaking. A shadow fell upon us that Chambertin and the crisp autumn air could not dispel.

1914-1915

100-100

CHAPTER XXII

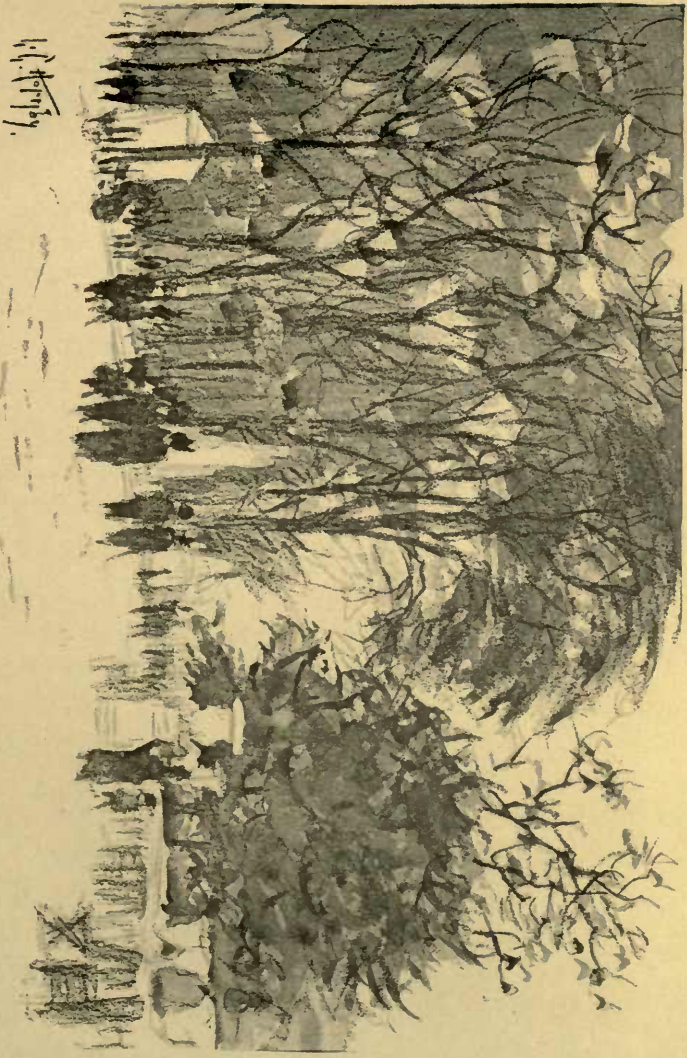
AT HOME IN THE WHIRLWIND

AFTER the initial days of mobilization, the German advance, the coming of the refugees, and the aeroplane raids, Paris became again astonishingly normal. We got used to the war quickly. A calamity is like death. It comes. You cannot change it. You must accept it and go on living. We were in the midst of the whirlwind. We had our ups and downs. There were periods of unreasonable hope, when we thought the war was going to end by the collapse of the Germans. And there were periods of equally unreasoning depression when gloom spread like a plague. Who will ever forget the hope that came with the Spring of 1915? Mysterious rumors spread of German demoralization and of the irresistible fighting machine the British were building up. Our armies were only waiting for the rainy weather to finish. Then the forward march would commence. But after a few unsuccessful attempts to break through, French and British settled down to the life of the trenches. Fortunately the Germans were equally immobilized. But during the summer, instead of our advance on the

PARIS VISTAS

western front, we had to read about the German advance in Poland. The censorship worked overtime. *Communiqués* were masterpieces of clever dissimulation. News was withheld in the hope of a sudden reversal of the fortune of arms. In the end we had to be told that Warsaw was in the hands of the Central Empires and that *les Impériaux* were closing in on Brest-Litovsk. In the summer of 1915, at the very beginning of the Italian intervention, the French lost faith in the new ally. Italy, untouched so far by the war and with the power of making an offensive in her own hands, could not even prevent Austria from lending powerful aid in the great German offensive against Russia! Ink and breath were spent in extolling the union of the Latin races: but the mass of the French people—from that time on—looked no more for aid to Italy.

We deferred hope until the spring of 1916. Surely the British would now be ready to cooperate with the French in the final offensive of the war! But the Germans, feeling certain that they had disposed of the Russians, struck first. The last days of February, 1916, were (if one except possibly the spring months of 1918) the darkest days of the war. Although the attacks against Verdun failed, the weather in Paris combined with sickening anxiety to make us feel that it was nip-and-tuck. As a contrast, the summer months of the Battle of the Somme renewed our courage. And



H. J. Hoffmeyer.

The first snow in the Luxembourg

AT HOME IN THE WHIRLWIND

just as we were reluctantly realizing that this onslaught of ours was as indecisive as the earlier German offensive against Verdun, to which it was the reply, the intervention of Rumania came to offset the admitted failure of the Dardanelles and Mesopotamian campaigns. At last, the war was to be decided in the Balkans! Before the third winter set in, however, we saw Rumania humbled by Mackensen and the Salonica army as motionless as the armies on the western front, even though Venizelos had at last succeeded in ranging Greece on our side. The German machine was not crumbling before a combination of superior numbers and superior equipment, and managed to face its enemies on all sides.

So much for what the newspapers said during those thirty months and for what we thought about the *péripiéties* of the war. After each disappointment we looked for new reasons to hope. We readjusted ourselves to living in the midst of uncertainties, bereavements that would have broken our hearts had they come to us "by the hand of God," and increasing social and economic difficulties. France was saved because the French people never faltered in their belief that *dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*. France was saved because Paris led a normal life in the midst of the whirlwind. The Turks have a proverb that a fish begins to corrupt at the head. If the Parisians had become demoralized, if they had given up the struggle

PARIS VISTAS

to live normally and tranquilly, France would have been lost.

Initial reactions and early symptoms of war fever passed quickly. We soon opened up our pianos, put on our phonograph records, and took to singing again. We did not wear mourning. We insisted upon having our theatres and music-halls. We celebrated Christmas. We stopped making last year's suits do and refusing to buy finery. For the *poilus*, coming home to find their women folks shabby, said it was gayer at the front. We allowed all the German composers except Wagner to re-appear on our programmes. Some stupidities, such as banishing the German language from schools and burning German books, we were never guilty of.

I remember reading with amusement and amazement an article in an American newspaper, written by someone who "did" war-stricken France in thirty days, in which this statement was made: "There are millions in France who will never smile again." Upon this absurd and false hypothesis the article was built. It was easy to be sure that the writer knew nothing whatever about France in war-time or about psychology, for that matter. Whoever has had any experience of horrors or who has lived through a great crisis knows that if you do not laugh you will go crazy. Normal human beings must have relaxation and recreation. They must have—or create—normal conditions in abnormal

AT HOME IN THE WHIRLWIND

surroundings. You must go on living. You must have strength to meet burdens. So you laugh and sing and dance. You entertain people and are entertained. You go to the theatre. You take exercise. You enjoy your meals. A long face is either a pose or a sign of mental derangement. In the spring of 1916 I checked up a dozen of my women friends, all of whom had husbands or sons—or both—in the war. More than half were widows or had sons killed. The husbands of two were prisoners in German camps. But all of them were planning to spend the summer in their country-homes or at the shore, just as they had done before the war. Is not this the secret of our ability to hold on during the "last quarter of an hour" and to continue to hope for victory until we had obtained it?

At the beginning of the second winter, in November, 1915, I sent my three children to live for a few weeks in my studio, which I had fixed up especially for them. They had a piano and a phonograph and books and toys. They moved over with their nurse on a Sunday afternoon, and thought it was a great lark. The next day their father went to see them and told them about the arrival of a baby sister.

Tuesday morning the children came to see us. Never shall I forget their joy. Christine said immediately, "Hello, Hope, let me fix your feet. Mama, could I tuck her blanket in? Hope's feet are cold. I want to hold her soon." A little mother, she is.

PARIS VISTAS

Lloyd, sensitive and reserved, stood quietly looking. He patted my face and tried to speak. But his mouth was turning down at the corners for just a second, and I had to save the day by asking him a cheerful question. Mimi clapped her hands and danced and said, "I like you, mama, dat's a fine baby." When Herbert went over to the consulate to register the baby, he took Christine with him. She heard him say to the Consul-General, Mr. Thackara, that his French friends were teasing him about the large number of marriage dots he will have to provide. Christine saw in this a reflection on girl babies. With a volley of French reproof, which delighted the whole consular office, she went for him tooth and nail.

Isn't it a joke on me to have so many daughters? I have always thought myself a good pal, understanding men much better than women. Miss Mary Cassatt came in. Her comment was subtle. She said simply to Herbert that she was glad of his assured increase of interest in women's suffrage. Surprised, Herbert was betrayed into asking why. "Don't you realize," exclaimed Miss Cassatt, "that you must begin now to interest yourself in the future of your girls?" Although the coming of Hope increases the problems of feminine psychology I shall have to deal with later on, I am glad the war baby was a girl. My first thought, when they told me, was that she should not have to carry a gun.

AT HOME IN THE WHIRLWIND

This brings me to her name. 1915 was drawing to a close with so many darkening shadows—but shadows that did not lessen our faith in the outcome of the war—that I thought the name imposed upon us by circumstances. I called her Hope Delarue. Dear old Père Delarue is one of the best known research scholars in the Jesuit Order. Our friendship, founded back in Constantinople days, has deepened during the war. When Herbert went off on his many trips, anyone of which might have proved the last, he left me in the care of Père Delarue. The dear old man had been coming to us from time to time with the news of another loss in his family. His brother, a general in the French army, was killed. His nephews had fallen. I thought it would comfort him to feel that there was a child in the world to bear his name. Before going to Suez, Herbert gave me some flat silver marked H.D.G. It flashed into his brain the day after the baby was born that the little thing had its mother's initials!

I was up for the first time on Christmas Eve. We had a large party as usual, with a tree for the children trimmed by the grown-ups. In spite of the rain we tried to make our Christmas Day a joyful one. There was the newborn baby to celebrate. At the end of the afternoon, Herbert gave us a hurried kiss all around, and went out in the rain to catch the train for Marseilles. He sailed the next day on the *André Lebon* for Port-Said. His was the only one of the

PARIS VISTAS

three passenger boats that week to escape the submarines. The P. and O. *Persia* was sunk off Crete and the Japanese mail went down seventy miles from the Canal.

I did not see my husband for several months, and then he joined us in Nice for a few days before going to Verdun. It was a joyful reunion. Herbert admired his children and asked what they had done during his absence. But he forgot all about poor little Hope, who was taking her nap. Two hours after his arrival, a lusty cry brought back to his mind the fact that the number of his children was four.

Memories of these days are not painful, because we did not allow ourselves to be dominated by pain while they were being lived. The whirlwind was not of our making, nor had we gone deliberately into the midst of it. But, finding ourselves there, we made the best of it. Memories are precious. I would not have missed the Paris vistas of those years. It is a blessed thing to have in one's mind the long lines of adverse circumstances and difficulties and anxieties on either side if at the end is hope realized. And I have my own tangible Hope, a child whose merry, sunny nature is living proof of how Paris was at home in the whirlwind.

CHAPTER XXIII

SAUVONS LES BÉBÉS

“**M**-M-M-MADAME m-m-must not be f-f-frightened; he said so!”

My Bretonne cook came to me pale and stammering.

“What is the trouble, Rosali?”

“P-p-policeman at the d-d-door s-s-says he m-m-must see you!”

A spick and span *agent* came into my drawing-room. He took the cigarette offered him, and explained the reason for his visit.

“My chief sent me around to ask madame to help. It is a baby case. We came here because the mother said she got a layette at madame’s studio. Her name is Mlle. A——; do you remember her case? If madame could come—”

In a few minutes we were walking up the Rue Delambre to the police station of the Fourteenth Arrondissement. Mlle. A—— had come to me for baby clothes before she went to the hospital. The child’s father was at the front. When the mother appealed to him to recognize the child, with the desperate way of a man who is in the trenches facing death, he replied,

PARIS VISTAS

“What’s the use! How do I know that the child is mine?”

Before going to the hospital the girl begged me to think of something to do. When the baby was born we had him photographed and a copy sent to his father, we wrote, “The baby looks like you as you can see from this photograph. If you tear up the card or throw it away, the next shell will kill you.”

At the police station, in the stuffy little room where the plain clothes men sit close to the door leading to the office of the Monsieur le Commissaire, I found Mlle. A—— and her baby.

“O Madame,” she cried, “Jean got our card. He was sitting in a little circle with some comrades eating dinner. The mail arrived. His name was called. He rose and walked over to the *vaguemestre* and, oh, Madame, just then the shell came. It exploded where Jean had been eating his dinner, and all his comrades were killed. He says the baby, *pauvre chou*, looks like him and saved his life.”

The *agent* came with papers. “Will madame sign here?” Jean was recognizing little Pierrot and was applying for permission to marry the baby’s mother.

An old woman sitting nearby held in her hands a *livret de mariage*. “*Quel beau bébé!*” she exclaimed. “Is it a girl?”

“No, madame, a boy,” replied mademoiselle, smooth-

SAUVONS LES BÉBÉS

ing the baby's swaddling blanket and pinning it tighter around Pierrot's little tummy.

"That's it, that's it," cried the old woman. "I came here to get a certificate myself. My daughter had a baby born this morning. It's a boy, too. It was like that in Soixante-Dix. Nearly all the babies born in war time are boys. O la, la, madame, what a baby! His father is fighting so he won't have to carry a gun." Here she pulled out a handkerchief.

The poor help the poor, when it comes to *moral*, as in everything else. I was sitting in my studio interviewing women who came for baby clothes. A white-faced girl sat down in the chair at the opposite side of the table.

"What can I do for you?" said I.

"A little white dress—" she sobbed. "Could you give me a little white dress?"

"Certainly I'll give it to you, and lots of other things too."

"I don't need anything else," she said softly, "My baby died this morning. They did everything at the hospital to save her. She was born three weeks ago and they let me stay on. They wrapped her in a little piece of sheeting. I can't stand it to bury her like that!" She put her head down on the table and wept.

"Shall I give madame a little white dress?"

The twenty other mothers sitting there answered "Yes, give it to her."

PARIS VISTAS

To some the tears had come. Others, dry-eyed, clutched their babies.

“And flowers?” said one.

“Yes, she must have money for flowers.” I hardly knew what to say to the girl, but soon the other mothers were talking to her. They were the best comforters.

How did amateur relief workers get the strength and energy to face the awfulness of the situation? What we did was not “wonderful.” Relief work was a debt we owed to life. Fatigue could never be thought of. When my apartment is in a mess from front door to kitchen, straightening looks hopeless. It used to be discouraging until I pretended I had blinders on my eyes and began with the nursery table. I took off everything that did n’t belong there and replaced the things that should be there. I finished the table to the last detail before making the bed. I tried to work in a leisurely frame of mind without too many glances at the clock. After a bit one whole room was tidied. Kiddies were requested not to go in there “till Mama says so.” Then I tackled the next room, and so on—and so on. In relief work, too, you must begin to work on one atom of the problem. You must put blinders on your eyes to shut out all the other atoms. It is fatal to let your imagination run away with you, fatal to envisage the accumulated woe.

Once in the Rue Servandoni days an Englishman came to ask Herbert to bury his baby. He told me

SAUVONS LES BÉBÉS

the story of how the baby died, and I cried all night thinking of the mother. Herbert remonstrated with me for trying to bear the whole of another's grief. Christ did that and it broke His heart. His broken heart could save humanity; but as for little me I could do nobody any good by breaking my heart over them. Relief work must be constructive with respect to the patient and instructive with respect to the worker. You have to exercise self-control of emotion and help yourself to poise by quickly concentrating your mind on what details of the problem you are fitted to cope with. You learn after a while that your enthusiasm and sympathy will not do it all. You accept the fact that you are not indispensable. You realize that you can put a person on his feet but that to carry him is beyond you. You are not the only influence for good that is touching his life. This attitude keeps you both happy and humble. And so you develop confidence in life and confidence in time. In relief work both life and time are good allies.

My work started in a modest way in my studio in September, 1914. I wanted to help mothers of newborn babies, and so I called my *œuvre* SAUVONS LES BÉBÉS. I wrote to friends for money and layettes, and depended—as all American women in France did—upon the personal correspondence with individuals and organizations in America to maintain and develop the work started. I had no committee, and, during the

PARIS VISTAS

three years I worked for the babies, only one associate. The French wife of an American artist joined me in 1915. From Princeton, Germantown, Philadelphia, Pittsburg, New York, Brooklyn and Boston people I knew and my readers sent me money and boxes through the American Relief Clearing-House. My best aids were always and invariably the police, who sent cases to me and guarded me against imposition. It soon became known in the Fourteenth (my own) Arrondissement, and the neighbouring Sixth, Fifth, Thirteenth and Fifteenth Arrondissements, that an American woman in the Rue Campagne-Première gave layettes to expectant mothers, and sometimes helped with medicines, milk, vacations, clothes and shoes for other children. I did not need to advertise or hang out a sign! In less than three years four thousand mothers of five thousand babies found their way to the Rue Campagne-Première. Sometimes I was swamped, badly swamped, but I managed to get around to all in the end. I remember one time, however, that babies were several months old before I could give their mothers a complete layette.

There was nothing unusual about my *œuvre*, in its size, its singlehandedness, or its spirit. Every American woman in France did what she could from the very beginning by taking up work as she saw it at hand—in her own home or neighborhood. Many did much

SAUVONS LES BÉBÉS

more than I. There were others in Paris looking after the new-born babies.

In the summer of 1917 we Americans resident in France had to give up, all of us, the individuality of our *œuvres*. This meant that most of them went out of existence. When the rumor ran from mouth to mouth in the American colony that the Red Cross insisted on taking over everything and would starve out the stubborn individualists, there was consternation. Since the Red Cross was a Government organization and controlled shipping, it was possible for them to tell us that we should receive no more cases of supplies after September first, even if friends at home kept on sending them. Some were furious; some were offended; some would give a generous slice of their fortune to fight the injunction; some laughed. But the charities' trust had come to stay, and started in to handle things and ride rough-shod over people in a way that I fear is typically American.

In the early stages of war fever, the Y.M.C.A. and the Army showed the same symptoms as the Red Cross in France. There was the idea that the American way is always and exclusively the right way; impatience with and resentment against existing organizations; a thirst for sweeping reforms; and the determination that Americans who had been on the ground from the beginning must be eliminated. The way our splendid

PARIS VISTAS

Ambulance at Neuilly was absorbed by the army is a story of Prussianism pure and simple. The Red Cross men and their wives did not seem to get it into their heads that we had been at war for three years. I attended a drawing-room meeting one day, where a hundred women were gathered who had been sacrificing themselves in relief work ever since the day France mobilized. More than one had lost her son in the war. A new Red Cross woman, fresh from America, lectured on what the Red Cross was going to do. She smiled at us, and her peroration was this: "Now you must realize that we are at war, and that we are going to put you all to work, all to work!"

When the excitement cooled down a bit, we realized that these Red Cross volunteers meant well, that they were devoted and capable, and that we could not take too tragically their ignorance and inexperience. We realized that we were tired, that we needed a rest and change, and that the Red Cross, with its enormous funds and abundant personnel, was in a position to realize many of our dreams. Our initial resentment was in part dismay at seeing newly arrived compatriots making the same mistakes some of us had made in the beginning, and partly their obtuseness in failing to get the French point of view. Contact with suffering such as they had never seen before soon mellowed most of the Red Cross volunteers and they realized that America was coming, as my husband put it, "not to

SAUVONS LES BÉBÉS

save France, but to help France save the world.”

Outside of hospitals, where there was a reason for it, we had never worn uniforms: but we got accustomed to seeing them as the A.E.F. grew although we never could master the meaning of many of them. One morning a woman in uniform, with service cap and Sam-Browne belt (not forgetting the nickel ring for hanging a dagger from), appeared in my studio. From her pocket she took a crisp new loose-leaf notebook, the like of which could no longer be indulged in by ordinary folks. As she unscrewed and adjusted her fountain-pen, she said,

“I’ve been sent to inspect your relief organization.”

“You come from the Children’s Bureau?” I asked.

“No, Civilian Relief. How do you handle the matter of investigation?”

“Well,” I answered, “I cast my eye over the person, size her up, and give her what she needs. I cannot afford to investigate. You see, I have no overhead charges and I need all the money I can get for materials and all the time for handling them. The only expense is for sewing. Even that money goes to my own women. I give the sewing out to mothers on my list so they will not have to go out to work. This encourages them to nurse their babies themselves instead of sending them to a *nourrice*.”

“People begging,” said my visitor, “are splendid actors, you know.”

PARIS VISTAS

"Few women who are just about to have a baby are likely to act the impostor," I answered, "and then I do not consider my women as beggars. I'm sure that nine out of ten are not. They would n't need any aid if their husbands were not in the trenches earning five sous a day. For the first two years it was only one sou a day. You can generally tell the difference between a shifty woman looking for a chance to get something for nothing and the shattered little mother, unaccustomed to charity, whose children would go without winter clothes were it not for some form of outside help. Most of the women who come here look on me as a neighbor who loves babies and who keeps flannel in her cupboard. I'd rather give away an occasional layette to a dead beat than bruise the feelings of timid souls at bay. If you could see them as they come in here!"

"But you know really that there can be an immense amount of waste of good material if you don't investigate."

"I may have wasted material, but I've never failed to help. Nobody investigated me when my baby was born in a Turkish massacre. If they had, I could n't have stood it. Of course I have faced the question. I figure that if I put in one column the number of layettes I give out and their cost, and beside it what I would spend in time and taxi fares to investigate, I should find that the price of a badly-placed layette or two would be less than the cost of investigation."

SAUVONS LES BÉBÉS

The inspector took full and rapid notes. Folding them neatly into her pocket with one clap of her notebook, she left me.

Three days later a young man appeared. He said, "I am here to represent the Red Cross. Would you mind telling me about your baby work?"

"Are you from the Children's Bureau?"

"No, I am Vital Statistics."

After the Refugees Bureau sent two inspectors to look into my activities, the Children's Bureau finally did come. They "took over" my work, which meant that no more babies in my quarter of Paris received layettes from the United States.

When I finally handed over my *œuvre* to the Red Cross, the interview with the husky well-fed football player of a doctor was refreshing. He was full of enthusiasm, and I felt instinctively that he was an able man with broad vision and an open mind. But, like all the men at 4 Place de la Concorde, he did not give the French credit for having already thought of and worked out many of the problems he wanted to solve. His attitude towards the French put them in what Abe and Mawruss would call the "new beginner" class in the matter of baby welfare. He cheerfully told me of organizing plans for saving French babies, plans which, compared with what we had been doing, were Kolossal. But the plans included some things which I knew would not go and others which the French had already worked

PARIS VISTAS

out more successfully than my own compatriots. Puericulture is an advanced science in France, where baby lives are more precious than anywhere else in the world. I had tried some of the things he wanted to do and had run up against a stone wall. So had other American women. I started to sputter, but stopped short of speech. For I had a lightning vision of how parents must feel when their children, grown to manhood, plunge into work and do things they might be saved from if only—. I felt motherly towards this capable young man who was as old as myself. But something about him gave me confidence that he would work it out all right. And I knew that he was in no frame of mind to benefit by my experience.

CHAPTER XXIV

UNCOMFORTABLE NEUTRALITY

THE following letter was in my husband's mail one day:

"A young American came to Paris about twenty-five years ago, lived for a time in the Latin Quarter, and then, following the loss of his income, obtained a minor position in the office of an importer of American goods. He liked his work, rose to a place of responsibility, eventually went into business for himself, and developed the business to a prosperous issue.

"He held the theory that the few Americans living and working abroad formed the nucleus of American overseas industrial expansion and that they were regarded by Europeans as representative of their fellow-countrymen. He felt that it was his duty to conduct his business and social activities in such a manner as to merit the confidence and respect of his hosts. Had he been indifferent to these responsibilities or had his patriotic fire ever burned low, his association with the active members of the American Chamber of Commerce in France and the American Club in Paris would have surely recalled and revived them. Every one knows of the results attained by these organizations in their effort to maintain the feeling of sympathetic understanding between the two great sister republics during the long and difficult period of 'watchful waiting.' Such services enter into the realm of practical diplomacy and could have been rendered efficient only by men of high standing and of the highest order of patriotism.

"I wish to call your attention to the editorial page of an

PARIS VISTAS

American weekly, which boasts of millions of readers, where we see a vicious attack upon ourselves. I quote textually: 'Things had reached a point among our expatriates, the *fifty-eighth and lowest form of cootie*, that in home circles to be pro-American was really bad form.'

"Is this the general opinion in America? Is it shared by people of intelligence? The editorial in question apparently adds another high authority on public opinion to the previous judgment rendered by Mr. Wilson when he classified us as 'unpatriotic Americans living abroad.' I am interested in knowing the true facts. Must we admit that we are held in small esteem by friends at home because we live in France?

"Sincerely yours,

"ONE OF THE COOTIES."

Being "cooties" ourselves, in the estimation of the American editorial writer, we read the protest of the American business man resident in Paris with the keenest interest and sympathy. In telling about the attitude of the Red Cross toward our relief organizations, after the United States intervened in the war, I spoke of only one phase of the mistrust—even scorn—so many of our compatriots took no pains to conceal when they learned that we belonged to the American colony. It was inconceivable that we should be living in Paris and bringing up our children there and still be good Americans. They questioned more than our patriotism and our loyalty to the country of our birth. They felt that there must be some skeleton in the closet of every American family living abroad. I have never had an American tell me to my face that my husband

UNCOMFORTABLE NEUTRALITY

was a crook and that we were abroad "for our health," but I have had them inquire pointedly why on earth this or that friend of mine lived in exile. And I suppose my friends were asked about the past of the Gibbons menage!

"How long have you been over?" is a question as common as the "Oh!" with a curious inflection that meets the confession of a protracted residence abroad.

I am sure I do not know why the writer in the American weekly read by millions called us first "expatriates" and then "the fifty-eighth and lowest form of cooties." I cannot imagine why. He is ignorant of the people of whom he speaks. He has probably never met anyone in the American colony of a European city, or has jumped to the conclusion that an occasional bounder or cad or snob (these are always in evidence) represents as intensely patriotic and loyal Americans as exist anywhere. Or he thinks that living abroad means dislike of one's own country.

There are Americans in Europe—and some of them are to be found in Paris—who have no valid reason for being where they are more than in another place. There are criminals and courtiers. There are those who have forgotten their birthright. But they form an infinitesimally small percentage of the American colony in Paris. Most of our American residents are business men, painters, sculptors and writers, with the necessary sprinkling of professional men to minister to

PARIS VISTAS

their needs, of the type of the writer of the letter quoted above. Many of them came to Paris first by accident or as students and just stayed on. Without them our country would be little known in Europe: and Europe would be little known in our country. Until the war broke out, it was never realized how many Americans resided in Paris. Most of them had lived along quietly, doing their own work and minding their own business. But they had kept alive the friendship begun in the days of Franklin. Art and literature have their part in good understanding between nations: but the foundation and the binding tie are furnished by commerce and banking. The best representatives of Americanism are business men.

We of the American colony found that out during the war; and we are sorry for the ignorance and misapprehension and ingratitude of our compatriots. They judged without inquiry and tried to put into Coventry the very men whose patience and tact and devotion not only prevented a break between France and the United States during the years of uncomfortable neutrality but prepared the way for the intervention of America and the downfall of Germany.

I may not have perspective. I may be prejudiced. But I do feel that I have a right to protest against the cruel snap judgments of us made by those who never realized there was a war between right and wrong until April, 1917.

UNCOMFORTABLE NEUTRALITY

Les amis de la première heure—the friends of the first hour—as the French love to call those who refused to obey the injunction to be “neutral even in thought” were not confined to Americans resident in France. We had behind us from the first day our friends in America, friends by the hundreds of thousands, who sent money and medical supplies, clothing and kits. All who could came to France to help actively in relief work. But the machinery for the charitable effort of the United States coming to the aid of France was provided by the Americans who were permanent or partial residents in France. We were on the ground. We knew the language. We knew the needs and the peculiarities of those we were helping.

The greatest service we were privileged to render to our own country and to France was not ministering to the material needs. What we accomplished was a drop in the bucket. It was the moral significance of the relief work that counted. Our Government was neutral. The American people in the mass were far away from the conflict. The French realized all the same that individually and collectively the Americans who knew France or who were in contact with France believed in the righteousness of France’s cause and in the final triumph of France’s arms.

Neutrality was uncomfortable. For thirty months we were in an awkward position. We had to hold the balance between loyalty to America and friendship for

PARIS VISTAS

France. On the one hand, we were called upon to comprehend the slowness of our fellow-countrymen to awaken to the moral issues at stake, especially after the sinking of the *Lusitania*. On the other hand, we were called upon to comprehend the impatience and disappointment of our French friends. We tried to be sensible and to realize that those who were far from the fray and to whom the war was incidental could not be expected to share our intense feeling. With rare exceptions, Americans in Paris did not allow themselves to criticize the policy of their government in the presence of French or British friends. That was hard, and required as much tact as we could muster. But when we were *en famille*, the fur did fly! That was natural. We had a right to our opinions, and everything we said from 1914 to the end of 1916, President Wilson and all America with him said in 1917 and 1918. We were never ashamed of being Americans. That accusation was untrue. But we were sorry that the awakening came so late. For we saw the toll of human life growing each month. We feared that France would come out of the war too weakened to profit by victory if the war dragged on. We were sometimes nervous about the aftermath.

As I look back upon the first years of the war, American neutrality appears as a tragedy. It was uncomfortable for us, and disastrous for France. But we lived through it as we lived through other things. Our

UNCOMFORTABLE NEUTRALITY

French friends were splendid. Their patience was greater than ours.

We kept our flags ready for the inevitable day. And when it arrived at last, no Americans were prouder of the stars and stripes than we.

1917

CHAPTER XXV

HOW WE KEPT WARM

IN Paris the child of the people is a born artist. He has the instinct from his ancestors. His taste is formed and cultivated by what he sees around him—of the present as well as of the past—from the time he first begins to observe things. Inheritance and atmosphere influence him. One June day in 1917, our dear friend Thiébault-Sisson, art critic of the *Temps*, was lunching with us. He drew from his pocket a lot of photographs. They illustrated the best and most striking of the drawings by children in the primary schools of the city. M. Thiébault-Sisson had organized an exposition of children's drawings, done in their ordinary class work. The photographs were a surprise and a revelation. Having lived in Paris since the beginning of the war, I could appreciate the comments of a Parisian, proud of this eloquent showing of precocious talent. I accepted with alacrity his invitation to see the originals.

The outline, almost always enhanced by bright frank color, where the three notes of the flag played a perpetual leit-motif, was a feast for the eyes. In work

PARIS VISTAS

of this character one expects to see the freshness and freedom of childhood. What I found that was unusual was the maturity born or suffering and intense emotion. In the drawings life in wartime was reflected with a *naïveté* that excluded neither precision nor vigor of touch. With compositions of the simplest and most studied character there was taste and a pretty feeling for color.

The most popular form of drawing was the poster. In one school the children were given the subject of calling upon the people to economize gas. One little girl made a few bold strokes outlining a gas-jet and wrote underneath, "Parisians—Economize Gas!" Asked to admonish the public to eat less bread, a boy of ten used a potato as a face. The eyes were almost human in their appeal. "Eat me please!" was written under the drawing. A further caption stated that it was the duty of patriots to save the bread for the soldiers. Sugar shortage inspired the idea of a sugar cone and the same cone cut in half. Under the former was "In 1914" and under the latter "—and now!" The best of these posters were reproduced by the thousand and put in tram-cars and railway stations. They did more to call us to order than all the grave *offices* of the Government.

A dominating note, perhaps the strongest after that of the man on furlough or the poignant expression of emotions experienced when the news came that father

HOW WE KEPT WARM

would never return again, was the hunt for coal. Little observers, inventing nothing of this (for it was seen over and over again), pictured a coal wagon upon which two or three youngsters had scrambled and were helping themselves. Generously they were firing bits of the precious commodity to their little comrades. This was a drawing made from memory of things seen.

Winter in Paris is often mild: but early in 1917 came a protracted spell of zero weather that would have taxed the facilities of Paris in ordinary times. The coal shortage hit us at the worst possible moment. Transportation was tied up. The mines were not producing. Stocks became exhausted in a few days. The hunt for coal was cruel because it was mostly fruitless and because it imposed upon the children weary waits, hours at a time, in the street in snow and wind, with the thermometer down to zero.

Whoever saw the crowds massed in a long line in front of the coal depots, old men, women, children stamping their feet painfully, jostled, weeping or seized with mute despair at the curt announcement that there was nothing to do but return to-morrow, will never forget the worst calamity that fell upon Paris during the war. Children were hit by it more than all the rest, and in a certain sense more than by the loss of a father. For they suffered from it in their own flesh, in little hands chapped till they opened into deep

PARIS VISTAS

cracks, in little fingers stiffened and swollen by monstrous chilblains, in frost-bitten feet. For six weeks the quest for coal was the ruling passion. It inspired the children to compositions all quite like each other in sentiment and all dominated by the conviction of an implacable fatality.

In common with most Parisians who lived in modern apartment-houses, we never had to think of heat. Like hot water, you just turned it on. To make an effort to have it no more entered into our scheme of things than to help with the stoking when we were on ship-board. How naturally one accepts the comforts and conveniences resulting from the work of others and the smooth moving of modern city life! At first we felt the coal shortage mildly. It meant piling on extra clothes and having our noses turn red and then blue, like the dolls with barometrical petticoats. The apartment was chilly, but we got up as late as we could. For once we blessed the school system in France which works the children so many hours that you wonder why the babies do not strike for an eight-hour day. As long as the municipality could supply them, schools were especially favored. After school hours and *devoirs* (we had a wood fire in one room), bed time soon came for the kids. We set the victrola going, and everybody danced until they forgot the thermometer.

Then we began to discover that coal means more



A passage through the Louvre

HOW WE KEPT WARM

than heat and light. We found out how many trades were obliged to say "no coal, no work." In a big city coal is certainly king, and not a limited monarch at that. Transportation depends on coal, and everything else depends upon transportation. One day there was a mass meeting of Paris laundresses. The Government had promised them coal upon payment in advance of a large part of the price. The order had been placed for weeks: no coal came. It meant livelihood to the laundresses and cleanliness to the rest of us. They had the Board of Health with them and the learned doctors of the Académie de Medecine. Think of the menace of weeks of accumulated soiled linen! It was all right for the papers to joke about abolishing starched shirts and cuffs and collars. That was a small part of the problem, affecting only men. The germs involved in not being able to wash were no joke.

Elderly people living alone and adult families calculated that it was cheaper to go to a *pension* than to keep house. In some cases it was the only feasible thing. People who had the means started to go south when conditions in Paris became intolerable. But with little children it was dangerous to attempt a journey in freezing cold trains.

Just when we had exhausted the little supply of wood we had laid in originally for the luxury of a wood fire we did not need, our *propriétaire* notified us that he could get no more coal for heating or hot water. And

PARIS VISTAS

the same day an inspector called to place a maximum of gas (our only means of cooking) at less than half the amount we ordinarily consumed.

The law of substitution came into force. We had long been ridiculing the Germans for their *ersatz* ingenuity. Were we now to have to seek substitutes? Cooking is the most vital thing in life next to foodstuffs. Paris blossomed out with what I thought was an American invention, the fireless cooker. But they were called *marmites norvégiennes*. I suppose if we keep on digging at Pompeii we shall find them there. Everyone who could afford a *marmite* bought one. You could get them at all prices and sizes, and the newspapers published daily directions for using them. If you could not afford a fireless cooker or if you were unable to buy one (they soon gave out, of course), you took your hatbox from the Galeries Lafayette and stuffed it with newspapers and sawdust with just room in the middle for your soup-kettle.

But fireless cookers would not wash clothes. They would not give the necessary supply of hot water. The law of substitution has a limit. And what was to be the *ersatz* for fuel in heating? Gas? Your supply was already cut down. Electricity? Ditto. Both of these depended upon coal. Petroleum? The army had commandeered all the supplies for motor transport and airplanes. Wood alcohol? There was none to be had.

HOW WE KEPT WARM

Then began the coal hunt for us. We had been pitying the poor. Now was our turn. Money was of no value. Other *propriétaires* had served the same notice. People with larger purses than ours were in the market for coal and wood. Our children began to suffer also in their own flesh.

My husband and his secretary gave up work and joined the coal hunters. They scoured the city in taxi-cabs. Herbert found a man who knew where there was a ton of anthracite for eighty dollars. He tracked it down and found that he was the tenth person applying for it that same afternoon.

Then the kiddies came down with measles. Keeping them warm in the way the doctor ordered was utterly impossible. All we could do was to give them more blankets. When the baby got congestion of the lungs and heat and hot baths meant the difference between life and death, I cast my eye over the apartment appraising the furniture. I no longer thought of how pretty my Brittany *armoire* was or how I loved my Empire desk. The cubic feet of wood was the sole criterion. Dining-room chairs went first into the fire in Hope's bedroom. The dining-room table, sawed into little blocks, heated the water for baths. Cupboard doors were taken off their hinges and converted into fuel. Herbert got a hand-cart and stood in line for his turn at a place where old lumber from torn-down houses was being sold. There was a crowd be-

PARIS VISTAS

sieging it as if it were a gold-mine. It was, to the owners. The junk that had been there for years disappeared at fabulous prices in a few days, doors, clapboards, window-sashes, shutters, beams, flooring, even lathes.

When our fight for Hope's life became known, friends appeared bringing treasures. A prominent American manufacturer was at the door one morning. He had climbed six flights of stairs with a huge bag of bits of wood gleaned in his factory.

"We calculate pretty close," he said apologetically. "We do not have much waste in making roll-top desks."

"Don't ask me where I got this sack of coal," said another respectable Samaritan. I felt his guilt, confirmed when he told me the story afterwards of how he had stolen it from the back of a wagon. But I was not asking questions then!

Two burly policemen, unmindful of dignity and uniforms, deposited sacks of wood on my salon floor. They had come from the Commissariat in the Fifth Arrondissement. Monsieur le Commissaire, they explained, had said that the woman who was looking after so many Paris babies in her *œuvre* must not be allowed to see her own baby die. They had agreed. This was the wood from their own office. Why not? For the first time I cried. Go through my experience, and you will understand how one can have a passionate love for the French. I am relating here just one little

HOW WE KEPT WARM

incident of help unsolicited that came in a crisis. I had never seen that Commissaire. How he knew my baby was ill was a mystery. But I have often experienced in my Paris life the impulsive generosity, carried out at inconvenience and sacrifice, of which this is an example. There were others who needed that wood as much as I did. But I was a foreigner who had been working for babies in the Commissaire's district. A point of honor was involved. Never will you find a Frenchman lacking when he feels a sense of obligation.

François Coppée wrote a beautiful story about a young French aristocrat whose life in the army had taught him that half of the world goes through life struggling constantly to obtain what the other half has without effort. Perhaps you have read "La Croûte de Pain." After the war of Soixante-Dix the aristocrat could not bear to see bread wasted. One day he picked up a crust on the street, brushed off the mud with his handkerchief and set it on the sidewalk where one who needed it would find it. And then he told his inquiring companion why. I shall always be like that with coal. For I can never forget how we kept warm in February, 1917.

CHAPTER XXVI

APRIL SIXTH

NEVER were Americans in France more perplexed about the state of feeling in the United States than at the beginning of 1917. The sinking of the *Lusitania* and other *torpillages* had brought forth note after note from President Wilson: but his spokesmen among the Democratic senators, especially Senator Hitchcock, were advocating measures to put an embargo on the export of arms and ammunition. If these men had succeeded, they would have helped Germany to win the war during 1916. Then President Wilson was re-elected on the slogan, "He has kept us out of the war." Immediately after his re-election, Mr. Wilson began an attempt to make peace that seemed to us at the time distinctly unfriendly to the Entente. The idealism of President Wilson stirred us. But we were living too close to the war to see the advantage of a "peace without victory."

Our first intimation of a change of attitude in America came one day when *L'Information*, one of our papers that comes out at noon, published a cablegram from Washington, stating that Secretary Lansing

APRIL SIXTH

had declared that the reason behind President Wilson's interest in peace was that the United States felt herself on the brink of war. Herbert and I were walking home from our studios. He stopped to buy the paper that the boy on a bicycle was just giving our news-woman. Long experience had taught us that the noon paper never gave anything new. But one was always afraid to miss something. That's why afternoon papers are able to bring out so many editions. When we read this message, we realized that the President must be at the end of his rope, and that if Germany persisted in her intention to declare unlimited submarine warfare, our entering into the conflict was inevitable.

The news of the rupture of diplomatic relations arrived on a Sunday morning when the streets were full. The dispatches from Washington contained long excerpts from President Wilson's splendid speech. Relief rather than joy was the feeling we all had. We said to ourselves, "*At last!*" Some of our intimate French friends, when we discussed the break and the reasons the President gave for it, wondered why those reasons had not been valid long before. It was an echo of our own thoughts. But French and American were so happy over the new stand taken by the United States, over the new note in the leadership of President Wilson, that we did not allow ourselves to criticize the past. All was forgiven on that last Sun-

PARIS VISTAS

day of January. Over night President Wilson became the most popular man in France. And just one week before my Parisian friends had been reading his Senate speech of January twenty-second with a puzzled expression that turned into anger and indignation.

We had an excellent barometer of what the French *bourgeois* and *universitaire* was thinking in our dear old family doctor. Doctor Charon had come to us first in the Rue Servandoni days. Christine was sick one night for the first and only time in her babyhood. The young father and mother were scared to death. Doctor Charon, whom we had not known before, was called in. He assured us that there was nothing fatal. After that he came again for colds. He knew how to scold us and make us obey. Since then he has been the family friend and censor, entering into our life as only a doctor can do. He always stopped to chat a minute. His only son was at the war: he and his wife and two daughters were doing hospital work. I often felt that his heart was breaking. He suffered from the war in his soul, which was far worse than suffering in the flesh.

During the years of uncomfortable neutrality, Herbert and I tried to reassure Doctor Charon and make him see how impossible it was that all our compatriots, who had never been in France and knew nothing about France, could feel the way we did. But we often felt that he loved us despite the fact that we were Amer-

APRIL SIXTH

icans. On January 23, 1917, Doctor Charon talked to us at length about the Senate speech. The way President Wilson's mind worked was beyond him. He despaired of America. On January 30 he came in with a face transfigured, held out his arms, and kissed me. We both cried.

"I do not yet understand about your President," he said simply, "but you were right in telling me not to lose hope in him. To-day he is our prophet."

During the two years that followed, Doctor and Madame Charon, in common with all our French friends, had a revelation of the heart of America beating for France. They saw at close range our relief work. Not only did we give money without stint, but hundreds of Americans—who had never known France before—came over to show by tireless personal service that the friends of France were not limited to the Americans resident in France or to those who had some point of personal contact. In the end they realized that we were ready to be as prodigal with our blood as with our treasure. When my husband received his red ribbon, the Charons gave a dinner for us. Doctor Charon said: "I have one ambition now in life—to go to America."

As I have related in another chapter, February and March were tragic months for Paris. Zero weather and no coal made a combination that took our attention away from the evolution of public opinion across the

PARIS VISTAS

seas. Germany stood firm, resisting the threats and disregarding the warnings of President Wilson's notes. But we had such an inherent mistrust of notes that we were not sure until the end of March that some sort of a *modus vivendi* would not be patched up, as after the *Lusitania* and the *Sussex*.

Were we even sure in the first week of April? Herbert told me to get out our flags that had been put carefully away since 1914. Although I was not as optimistic as my husband, I brought out the flags and mended them. I needed two for our studios. My voice trembled when I asked for the stars and stripes at the Bon Marché. They had a large stock, mostly brand-new. They were counting upon the imminent event. The sales girl told me that they had sold more American flags in the last fortnight than those of the other Allies put together since the beginning of the war. She said it gleefully. The new broom was sweeping clean. With all my pride in my own country, I had my misgivings about too great a demonstration. Why did not the Government or some of the patriotic organizations make a propaganda to have the flags of the Allies ready for display everywhere with the American and French when the day arrived? I suggested this to my husband, who was a member of the Union des Grandes Associations Françaises. I knew how I would feel if I were a Britisher who had been there from the beginning. Would not the French show

APRIL SIXTH

that wonderful characteristic of theirs, the sense of proportion?

But when the day arrived, my internationalism and cosmopolitanism, a gradual and unconscious growth, suddenly disappeared. It was a reversion to type. I became blatantly American again, and gloried in the fact that everywhere it was all Stars and Stripes. Why not? This was America's day. And ever since, despite the theoretical internationalism (or super-nationalism) I have advocated in common with my husband, I fear that practically I have been lapsing into a narrow nationalism. It is a curious phenomenon. I do not attempt to explain it.

On Thursday, April sixth, Herbert went to the American Club to lunch. Settling down to work had been hard that morning. We were feverishly awaiting the news. I was just starting lunch with the children when the telephone rang. Herbert's voice said, "Put out your flag," and then he hung up.

An hour later he came in a taxi-cab with Carroll Greenough, an American architect who lived near us. We went for his wife. Then the four of us did the Grands Boulevards, the Rue de la Paix, and the principal streets in the heart of Paris. As if by magic the American flag appeared everywhere. Paris had not waited for the poster of the Municipality, in which the President of the Municipal Counsel called upon his fellow citizens to *pavoiser* in honor of the new

PARIS VISTAS

Ally. Americans though we were, we had never seen so many American flags. They expressed the hope which, though long deferred, had not made the heart sick.

We went to the Ambassadeurs for tea. The terraces were full. We watched the crowds passing up and down the Champs-Élysées. All that was lacking was the orchestra to play the Marseillaise and the Star Spangled Banner. There had been no orchestras in Paris since the beginning of the war.

But the music was in our hearts.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE VANGUARD OF THE A. E. F.

“WHAT class are yuh goin’ to git?”

The voice came from a wee island of khaki in a solid mass of horizon blue. American soldiers! The first I had seen. The American army was to the French army as were these half dozen doughboys to the station full of shabby *poilus*. The Gare du Nord has many memories for me, happy and poignant, but this will always be the most precious. Shall I ever forget the ticket window around which our boys crowded? We had been saying “How long, O Lord, how long?” And now they were with us. I moved nearer to them.

“Why, there’s classes—foist, second, and thoid—accordin’ to what yuh pay—see?”

“Aw! What dya mean?”

“Buy fift’ and we’ll ride foist!”

I volunteered to help them count their change.

“She don’t understand and neither do we,” said one, hitching a thumb in the general direction of the girl behind the grating.

“Guess she’s got mush in her brain.”

“Or feathers!” laughed another.

It was not the class they would ride that was at the

PARIS VISTAS

bottom of the trouble. I found that the boys wanted to go to Versailles. They had come into the Gare du Nord with baggage two days in advance of General Pershing and his staff. Their officer had given them an afternoon off, but told them that they were not to wander around Paris. He had suggested Versailles. This was the only station they knew, and so they were trying to get to Vers-ales. I took them to the Gare du Montparnasse and put them on their way. This really was not necessary. I soon discovered the American soldiers needed no interpreter. They always got to whatever destination they set their minds upon. But this little scene at the Gare du Nord was typical of the spirit of our boys during the two years they were in France. Instead of getting angry, they smiled and "joshed." In their very nature they had the secret of getting along with the French.

The afternoon of General Pershing's arrival, the streets around the Gare du Nord held a crowd the like of which I had not seen in Paris since the war began. It was the same at the Place de la Concorde. Rooms had been engaged for the Pershing party at the Hotel Crillon. The ovation at the Gare du Nord and along the route of the procession was remarkable. When General Pershing came out on the balcony of the Crillon it was a scene worthy of the occasion. Paris was not greeting an individual. France was welcoming America.

THE VANGUARD OF THE A. E. F.

For the first time since the beginning of the war Paris celebrated. The danger that still menaced the city and the bereavements of three years were forgotten in the frenzy of joy over what everyone believed was the entry of a decisive factor. Since April sixth insidious defeatist propoganda had permeated the mass of the people. Seizing upon the failure of the Champagne offensive in April, which had caused mutinies in the army that could not be hushed up, German agents—often through unconscious tools—spread their lies among a discouraged people. America had declared war, yes, but she intended to limit her intervention to money and materials. No American army would risk crossing the ocean. The Americans, like the British, were ready “to fight to the last Frenchman.”

Seeing was believing. Here were the American uniforms. The arrival of the first American troops, we were assured, would be announced within the next few days. Perhaps they had already landed at some port in France? To baffle the submarines we understood that the censorship must be vigorous. At any rate, an American general and his staff would not be in Paris without the certainty of an army to follow.

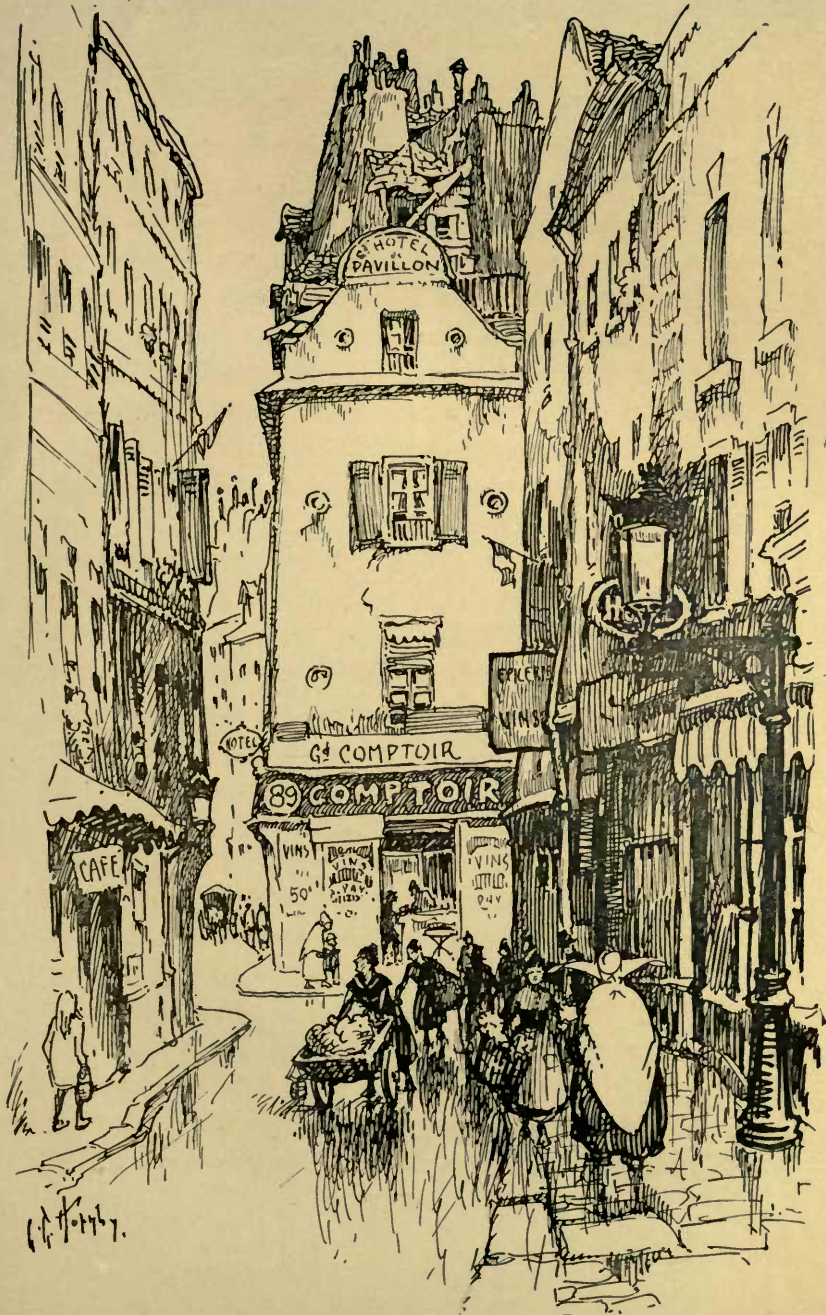
Another source of conviction was afforded us in the fact that on this day of General Pershing's coming Marshal Joffre made his first public appearance in Paris. Parisians had never had a chance before to acclaim the victor of the Marne.

PARIS VISTAS

The Americans set up their headquarters in two small *hôtels* at the end of the Rue de Constantine, opposite the Invalides. Immediately the boys of the headquarters detachment marked out a diamond on the Esplanade des Invalides, and passers-by had to learn to dodge base-balls. The police did not interfere. Nothing was too good for the Americans. All Paris flocked to see for themselves the khaki uniforms and to learn the mysteries of our national game. There was always a crowd around the door of General Pershing's home in the Rue de Varenne.

The events of the next few weeks will always seem like a dream to me. The scene of the drama that has influenced so profoundly the history of the world was shifted from Paris. I went to Saint-Nazaire to see our boys land and later to their first training-camp in the country of Jeanne d'Arc. Many of them did not see Paris. Their idea of France was a long journey of days and nights in freight-cars, with interminable stops, and ending in small villages where they met rain and mud. But a fortunate battalion of the First Division had the honor of being the vanguard of the A. E. F. in Paris.

They were lodged in the Caserne de Reuilly. On the Fourth of July, declared a national holiday by grateful France, they paraded through the streets of our city. We were to become accustomed to American soldiers in Paris. But these first boys made a unique



In an Old Quarter

THE VANGUARD OF THE A. E. F.

impression. The moment of their coming was psychological. Paris never needed encouragement more.

After this excitement we had another long and anxious wait of eight months. The Americans came each week, but in dribbles. Between Gondrecourt and the three ports of Saint-Nazaire, Bordeaux and Brest, it was necessary to construct the lines of communication while a great army in America was being gathered and trained. The defeatist propaganda started up again, the word was spread that the Americans were coming too slowly and that in France they were to be seen everywhere but at the front. Were not the French still holding the lines against odds and giving their lives, while the Americans were in safety? Despite the fact that General Pershing moved G. H. Q. from Paris to Chaumont in the Haute-Marne, the number of American soldiers in Paris, through the necessities of the S. O. S. increased rapidly. The Hotel Méditerranée, near the Gare de Lyon, was the first large building taken over. Then the Elysée-Palace Hotel on the Avenue des Champs-Élysées was chartered. The American flag soon appeared over barracks, garages and other buildings in all parts of the city. You could go nowhere without seeing the American uniform, and our automobiles learned to drive as rapidly as the French. We got accustomed to hearing English spoken on the streets. The Red Cross, the

PARIS VISTAS

Y.M.C.A., the Knights of Columbus, and the Jewish Welfare Board, established hotels and restaurants and reading-rooms and leased theatres. Our American Ambulance at Neuilly, taken over by the army, became only one of a number of hospitals.

Not until the spring offensive of the next year were the Americans able to come in large numbers. Then suddenly a single month brought as many as the nine preceding months. We had our half million, our million, our two millions.

The faith of the French in us revived with Cantigny and Château-Thierry. I am ahead of my chronology. But the men who first fell under the American flag were those who marched through the streets of Paris, on July Fourth, 1917. On parade they gave us hope. Fighting they gave us certitude of victory.

1918

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE DARKEST DAYS

PROBLEMS of war time housekeeping in France did not go back to 1914. The learned political economists who demonstrated to their own satisfaction that a general European war would not last a year were dead wrong. Millions were mobilized. Nations were at each other's throats. The Germans were able to retaliate against the naval blockade by submarine warfare that threatened to decrease seriously our own communications with the outside world. But somehow we managed to go through year after year without feeling the pinch of decreased productivity. And somehow we accepted the inflation of currency and continued to subscribe cheerfully to successive war loans with money that came from God knows where. One hears now much about how we suffered in 1915 and 1916. Morally speaking, I suppose we did suffer and that we were aware of the strain as time went on. But from a material point of view the war did not make itself felt much until 1917. It was only in the spring of that year that a cartoonist was inspired to draw a necklace of anthracite, tipped off with an egg for a pendant, over the caption, "Her Jewels." Coal cards,

PARIS VISTAS

sugar cards, and bread cards were to us the signs of Germany's weakness.

Successive Cabinets realized well enough the prudence of anticipatory restrictions. In the autumn of 1916 the newspapers put forth a *ballon d'essai*. Every day they published a homily on the virtue of practicing economy. It had no effect on my servants, this constant warning of a shortage to come. No restaurants obeyed the voluntary rationing measures. The Government did not dare to introduce obligatory rationing. Public opinion rebels against restrictions of individual liberty. We had to feel the pinch before rationing measures were tolerated.

Sugar cards came first. They were "put over" on the public during the rejoicing over the intervention of the United States. Coal cards were instituted only after the bitter lesson of the late winter months of 1917 bid fair to repeat itself. Not until October, 1917, did I have to put my signature as *chef de famille* (my husband was so often away) on an application for bread cards handed me by the concierge. A fourth New Year of war came and went before we experienced what we had read about in other countries—real lack of necessities. The reserves of everything gave out suddenly. For the first time ability to spend money freely did not solve household problems.

Some difficulties were insoluble. They were the difficulties centering around a shortage of coal supply.

THE DARKEST DAYS

I never realized before that in our modern civilization coal is really a dominating factor in making tolerable existence in the city. The winter before the sudden giving out of coal affected only our heating. In the first months of 1918 coal rationing led to cutting down on gas, electricity and water. In modern apartments, just as there is no way to heat them except by radiators, there is no way to light them except by electricity and no way to have hot water except by turning on the spigot. We were in what the French call a *cercle vicieux*. We had a fox-and-geese-and-corn problem. For instance, when a municipal ordinance forbade giving hot water except on Saturdays and Sundays, your first thought was to heat water on the kitchen gas-stove. But your allowance for gas was insufficient for cooking. Nor could you use gas for lighting to save electricity. Petroleum for lamps or cooking was unobtainable. Everyone made a rush for candles and wood alcohol. They gave out. When you thought of honey and jams to make up to the children what they lacked in sugar, everyone else thought of honey and jams at the same time. We lived on the sixth floor. The electricity rationing made possible running the elevator only at certain hours. And when the elevator broke down, all the steel was going into cannon and all the workers were turning out munitions. You just walked up six flights of stairs all the time.

Aside from cooking and baths and heat and light,

PARIS VISTAS

the coal shortage affected your laundry. So you could n't change linen more frequently to compensate for lost baths. In the old days the laundress would cast her eyes around for more stuff to pack into her bundle, and if you gave her a free hand, would gather up things that had never been soiled. Now she picked out of the basket what she saw fit to take. In the same way, I used to struggle to keep my milk supply down. It was a common trick for the dairy people to load you up with milk and butter and eggs and cheese in collusion with your cook. Now you had to beg for enough milk to give the babies a cup apiece a day; butter arrived in exchange for a heavy tip; and eggs appeared not when you ordered them but when the dairy chose to send them—which was rarely.

To have the laundress acting like that, and other people acting like that, was living in Alice's Looking-Glass House. Things were contrariwise. One day the laundress came to tell me that she could take no more work. The wash house where the work used to be done had shut down. My poor woman was dissolved in tears to think that a business that she had spent twenty-three years in building up had to drop its customers. I did the best I could by getting in a scrub woman for the day to wash the most important things in cold water in the bath-room. That was hard enough. But how dry them? Old tricks would not go: there was no heat in the radiators. You see, as I

THE DARKEST DAYS

said, all the troubles came at once and were due primarily to coal shortage. There was no remedy. Insufficient food supply because of lack of means of transportation. Insufficient lack of means of transportation because of shortage of coal for freight engines.

I bought dark jersey dresses for the babies, and lived in dark things myself.

I was fortunate in having a good cook and nurse who stayed with me through thick and thin. But when I came to get a *femme de ménage* for chamber work I realized how justified were the complaints of most of my friends. Women could make big money in munition factories. The large country element, scared away in 1914 or called home to take the place of men at the front, did not feed Paris with help as in peace time. I had a succession of giggling sixteen-year-olds, pottering grandmothers, and useless loafers. One *femme de ménage* I called "Toothless." She thought it was an English pet name, and beamed under it. She was a farm hand from the Marne district. The family fled before the Germans. She was left in charge until the soldiers drove her out. "Toothless" put the chickens in a little hay wagon, tied the cows to the back of it, and, with her employer's silver on her lap, drove alone through the night to safety. She was herded with other evacuated peasants on a steamer bound for Bordeaux. The ship was torpedoed and she lost her teeth by the explosion. I felt very sorry, and regarded her some-

PARIS VISTAS

what as a heroine until the truth dawned on me that she was speaking of a plate. I did n't think of this myself. She asked me for an advance one day, explaining that she had to pay it down to a dentist when she ordered *more* teeth. A stranded Russian student followed "Toothless." She held out until her prosperous father sent money from Petrograd through the Russian Embassy. Try as hard as I could and offer more than I wanted to pay, I could not get a regular third servant. I used to be amazed at the letters from American friends, asking me to send them servants. It must have been the popular notion in the United States that France was full of women eager for the chance to work.

In the fourth year of the war, we began to feel the drain on the nation's manhood. The constant killing and crippling and calling to the colors of older men and boys made it almost impossible to get any work done. Bells or lights or plumbing out of order—you waited for months. Where in 1915 I had found half a dozen paper-hangers and painters eager to bid against each other for the job of renovating my studio, I had to beg and bribe men to come in 1918. It took me four months to get what I wanted done. Herbert became expert in carrying trunks and boxes: but that did him no harm. There is a bright side to everything.

Lines began to form at the grocers and the butchers. One waited and waited and waited. My servants spent most of the day in the early months of 1918 in

THE DARKEST DAYS

sugar and meat-lines. All over Paris it was *faire la queue* for everything, even for tobacco and matches.

Although it was an expensive proposition, I found it necessary, with my large family and constant guests, to buy groceries through an agent. A large English firm seemed to be able to furnish everything—if you paid their price. The order-man who came around every week was a rascal named Grimes. He had the genius of a book-agent, and worked you for an order by playing on your fears. Here is a monologue that I wrote out one day just to record how Grimes sold things.

“Rice? First-class American rice?” (Why Grimes called rice “American” was more than I could understand.) “Still got a little of it—please don’t ask me the price. Don’t think of that now. Better let me put you down for a hundred pounds of it and just shut your eyes to money. Golden syrup? Just brought three cases of it up from Bordeaux myself. No telling when we will see any more. The submarines are worse than ever: awful, is n’t it, but it’s best that the newspapers don’t tell us the truth. I’m going to let you have two dozen tins of syrup if you don’t tell anyone. It’s on account of your kiddies. I recommend that you don’t let older people touch it. Stack it away for the time when your sugar card—I’m not pessimistic, but I believe you can’t be too sure about sugar cards. A funny fellow over at our place said a neat thing: ‘It’s hard to believe in a paper shortage when the

PARIS VISTAS

Government has voted sugar cards and those new identity cards.' Biscuits, when have you and I seen a biscuit? I got a few cases in from America. I'll let you have some. I'll reserve a couple of hams and some sides of bacon and hang them in our cellar for you. Gad, you're lucky to have those four babies. It's only because they need the bacon this winter that I give it to you. Now, did n't I tell you that you must not think about money? Trust me to give you a square price. It's safe to say that the beans and other dried vegetables I'm letting you have will make you shiver when you get the bill. But if this order figures up to two thousand francs, you can rest assured that three months from now it would cost you three thousand francs. And six months from now, with all the good will in the world, I could n't get you the stuff.

"No use mentioning flour. Can't give you any. They say that the Government is meeting on the quiet half the price of the flour before the bakers see it. Comes high but it pays 'em to keep the people quiet. Everything else can go up, but not bread. No m'am, I say it positively; got to give 'em bread and the chance to have a little fun." (I'm sure that Grimes never studied Roman history, but he had arrived at the formula of *panem et circenses*.) "But we shan't starve. Better off in France than they are in England or Germany. Save the bread for lunch and tea: give the children a cereal in the morning. Just by luck, I have

THE DARKEST DAYS

a few cases of American oatmeal and hominy grits.

“Of course, the porridge means milk. I know what you’re going to say. But I’ve got hold of powdered milk made in Brittany. They say it’s an American invention. Only one big tin to a person, but then you’re six and we’ll count the babies as grown ups. You can’t tell how long they’ll be able to keep transporting milk to the city. Order as much canned goods as I can give you. Canneries are running out of tin. Food we put up in paraffined paste-board does n’t keep very well, and there is mighty little paste-board.

“It’s a good thing you don’t depend upon cocktails to keep you going. I have a big auto-taxi ticking out there. The man who is going to pay for it would be glad to let it tick all night just so he got what is inside. One hundred bottles of gin. You know, the ordinary five-franc gin. I’m going to get thirty francs a bottle at the Hotel Meurice bar. But they’ll be two bottles short. There they are—yours—right under my hat on the table.

“Now please let me read over the order. Not a luxury on it. Macaroni, beans, lentils, prunes, dried-apricots, salt, and yes, there must be some soap. Better let me put you down for a good hundred bars. The Marseilles people tell us they have got to stop making it soon.”

Then he resumed his reading, and I did n’t dare to say a word. On those rare occasions I was pensive.

PARIS VISTAS

My husband would say: "You don't need to tell me. That scoundrel Grimes has been here. Good Lord, I wish we had an anti-hording law, like England."

"But, oh, Herbert, the children you know."

I tell this story because I believe it illustrates the thought that was uppermost in the minds of Paris women. We had faith in our armies. We stuck to our homes. We were willing to stand anything. But the constant talk of food shortage got on our nerves. We pictured our children without milk and fats and bread. It was not hard for the Grimeses to fill pages in their order-books. And you could not reason with us that laying in supplies was a sin against the community.

In my apartment-house (and it was the same all over Paris because of the new law) the water-heater was having a good rest. I used to have the kids bathed every night in the week except Sunday. Sunday was a real day of rest. My servants liked to go to early mass and Sunday afternoon was "off" for them and for the governess. Circumstances aided in keeping this side of Sunday as my Covenanter grandfather would have had it. But after the restrictions you bathed Sunday morning or never. And you had to wait for your bath. Inferior coal, parsimoniously stoked, took the water-heater a long time to get going. We chose the next best to godliness. Church attendance fell off. The

THE DARKEST DAYS

lawmakers who restricted bathing to Sunday were anticlericals as well as traditionalists.

I had been putting off doing over the apartment and our studios each spring and fall since the war began, saying to myself that I would wait until after the war. But in the autumn of 1917 the time had come to do something. The painter was so short of men that I had to wait three weeks before he sent someone simply to see what was to be done and to make an estimate. The men cleaned half the paint in October. They never came back to do the other half. I was tired of the dull grey wood-work in my husband's studio and the painted grey wainscoting effect that ran around the walls shoulder high. The place looked like a battle-ship turned wrong-side out. Standing in the middle of that studio and looking up to the skylight, I felt as if the hair was flying right off the top of my head. The time came when I could stand it no longer. The painter's soldier son, home on *permission*, agreed with me. But the father shook his head when I asked him to paint the lower part a cheery buff and the upper part cream-color. He had no helpers. I pled with him then to give me the paint properly mixed, lend me brushes and ladders, and I would send for them and do the work myself. It took me a whole morning to remove a part of the imitation wainscoting. Then other things more pressing came up. My husband, who had been oblivious to the old combination, pro-

PARIS VISTAS

tested. Fortunately, one of my wounded *filleuls*, who was able to get around without crutches, did the rest. I helped when I could: for I do love to paint.

The rugs in my drawing-room needed cleaning. At the Bon Marché they offered to write my name down in their books. But they warned me that they could not call for the rugs for three weeks, and that I must understand that they could not be delivered before January. In the end I sent the rugs to three different cleaning places and waited from four to six weeks to get them back.

The curtains of my drawing-room windows were dark green velvet, too depressing a color for wartime. I wonder how I lived with them so long. The drawing-room faces north, and I wanted yellow silk curtains to invite the sunshine in. The curtains should be a frame for the best picture in the drawing-room—a view of Paris that is the reverse of the picture described in the first pages of Zola's Paris. The idea ran away with me, and the momentum of it carried me through the difficulties I found when I tried to get an upholsterer to make the curtains. We are all learning new trades. The curtains were made finally by an artist, who, in order to earn her living through the war years, learned to do retouching of photographs. She and I worked together at those curtains, and you would think that an upholsterer made them.

Then the electric-bells—why can't they be fixed so

THE DARKEST DAYS

one can wind them up like a clock? They would not work; that was certain. I unscrewed their little tops and punched the things like miniature type-writer-spacers which the buttons ought to have hit: no ring. Herbert said they "needed new juice" in the batteries. He had the concierge send up some stuff that looked like salt. I climbed on the pantry table to reach the suspicious-looking butter crocks hitched to twisted waxy wires, and poured in the stuff with water according to orders. Still no ring. Then I telephoned for the electrician. Perhaps he would consent to send me Jean Claude, the nearsighted, who put in the wires when we first came and had always been able to make them work. Jean Claude, we heard, had come back from the war. But the electrician answered that Jean Claude had been sent to the front again in spite of his eyes. He would let me have apprentices. The boys were so short that the big monkey-wrench in their tool-kit was as long as their forearms. They climbed my step-ladder and tinkered with the bells for most of an afternoon, while I held the ladder through a sense of paternal protection for anything as young as that and was glad I had bandages and ointment in my cupboard. When evening came, they were like the boy in the song, who said:

"I don't care what my Teacher says,
I cannot do that sum!"

PARIS VISTAS

Quite naturally they explained that they must ask somebody at the shop what to do and promised to come back next day.

But they did not return. Luckily our dentist turned up on a forty-eight hour furlough. He and his wife knocked long and loud at our front-door. When the first surprise and delight of seeing him back, looking so bronzed and fit, had passed, I apologized for the bell, and told my sad story. The problem awakened the dentist's interest. He went walking about tracing the wires. French wires are all just hitched somewhere above the picture moulding line so you can see them.

"Aha!" came from the pantry. It was the dentist's voice. At the same moment there was a prolonged ringing. "That's what comes from earning your living by making your brains speak through your fingers. Quite simple, quite simple," said the dentist. "I only arranged this little affair on the indicator. It was the fourth screw from the back at the upper line of the plate."

"Sakes," I cried, "get down from there before you give me a toothache!"

We all go through the world lighting up its darkness with our own kind of lantern.

Throughout the war we have done with clothes as with our houses—making things do. That went very well at first. But in the fourth winter wear and tear had to be met. We learned a new scale of values for

THE DARKEST DAYS

little things. A green glass lampshade cost fifteen francs, and you were lucky to get it. The plug to stick in the hole for an electric light you scoured the town to purchase at seven francs. The steel wire your *frotteur* uses to polish floors quadrupled in price. My *frotteur* went to war long ago. His substitute, a chauffeur in the postal service, gave us two afternoons in a month—his only free time. One day he defended his service gallantly while he balanced a wet brown cigarette and cake-walked the steel wire over my *salon* floor. The long black autos marked *postes et dépêches*, terror of pedestrians in Paris, do not really go faster than other autos. We think they do because they were the first autos to be used extensively in the city, and the fear of being knocked down by them has stuck in the minds of the public.

I used to have half a dozen "nice little dressmakers" on my list and as many milliners to whom I could send friends confidently. But as the war dragged on, one after the other they disappointed me. If it were not poor cut and shoddy materials, it was inability to make delivery anywhere near the time promised. Everyone must have been in my position, because when I turned to the department stores for ready-made things, I found long lines awaiting for a turn with the sales woman. It is not the fault of dressmakers. One of them opened her heart to me.

"It is very hard. Like everybody else, I keep hoping

PARIS VISTAS

the war will end suddenly. My reputation was made by my *premières ouvrières*. I still keep on paying them good wages now although I eat into my savings to do it. I cannot risk having my best girls go over to competitors. We had our side in the strike of the *midinettes*. If it had not hit me hard, I should have been amused to see those pretty young things dressed in clothes cheap in material but *chic* go marching along the boulevards winning policemen over at every corner. I raised pay beyond my means, and have granted the *semaine anglaise*. But they would go to-morrow for the least thing.

“For twenty years I have had three classes of customers in Paris: *bourgeoises* of the solid type, who come to me for the reserved sort of clothes that sell on line, good material and long wear. They paid my rent. American women, who came in the summer, or hurried through Paris in February, headed for the Riviera, wanted an advance idea rapidly executed. That trade paid my running expenses. From actresses and mistresses I got fantastic prices for exclusive models I promised not to repeat. From them I made my profits.

“The first class are deft-fingered like all French women, and do their own dressmaking now. They get their mourning from the houses that make a specialty of that trade. The Americans do not come as they used to. My profitable trade does not have the money for fine clothes or the opportunity to show them off.”

THE DARKEST DAYS

Curious it seems to me now, when I sit down to write a chapter about the darkest days of the war, that I find myself penning page after page of the story of petty household difficulties. But I want to be what the French call *véridique*. This is how we felt during the first winter of the American intervention, when the A. E. F. was coming to France with painful slowness and when we were aware that the Germans were preparing a final desperate *coup* before Pershing could marshal an army, effective in training and equipment and numbers. In January and February, 1918, we were under the reaction of the Russian collapse, of the awakening to the falsehoods concerning German military strength that had been spread consistently for three years, of the nervous dread that the submarines might after all prevent the coming of the Americans. The little things, strikes, petty annoyances of daily house keeping, steady increase in the cost of living made the deep impression.

Then came the new German onslaught, the daily long-distance bombardment and the aeroplane raids every night.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE GOTHAS AND BIG BERTHA

IN the early days of the A. E. F., when I was speaking to American soldiers in the camps, I used to leave a little time for questions at the end of my talk. The boys always had something in their heads they wanted to talk about. The scope and variety of their questions were amazing. But some one was sure to ask:

“Have you ever been in an air raid?”

When I answered in the affirmative, he would say,

“How did you feel?”

For a long time I reasoned like the *poilu*, who said that if his number was on a German shell it would find him. Herbert and I worked it out mathematically that our chances of being hit in the enormous area of Paris were not as great as of being knocked down by one of the crazy Indians we had for chauffeurs. When any left-over of a man could get a license to run a taxi-cab in Paris after a course of two days at fifty francs, why worry about bombs dropped from an occasional Hun plane? If we had to go, we'd rather be in our beds. Better to be warm and cosy and run a slight risk, an infinitesimal risk, than the almost certain alternative of a bad cold by huddling in a drafty cellar. I

THE GOTHAS AND BIG BERTHA

told the boys that we took the raids as a matter of course—all in the day's happenings. I explained my philosophy, which was this.

I once knew a man so afraid of germs that he made his wife wash new stockings in disinfectant solution. He kept strict surveillance over his children's diet. No peanuts, pink lemonade, little-store-around-the-corner candy for them. They were taught to exercise minute precautions in the every-day round of living. And yet, for all the bother, they had as many ailments as other children. When one is leading a normal life and has only imaginary or petty things to contend with, molehills are magnified. When one is facing a great crisis, one realizes that health is often simply a matter of lack of physical selfconsciousness. Most of the things you think about and guard against do not happen. I remember once seeing a play, in which a Romeo and a Juliet held the center of the stage, oblivious to fighting in the distance. The man said: "That is only a battle; this is love." Some people see the honey in the pot; others cannot take their eyes off the fly.

I still hold to this way of taking things. It saves a lot of trouble and makes for peace of mind. But somehow it did not work out to the end in the air raids. The Germans were finally able to reach Paris when they wanted to and in appreciable number.

From the beginning of the war to the end of 1917, air raids did not mean much to Parisians. We read

PARIS VISTAS

about the awful nights of terror when the full moon came around in London, and the heavy bombardment of cities just behind the front lines in France. Aeroplanes did come occasionally to Paris. But up to 1918 we experienced curiosity and excitement rather than fear. In 1915 we saw a Zeppelin over the Gare Saint-Lazare. I can recall nothing particularly startling about any of these raids. When aeroplanes came and we did not wake the babies, they scolded us the next day. They wanted to see the fun. Our balconies, looking over the city from the *sixième étage* of the Boulevard du Montparnasse, gave us a wonderful vantage point for seeing the raids.

One January night at the beginning of 1918, the fire engines rushed through the streets with their horns screaming the hysterical "pom-pom! pom-pom!" with more vigor than usual. As was our custom, we turned the lights carefully out and went on the balcony to watch the weird scene that never failed to fascinate, rockets and searchlights and the firefly effect of rising French planes. That always comforted us. We had little thought that an *escadrille* of German planes could reach Paris. They never had before. The raids had been only an occasional plane flying very high and dropping at random a few bombs which burst in different quarters. The next day you had to hunt hard to find the damage they did. Remembering our promise to Christine, we woke her up and took her out.

THE GOTHAS AND BIG BERTHA

The sounds of the alarm died away. Often we had waited in vain for the fire from the forts around Paris to warn us that the raiders had actually arrived in the vicinity of Paris. Then there was another wait until the first bomb fell. Christine was a bit disgusted at being waked up for nothing. During the long silence she asked impatiently, "What is this? The *entre'acte*?"

But Christine was not disappointed. Over our heads we heard distinctly the harsh engine-sound that distinguished the new German Gotha from French planes. We heard it several times. When the bombs began to drop, it was not one or two, but dozens of explosions. We did not think of going inside. The thought of danger to ourselves did not enter our heads.

Although we knew the raid had been something different from any we had experienced up to this time, there was little in the papers about the events of the night. We thought that we must have been mistaken in the number of bombs that had fallen. It is not always easy to distinguish between the explosions of a shell from the *tir de barrage* and the explosion of a bomb. Before we got through the first month of 1918 we had the opportunity of becoming expert in this.

We happened to be lunching with Robert and Edmée Chauvelot. Robert said, "Did you go down to the cellar last night?"

"No, we never do."

PARIS VISTAS

"Why not?" cried Robert.

I explained our air raid philosophy.

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Madame Alphonse Daudet, Edmée's mother, "you must go down next time. It is n't fair to your children. Your idea sounds spunky and American—childish you understand. When we have epidemics, the authorities study remedies. The Huns have decided to concentrate their energies on Paris now. You must have read the warnings in the newspapers. The police have collected statistics. We know now that most of the people killed by German planes were standing at windows or front doors, or were on the streets, or remained in their top-floor apartments. What you have been telling your soldier boys in the camps is all wrong. No precaution ought to be neglected. It is a question of commonsense, not fear."

"I know how to convince you," said Robert. After lunch he took us to the Avenue de la Grande Armée not far from the Arc de Triomphe.

"There!" He pointed to a house whose top floors had been blown away. "That might just as well have been you."

The house was a new one like ours and as solidly built of stone. The apartment on the *sixième étage* was pulverized, the one below it was smashed, and the fourth floor damaged some. But the third floor was intact. This convinced us. If air raids were now to be frequent, had we the right to risk the kiddies? We

THE GOTHAS AND BIG BERTHA

could take the chance for ourselves. But for them?

All Paris reasoned in the same way. The Gothas began to come every night during the full moon periods and other times when it was clear. In the late afternoon we grew accustomed to watch the sky and calculate the chances of cloudy weather. If the stars came out we were sure that there would be no undisturbed night's rest. The Government intensified the batteries of A.D.C. cannon around the city. Patrols of aeroplanes were multiplied. The *tir de barrage* became formidable. None could boast any longer of being able to sleep through air raids. Sirens were put on all the public buildings to replace the *alerte* of the fire-trucks. When the sirens began to wail, not a soul in Paris could complain of not being warned. Frequently nothing happened after the sirens, because the *alerte* was given each time German planes were signalled crossing our lines in the direction of Paris. Then we would simply wait for the *berloque*, the bugle signal "all's over," which was sounded by the firemen riding through the streets on their hook and ladder trucks.

When the Gothas demonstrated their ability to come in numbers, as the Zeppelins had been doing in London, the municipality, upon orders from the Ministère de la Guerre, ordered every light out and the instant stopping of tramway and underground services the moment

PARIS VISTAS

the *alerte* was sounded. Engineers went around the city examining cellars and Métro stations. Houses with solid cellars were compelled to keep their front doors open until the number of persons they could hold had taken refuge inside. In front of the house placards were posted with ABRI in large letters and the number of persons allotted for shelter underneath. The underground railways had to shut all stations except those deemed safe. If you were on the street or in an underground train or tramway when the *alerte* sounded, you had the choice of walking home or of taking refuge in the nearest *abri*. At first the theatres and moving-picture houses protested against being closed down. But one January night a bomb destroyed completely a house a hundred yards from the crowded Folies-Bergère. This was enough. After that, if the *alerte* sounded before opening time, there was no show. If it sounded during a performance, theatres and *cinémas* were evacuated immediately by the police.

One can readily see the inconvenience of all this. If you planned to go out for dinner or to a show, you risked a long walk home or being caught for hours—and then the walk! For it was practically impossible to get into the underground after the *berloque* sounded.

On account of the children, from January to April, we went far from home only on a cloudy or rainy night.

THE GOTHAS AND BIG BERTHA

If there were engagements we had to keep on a clear night, there was only one thing to do—bribe a chauffeur to stand by you with his taxi-cab all evening.

As the *alertes* were often false alarms, we waited until the *tir de barrage* began. Then with servants carrying children wrapped in blankets, we had to stumble down dark stairs. My husband was often away. Sometimes I had to go on lecture trips. But we never left Paris at the same time. Whenever I was out of town, I looked on clear weather as a calamity and dreaded the full moon. The next morning I would eagerly scan the paper for news of what happened in Paris. It was no fun.

Cellars of modern apartment houses may be solid, but they are not spacious. Each *locataire* has two *caves*, one for storage and coal and one for wine. The only refuge space is around the furnace and in the long corridors that lead to the *caves*. We were allotted space for three hundred. Such a crowd would gather from the streets! I could not take my children there. At first we went to the concierge's *loge*. As explosion succeeded explosion, I telephoned the *Herald* office and learned the location of the bomb a few minutes after it fell. This was a way of knowing whether they were in our quarter or across the river. But this soon ended. For telephone service during the raid was interrupted, and the concierge's *loge* was deemed by the police unsafe. Bombs falling in the street or court were wreck-

PARIS VISTAS

ing ground floors. A solidarity manifested itself among the *locataires*. Those on the first two or three floors took in the tenants from the upper floors. I was lucky in having the use of a first-floor apartment alone for my family. The *locataires* of this apartment would leave the door open for me. They went to the cellar! Everything is relative in this life.

At first, the children objected to going down stairs. The younger ones did not like to be wakened from their sleep. The older ones wanted to see the raid from the balcony. We sympathized with them. We were missing so much! After a while, as nothing ever happened to our house, I began to regret having started to follow the advice of my friends. After all, was the cellar safe? It was fifty-fifty. I wonder how my children will feel about Germany as they grow up. They were old enough to have impressed indelibly upon their minds the memory of these months. They will never forget the sirens, the sudden waking from sleep, the *tir de barrage*, and the explosions that sometimes shook our house. Mimi asked once, "Do the Gothas make that siren noise with their heads or with their tails?" Fancy the image in the child's mind: the German birds swooping over Paris shrieking a song of hate and dropping bombs that meant destruction and death. And when the *berloque* sounded and we went up stairs, we could see from our balcony fires here and there over the city. For the Germans used incendiary bombs.

THE GOTHAS AND BIG BERTHA

But we were to have worse than air raids.

The other day I put on the victrola a selection from "Die Walkyrie." Wotan was singing. The orchestra thundered three motifs. The spring of the instrument ran down before I could get to wind it up, there was a rasping shriek. Mimi started.

"That 's like an air raid!" cried Lloyd.

But they say the most potent way "to summon up remembrance of things past" is the sense of smell. Burned toast means to me Big Bertha.

One Saturday morning I was reading the depressing news of the rout of the Fifth British army. After nearly four years of immobility in the trenches, the Germans had once more started the march on Paris. The two older children were out walking with Alice, their *gouvernante*. I was at home with the babies. It was a jewel of a day, picked from an October setting and smiling upon Paris in March. The feel of spring was in the air. For months we had welcomed bad weather as an antidote for Gothas. But I was glad the morning was so fine. At least there was nothing to fear until evening. At the end of winter it is a blessing to have the windows open once more. Suddenly the sirens started. We went out on the balcony. The streets were filling with people, crowding into the Vavin Métro station opposite and looking for the houses that were *abris*. Still the crowds in the Boulevard du Montparnasse got larger. I was sorry that Easter

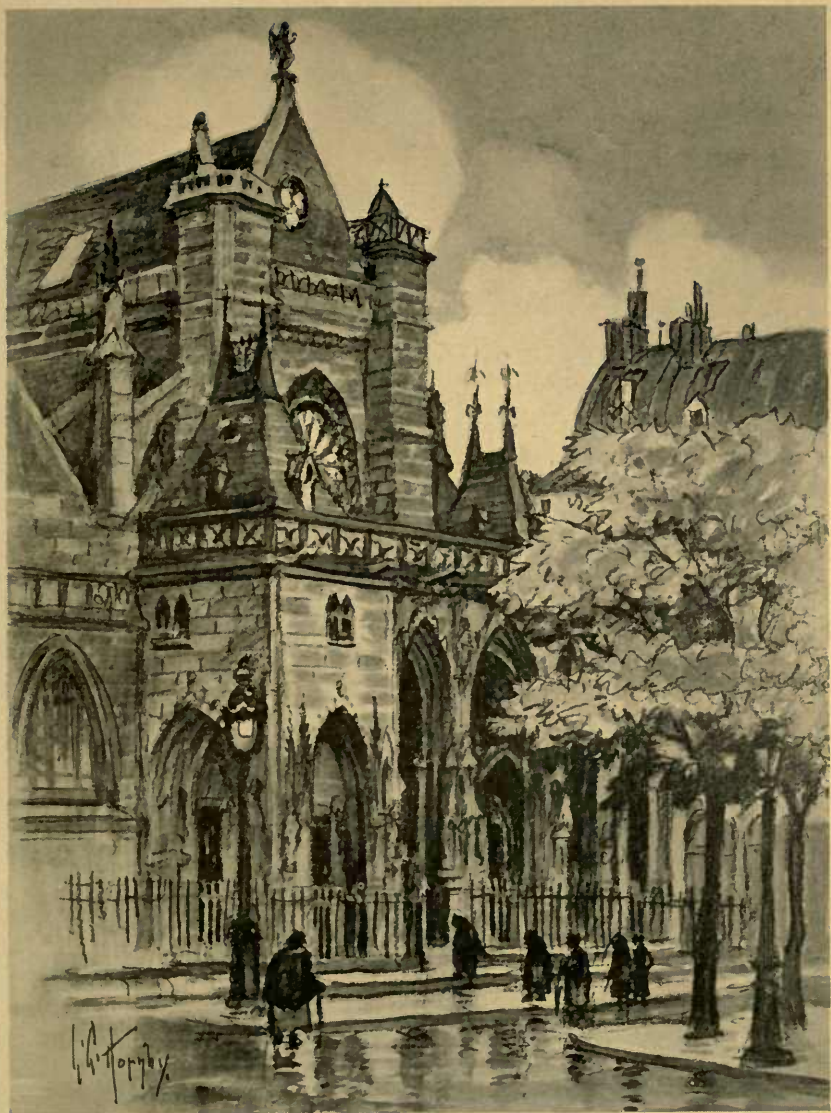
PARIS VISTAS

vacation was starting so early. Were the children in school, they would be in the cellar. At the Ecole Alsacienne the children were drilled for air raids as American school children are for fire. Would Alice take the children to her own home or come back here? If she went to her house, could she get there in time to telephone me before the communications were cut off? It was impossible to go out and look for Christine and Lloyd: for I must stay with the others. Often the best thing is to sit tight. The children came in.

“It is n’t the Gothas—it’s balloons. The Germans have sent a lot of them over us. Everybody says so.”

In the unclouded sky there was no sign of aeroplanes. Could they be so high as to be out of sight? And yet there were explosions near us every few minutes. They lasted until late in the afternoon. The rumor of a big gun spread. The noon newspapers and the earlier afternoon ones spoke of a long distance bombardment to explain the explosions. Shells were certainly falling. Bits of them, different from bombs, had been picked up. But the opinion of interviewed experts scouted the theory of a gun that would carry over a hundred kilometers. Was a new German advance being hidden from us? Had they reached the gates of the city?

That night we had our air raid as usual. The next morning the newspapers told us that we could now expect to be shelled by day as well as bombed by night.



Saint-Germain l'Auxerrois

THE GOTHAS AND BIG BERTHA

It was established that the Germans had discovered a means of sending shells from their old lines all the way to Paris.

We were in the axis of Big Bertha, as the cannon was immediately dubbed. This was a new and more severe test for nerves. We got accustomed to it. For the trial, the strength. The kiddies had to have exercise and you yourself could not be home every minute of the time. But my feeling each time a shell exploded is the most horrible memory of the war. You never knew where it fell. On the third day when the children came home from the Luxembourg, they told me that a shell from Big Bertha had torn away a corner of the Grand Bassin. I tried to steel myself. One can become a fatalist for oneself. But it is not easy to be a fatalist for your children.

Then we had a lull. We were assured that there was only one Big Bertha or at the most two. The life of the cannon was a hundred shots. Counting those that fell in the suburbs, the attempt to intimidate Paris was over.

We were thankful now that we had only the air raids.

I woke up on Thursday morning, thinking to give the children a treat. I built a wood fire, and started to make some toast. As I sat on the floor, cutting pieces of bread, I told myself that it would not help to worry. Perhaps it was true that the Germans had sprung a trick

PARIS VISTAS

they could not repeat. At any rate, the news from the front was good. The British had made a magnificent recovery. The French were helping them stop the hole. General Pershing was throwing all the Americans in France into the breach north of Paris. There was something to be thankful for. Even if Big Bertha started up again, we were as safe from shells in our own home as anywhere else. I said to myself, "I am going to forget Big Bertha and put my mind on the children's treat—hot buttered toast for breakfast." There were enough embers now to make the toast. I speared a piece of bread with the kitchen fork and held it over the fire.

"Bing!"

The toast dropped from my fork and was burned before I could pick it out.

Mimi, who was sleeping in the bed close by, woke up.

"Hello, Mama," she said cheerfully. "Dat's Big Bertha again. I did hear her."

CHAPTER XXX

THE BIRD CHARMER OF THE TUILERIES

THE Paris subway system is the best in the world. We make this boast without fear of contradiction. In London the various lines do not connect, and require a life study to arrive at the quickest combination. Even then, old Londoners are in doubt. They say to you, "Piccadilly Circus? Ah let me see—" Then your guide contradicts himself two or three times before giving you directions of which he is reasonably sure. In New York, you have to be certain you are on the uptown or downtown side, and that you have not mistaken the Broadway line, where you drop the money in the box, for the Seventh Avenue line, where you buy tickets. Experience with the Forty-second Street shuttle teaches you that it is quicker to walk than to ride: you have to walk most of the way anyhow. New York subways are filthy and stuffy. In Boston you have a bewildering variety of trolley-cars, stopping at different parts of the platform and going every which way.

But Paris underground is clean, well-ventilated, orderly. You can go from any part of the city to any

PARIS VISTAS

other part quickly and without confusion. The resident knows his way instinctively. The stranger has only to follow the abundant and clearly-marked signs. In every station the signs bear the name of every other station, and if you are in doubt, there is a map before you. On the doors of cars the stations are marked, with junction-stops in red, and all the stations of the line you are taking are indicated on a map which you cannot fail to see.

The subway system of Paris is superb because it has to compete with excellent surface transportation. It has also to compete with the beauty of Paris. Unless you are in a hurry or it is a very rainy day, riding underground is folly. One never tires of going through the streets of Paris. The joy is constant. I am proud of the "Métro" and "Nord-Sud," as the two subway systems are called. But I use them as little as possible. An open *fiacre* is a temptation never to be resisted. And, until the last year of the war, it was a temptation thrust under your nose. Best of all, I love to walk. Our way to the Rive Droite is down the Boulevard Raspail. At the foot of the boulevard, you have three choices. You can go straight ahead through the Rue du Bac and over the Pont Royal, by the Boulevard Saint-Germain and across the Pont de Solférino, or to the end of the Boulevard Saint-Germain and across the Pont de la Concorde. Each route is equally inspiring. By the Pont Solférino

THE BIRD CHARMER OF THE TUILERIES

you have before you a perfect vista of the Vendôme Column and Sacré-Coeur in the background. By the Pont de la Concorde you have the Obélisque and the Madeleine in the background. But I used to prefer the Rue du Bac and the Pont Royal because of Monsieur Pol. Alas that I have to say "used to"!

After crossing the Seine by the Pont Royal, you enter the Tuileries Garden at the end of the Louvre. On the left-hand side, before you reached the Rue de Rivoli, ever since I can remember a little group was gathered around a man feeding birds. I had to be in a great hurry on the day I did not join that group.

There is an old saying that every man drifts into his means of livelihood. That is the reason so few people are doing what they planned to do, and why there are so many queer ways of earning one's living. Certainly the first time Monsieur Pol threw bread crumbs to the sparrows in Tuileries he did not think of doing it for a living. Nor did he dream that he would become as familiar a Paris landmark as Paul Deroulède in marble and Jeanne d'Arc in gilt near by. A generation of Parisians may have forgotten the features of former presidents of the Republic. But who would not recognize Monsieur Pol? In fact, I have seen Emile Loubet standing unrecognized in the crowd around the bird charmer.

One day a one-legged soldier limped his way through the crowd to a good place. In the lines of his face

PARIS VISTAS

you could read suffering, but the expression was of a happy child absorbed in the wonder of the moment. On the sand around the old man's chair a hundred sparrows faced his way, heads uplifted.

"Get out of this, you rascals! I have had enough of you," cried Monsieur Pol, stamping his foot and shaking a fist at his battalion. Do you think they budged? The bird charmer shook his head, and remarked with a gentle sigh, turning to the crowd, "You see, they have known me a good while. Mind how you behave," he shouted, addressing the birds again, "here is a soldier looking at you. Think how he will laugh if you do not stand up straight. Look how well he's standing himself—with one leg gone."

The birds heard a speech praising their defender, which turned into a glorification of our *poilus* in general. How those birds had to listen to lessons in politics, shrewd comments on the news of the day, the latest Cabinet crisis, talked-about play, scandal in high life! Since the war it has been the Germans in Belgium, the Turks in Armenia, Kerensky and the Bolshevists, and the last three o'clock *communiqué*. The birds gave their attention to the end. They seemed to know when the speech was done, when the lesson of faith in France and optimism had been driven home. They began to fly about the charmer, billing around his neck and perching on his wide-brimmed hat in search of bread-crumbs.

THE BIRD CHARMER OF THE TUILERIES

Feeding the sparrows was "*un métier comme un autre.*" He had names for all his pets. With "the Englishman" he talked about Edward the Seventh, Sir Thomas Barclay and the Entente Cordiale, and pressed him on the subject of the tunnel under the Channel. He complimented "the Englishman" on the bravery of the Tommies and told him what the French thought of Sir Douglas Haig. "The Deputy" received frank comments on the doings at the Palais Bourbon. "The Drunk" was twitted for having to go without absinthe, scolded for his excesses, and at the end of the afternoon invited to accompany Monsieur Pol for a drink, the price of which invariably came from someone in the crowd. Monsieur Pol and his sparrows would have earned a fortune at any vaudeville house. He was as witty as a cowboy rope-juggler I saw once in New York, and his lectures to the birds, if taken down in shorthand, would have made a valuable contemporary commentary on Paris during the Third Republic. Monsieur Pol depended upon occasional gifts and the sale of postcards.

During the war he grew gradually more feeble, but could not be persuaded to accept the care of loving hands stretched out to him on all sides in spite of the preoccupation of the struggle. When the bread restrictions came in, he never lacked a sufficient supply for his little friends. I have seen people give him strips of their own bread tickets. Monsieur Pol kept coming

PARIS VISTAS

to the Tuileries until he died in action as truly as any soldier at the front. His best epitaph is a little verse on the postcards he sold:

“Auprès de ces petits, je suis toujours heureux.
Car je vois l'amitié pétiller dans leurs yeux,
Et j'éprouve aussitôt, avec un charme extrême,
Le plus doux des bonheurs : être aimé quand on aime.”¹

¹ “Among these little ones I am always happy.
In their innocent eyes glows friendship,
And with swelling heart I know the charm
Of loving and of being loved.”

CHAPTER XXXI

THE QUATORZE OF TESTING

BIG BERTHA, or rather her successors, kept up a sporadic bombardment of Paris in April and May. A few shells fell again in June. But the effect of the bombardment, materially and morally, was nothing like that of the original Big Bertha. The culmination of horror and indignation was reached on Good Friday afternoon, when a hundred people were killed in the church of Saint-Gervais. After that the Germans made no other big killing. They came to realize that Big Bertha could not intimidate or demoralize Paris. Where the shells fell, however, we shall never forget.

I used to listen with awe (and a bit of envy) to the stories of people who passed through the siege of 1870. I remember well when I was a child being told by my father's friends, as we drove in the city, "A shell burst here in 1870 and tore the front out of a shop: I was sitting at a café near by"; or, "On that spot the Versailles troops stormed a barricade and lined its defenders against a wall—there was no quarter." Now I have my stories to tell! There is hardly a street between the Boulevard Montparnasse and the Seine that is not

PARIS VISTAS

associated in my mind with an aeroplane bomb or a Big Bertha shell. The compensation for having lived through these days will be the privilege of telling Americans who come to see us "all about it." As the years go by, I have no doubt that legends will form themselves in my mind and that I shall do my full share of innocent and unintentional lying. You want to impress your listener: so you must make things graphic.

But I shall never be eloquent enough to enhance upon or exaggerate the nervous tension through which we passed during the spring and early summer of 1918. From the moment we learned the news of the collapse of the Fifth British Army, which brought the Germans to Montdidier, until the tide of battle was definitely turned, we never had an easy moment. The strain was worse than in 1914. For it lasted months instead of weeks, and reverses after four years of fighting, with all the world against Germany, were more difficult to understand and to stand. The British were just recovering themselves when the Germans fell on the French, captured the entire Craonne plateau for which we had been struggling for three years, reoccupied Soissons, and started to advance once more from the Aisne to the Marne.

It was not easy to be an optimist. We had faith in the holding ability of the French and British armies; we believed that the Germans were shooting their last bolt; and we knew that the Americans were arriving

THE QUATORZE OF TESTING

in large numbers. But we had been fooled so often about internal conditions in Germany! And Russia and the submarine warfare were factors concerning which we had no exact data. The people who recreate the past with the advantage of hindsight will tell that they never worried a minute. They knew things were coming out all right! To listen to them one would think that they expected all along to happen just what did happen in the way it did happen. When I hear this kind of talk now I know that it was either a case of

"Where ignorance is bliss
'Tis folly to be wise,"

or hopeless bumptiousness. How strange it is that many of those who tell you now that the Germans never had a chance ran away from Paris in 1914 and again in 1918.

Parisians passed no fortnight in which there was more anxiety and uncertainty to their beloved city than the first two weeks of July. The Germans were widening their pocket. They occupied the right bank of the Marne from Château-Thierry to Dormans. They crossed the Marne. It was too late for Germany to hope to win the war. But would they get to Paris?

On July Fourth I was in reconquered Alsace and my husband was speaking at Tours. He telegraphed me to join him at Boulogne-Sur-Mer on July seventh. It took me three days to go in slow trains, with an occa-

PARIS VISTAS

sional lift by motor, the entire length of the front. I saw everywhere reserves of troops and endless lines of motor-trucks and trains with cannon and ammunition. The American uniform was ubiquitous. All this gave me a hope and confidence I had not felt in Paris, where I knew that the Government was making more elaborate preparations than in 1914 to evacuate the city. Herbert and I returned to Paris from Etaples on July ninth. The direct route by Abbéville and Amiens was under the German cannon, so we had to make a wide detour by Tréport and Beauvais. We both had a raging fever and it was all we could do to get home from the Gare de Nord.

Doctor Charon came early in the morning and told us that we were down with the *grippe espagnole*, the plague that was sweeping France and that had much to do with the general depression. Many a soldier who had gone through four years of battle unscathed succumbed to this mysterious disease. It hit one suddenly and the end came quickly. On the other hand, if the first forty-eight hours passed without complications, recovery was as rapid. Despite the protests of Doctor Charon, Herbert got out of bed on the morning of the thirteenth to go to Lyons to the inauguration of the Pont Président-Wilson. I was up to celebrate the Quatorze. After it was over, I was glad of the illness that came to keep me in Paris for this day when we whistled to keep up our courage. Had the Spanish

THE QUATORZE OF TESTING

grip not interfered, I should have returned to my children in the Little Gray Home near Saint-Nazaire.

The military operations in July, 1918, were not critical from the standpoint of the safety of France and the success of the Allied cause. The size of the army America was sending to France put the Germans in such a hopeless inferiority of numbers that as soon as the table of the landing of the first million was published we knew that the Germans were doomed *if the fighting continued*. But we had a growing number of strikes and a wide-spread defeatist campaign in the rear to contend with. If Paris were taken, what would be the effect on French public opinion? This was the stake the Germans were fighting for, and they knew it was their only hope of salvation.

Never have I loved Paris more than on the Quatorze of testing. Music and dancing were lacking, of course: for since 1914 we had not danced in public out of respect to the dead and music had been barred in cafés. Military bands had other places to play than in Paris. But happen what might, Parisians were determined to celebrate the fête just as if the Germans had not crossed the Marne. I went out for the day with friends. We smiled and laughed and tried to have a good time. The relaxation helped all to bear the burden. Within limits hedonism has its merits. "Eat, drink and be merry, for to-morrow we die" is the philosophy that wins out when a crisis is being faced.

PARIS VISTAS

I went to the review in the morning, and made a round of the streets and the Champs-Élysées Quarter that had been rebaptized in honor of our Allies. The Paris Municipal Council cannot be accused of lacking optimism in regard to persons as well as events. Belief in victory and in the permanent esteem for those who were bringing it to pass led to changes of names that may not in retrospect have popular approval. The Avenue du Trocadéro has become the Avenue du Président-Wilson; the Avenue d'Antin, the Avenue Victor-Emanuel III; the Avenue de l'Alma, the Avenue Georges V; the Quai Débilly, the Quai de Tokio; part of the Rue Pierre-Charron, the Rue Pierre I de Serbie; and the Place de l'Alma, the Place des Alliés.

When Herbert returned from the Quatorze at Lyons, we celebrated the Franco-American victory of the Marne with a dinner at Parc Montsouris. Whoever has been to the Pavillon du Lac becomes a regular client. We discovered this unpretentious little restaurant many years ago when we were exploring with Christine and the baby-carriage. Ever since Xavier has been our friend. Xavier does not need to be on the Grands Boulevards. He prepares the choicest dishes with utmost confidence that his friends will bring their friends to Montsouris. The Pavillon du Lac is nearly a mile from the nearest Métro station and no taxicabs are to be found out there by the fortifications. But difficulty of transportation is more than compen-

THE QUATORZE OF TESTING

sated for by the restfulness of the Pavillon du Lac, its *cuisine*—and Xavier, with his good humor and witticisms, waiting on the table. You eat on the *terrasse* facing the park, with its waterfall and lake, and you feel that it is all yours—park and restaurant. From *patron* to *chef*, everybody calls you by name, and most of the people at the tables are your friends. In the salon is a piano. You dance to your heart's content. Xavier dances with you.

When I try to write of the Pavillon du Lac, memories crowd in on me thick and fast. I could have put this restaurant in almost any chapter of my Paris vistas.

But what place could a dinner at Montsouris enter more appropriately than on the night of July 18, 1918? We were celebrating better than we knew. The afternoon *communiqué* brought with it the certainty that the miracle of 1914 had been repeated and that Paris was saved again. Did we realize that the day's fighting was the turning point of the war? I think not. But we acted as if we did.

Around our table were gathered the American General commanding the troops in Paris, my husband's chief on the Committee of Public Information, a French editor, colleagues of the American and British press, and one of our dearest French friends, whose work for his country in the hour of trial was bearing splendid fruit. Xavier was at his best. Had I not

PARIS VISTAS

recently been in his beloved Alsace from which he had been an exile since childhood? From *hors d'œuvres* to *liqueurs*, there was an uninterrupted flow of good cheer. The strain of years was passing away.

The climax came when Jim Kerney picked up his cordial glass, twirled it with his thumb, looked at it regretfully, and sighed,

"The fellow who blew this glass was certainly short of breath."



Old Paris is disappearing

CHAPTER XXXII

THE LIBERATION OF LILLE

FROM the Boulevard des Capucines to the Avenue de l'Opéra there is a convenient short-cut through the Rue Daunou. Newspaper men and other Americans do not always use the Rue Daunou for the short-cut. It is better known as the way to the Chatham bar. I ought to know nothing about the Chatham bar. My acquaintance with that corner should be limited to the Restaurant Volney and ladies' days at my husband's club opposite. But I do know the Chatham bar and for a perfectly respectable reason. It is where my old uncle used to be found when the clerk at his hotel said that he was not in. The uncle makes me think of a friend of his and a table with a little brass disk in the center of it to commemorate assiduous attendance through a long period of years in the Chatham bar. And the uncle's friend makes me think of the liberation of Lille. Association of ideas is a strange thing.

Herbert and I sat one evening in the autumn of 1915 before a big map with my uncle's friend. His fingers

PARIS VISTAS

lay upon the Flanders portion of what we had come to call "the front." Bubbling over with excitement, he exclaimed,

"They have broken through here, I tell you, day before yesterday. I always knew that when Kitchener's army was ready the trick would be turned. Of course the censorship is holding up the news, but everybody knows it. A sharp bombardment that overwhelmed the Boches, and then the break through. The Boches were routed. Talk about not being able to storm trenches! The cavalry has passed Lille. At this moment Lille is liberated. The British must be there in force."

"But," objected my husband, "this is too good to be true. They could not hold back news like that, you know. If the British are in Lille, the war is over."

"Of course it is over," insisted my uncle's friend. "We shall have peace by Christmas."

Mr.—well I won't tell you his name—let us say Mr. Smith, was hardly to blame for taking the wish for the fact. The rumor of a big break through the Flanders front was everywhere in Paris. Fourteen months of war had been enough. The French had waited a year for the British to form an army. Why should n't it be true that now the end had come?

Alas! we were to wait three years more before the lines in Flanders were crossed; we were to have many costly disappointments like that of Neuve-Chapelle.

THE LIBERATION OF LILLE

But when the moment finally did come, the liberation of Lille was to mean the beginning of the end.

In October, 1919, when I came back to Paris from the Little Gray Home, I returned to a city where there was a feeling of victory in the air. The most conservative had lost their habitual pessimism. The most resigned, who had come to accept the war as a fatality that would never end as long as there were men to fight, began to revise their opinions. The most suspicious, who wagged their heads over *communiqués* no matter what the authorities said, felt that after all we were making "some progress." Each day the list of liberated communes grew longer. But until some big city was abandoned, Parisians were afraid of having to pay too big a price to break down the Boche resistance. After all, they had proved themselves stubborn fighters. They might elect to make a long "last ditch" combat on lines of which we did not know the existence. But if they abandoned Lille, that would mean the intention of falling back to the Meuse. Genuine optimism is as hard to instil as it is to dispel. In retrospect, many writers are now asserting that Parisians knew the Boches were beaten after the failure of their last July offensive from the Vesle to the Marne. But this is not true. Relief over the failure to reach Paris did not mean certainty of the imminent collapse of Ludendorf's war machine.

When summertime was over, and darkness came

PARIS VISTAS

suddenly from one day to the next, Herbert and I resumed our walks at nightfall. During the war we had lost our interest in buildings as memorials of the past. Contemporary history had crowded out ante-bellum associations. The Eiffel Tower was not a gigantic monstrosity, a relic of the Exposition. It was a wireless-telegraphy station, the ear, the eye, the voice of Paris. Tramping by the Champs de Mars, we saw the sentinels in their faded blue coats of the fifth year and felt sorry for the men up there always listening in the pitiless cold. Crossing the Pont Alexandre III, we forgot the splendor of the Czars and thought of Nicholas in the hands of the Bolsheviki. The Grand Palais no longer recalled brilliant Salons. We thought of the blind in the hospital there and of the re-education of mutilated *poilus*. The picture inside was a one-armed soldier learning to run a typewriter, and a man with both legs amputated sitting on a low bench, the light of renewed hope in his eyes: for he had found out that he could still do a man's work in the world by becoming a cobbler. The newspaper building, whose cellar windows used to fascinate us, was the place where we waited for the posting of the *communiqué*. The Invalides was no longer just Napoleon's tomb. It was the place where you went to see your friends decorated and where you strolled about the central court to show your children aeroplanes and cannon captured from the Germans. And you were saddened by the

THE LIBERATION OF LILLE

thought that when the last veterans of the Crimea and Soixante-Dix and colonial wars disappeared, there would be thousands of others to take the vacant places.

October is chestnut month. From some mysterious source the venders drew their supply of charcoal when we could not get it. But we were glad of their luck. Autumn walks would not be complete without the bag of roasted chestnuts which I could fish out of Herbert's overcoat pocket.

We were going down the Rue de Rennes one night and stopped to get our chestnuts from the man at the corner of the Rue Sainte-Placide. Herbert was fumbling for coppers. A boy thrust a newspaper under his nose.

"The Liberation of Lille!" he cried.

We hailed a taxi and made for the Chatham bar. Everything comes to him who waits. Uncle Alex's friend was waiting.

CHAPTER XXXIII

ARMISTICE NIGHT

ON the eleventh day of the eleventh month at the eleventh hour, Paris heard the news. The big guns of Mont Valérien and the forts of Ivry roared. The anti-aircraft cannon of the Buttes-Chaumont, Issy-les-Moulineaux, the Eiffel Tower, the Arc de Triomphe and the Place de la Bastille took up the message. The submarine moored by the Pont de la Concorde spoke for the navy. And then the church bells began to ring. We had heard the tocsin sounded by those same bells at four o'clock on the afternoon of August 1, 1914. France to arms! We had heard those same cannon during more than four years announcing the arrival of Tauben and Zeppelins and Gothas over Paris. But Paris kept the faith and never doubted that this day would come. The armistice was signed. The war was over. The victory was ours.

In the Rue Campagne-Première artists' studios are in the buildings with workingmen's lodgings. House painter and canvas painter work side by side; writer and printer and book-binder, sculptor, cobbler, and mattress maker live in the same court. Our little community could exist by itself, for we have within a few

ARMISTICE NIGHT

hundred feet all that we need, tailor and laundress, baker and butcher, restaurant and milk woman, the stationer who sells newspapers and notions, and the hardware shop where artists' materials can be had. During these years of danger and discouragement and depression we have exchanged hopes and fears as we have bought and sold and worked. We have welcomed the *permissionnaires*, we have shared in the bereavements of almost every family, and we have greeted the birth of each baby as if it were our own. I was in my studio when the message of victory arrived. Windows in the large court opened instantly, and then we hurried down the staircase to pour forth, hand in hand, arm in arm, into the street. We kissed each other. Flags appeared in every window and on every vehicle.

The Boulevard du Montparnasse was ablaze with flags and bunting, and processions were forming. Hands reached out to force me into line. I managed to break away when I got to the door of my home for the crowd paused to salute the huge American flag. Herbert, who had reached the apartment first, was hanging from our balcony. My four children were in the hall when the elevator stopped. School had been dismissed. They danced around me. Mimi the five-year-old cried: "No more Gothas, no more submarines, we can go home to see grandma, and the Americans finished the war!"

"It is peace, Mimi, peace!" I said.

PARIS VISTAS

“What is peace?” asked Mimi bewildered.

I tried to explain. She could not understand. The world since she began to talk and receive ideas had been air raids and bombardments, and life was the mighty effort to kill Germans, who were responsible for all that, and also for the fact that there was not enough butter and milk and sugar. Mimi knew no more about peace than she did about cake and boxes of candy and white bread. Questioning my seven year old, I found that his notions of a world in which men would not fight were as vague as Mimi's. Lloyd was frankly puzzled. Like Mimi, he believed that the armistice meant no more Gothas and no more submarines, but he thought surely that we would go on fighting the Germans. Had not they always been fighting us? And if we weren't going to fight them any longer, chasing them back to their own country, what in the world would we do? And how could Uncle Clem and all the other soldier friends be happy without any work?

The Artist dropped in for lunch. Together we had seen the war suddenly come upon France. Together we were to see it as suddenly end. “Do you know,” he said, “everyone in the quarter is going to the Grands Boulevards. Taxis have disappeared. The Métro and Nord-Sud are jammed. We may have to foot it, like most people, but if we want to see the big celebration, we must get over to the Rive Droite this afternoon.”

ARMISTICE NIGHT

The Artist was right. As Lester and Herbert and I went down the Boulevard Raspail and the Boulevard Saint-Germain, we seemed to be following the entire population of the Rive Gauche. To cross the bridge was the work of half an hour. We kept near the coping, and had time to see the crew of the submarine *Montgolfier* engaged in more strenuous work than sailing under the seas. The *Montgolfier* was brought up to the center of Paris a fortnight before to stimulate subscriptions to the Victory Loan. The Parisians had been allowed to subscribe on board. To-day the crew was busy trying to keep people off without pushing them into the river. The crowd in the Place de la Concorde overflowed to the Champs-Élysées and the Tuileries. Boys were climbing over the German tanks. They sat astride the big cannon trophies and invaded the captured aeroplanes parked on the terrace of the Tuileries. Only its steep sides saved the obelisk.

For many months the horses of Marly, guarding the entrance to the Champs-Élysées, had been protected by sand-bags and boxed up. A crowd was tearing off the boards and punching holes in the bags. Air raids were a thing of the past, and these hidden treasures were a painful memory which Paris wanted to efface immediately. A gendarme interfered only to point out the danger of the long nails in the ends of the boards. He insisted that the nails should be taken out, and then the boards were given to those who had torn them off.

PARIS VISTAS

This kindly interference appealed to the good sense of the crowd. Men were putting the boards across their shoulders to parade the *poilus* triumphantly around the Place. The gendarme was awarded by the honor of a high seat, too.

The statues of the cities of France formed splendid vantage-points, and they were crowded with the agile and venturesome. Lille and Strasbourg, however, were respected. When Lille was delivered last month, the statue had been covered with flowers and wreaths and flags. As it symbolized all the invaded regions, new offerings had been coming each day from the cities and towns that were being freed. In the midst of the joy of the armistice, this tangible evidence of victory was receiving more offerings each hour. We could see people moving towards Lille with arms aloft, in order that flowers should not be crushed in the jam. There was something sublimely pagan about the offerings to the huge statue. And Strasbourg! After nearly half a century, this was Strasbourg's day. The first instinct of the crowd was to tear off the crepe. But the government had taken precautions. Strasbourg was to be unveiled on the day Marshal Foch and his army enter the city. So Strasbourg was protected by a *cordon* of the Garde Municipale.

On the Rue Royal side of the Hotel de Coislin, which the American Red Cross occupied since our entry into the war, the proclamation of the mobilization was cov-

ARMISTICE NIGHT

ered by some thoughtful person with glass. It has remained through these years, defying wind and rain and souvenir-hunters, a constant reminder in the busy thoroughfare of Paris's last Great Day. This afternoon a fresh poster had been put beside it. We read:

INHABITANTS OF PARIS

It is the victory, the triumphal victory! On all the fronts the conquered enemy has laid down his arms. Blood is going to cease flowing.

Let Paris come forth from the proud reserve which has won for her the admiration of the world.

Let us give free course to our joy, to our enthusiasm, and let us keep back our tears.

To witness to our great soldiers and to their incomparable chiefs our infinite gratitude, let us display from all our houses the French colors and those of our Allies.

Our dead can sleep in peace. The sublime sacrifice which they have made of their life for the future of the race and for the safety of France will not be sterile.

For them as for us "the day of glory has arrived."

Vive la République!

Vive la France Immortelle!

THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL.

Paris had anticipated the advice of the City Fathers. Printers and bill posters were not quick enough. But the proclamation was read with enthusiasm. "*Ça y est cette fois-ci!*" cried a girl who had just come out of Maxim's.

The cry was taken up immediately by all who were gathered around the poster, and we heard it passing

PARIS VISTAS

from mouth to mouth as we worked our way toward the Madeleine. Nothing could express more appropriately and concisely the feeling of the Parisians than this short sentence. *Cette fois-ci! This time!* There had been other times when rejoicing was not in order. There had been false hopes, just as there had been false fears. The certitude of victory *cette fois-ci*—a certitude coming so miraculously a few months after incertitude and doubt—was the explanation of the fierce mad joy expressed in the pandemonium around us.

After a mile on the Grand Boulevards, a mile that reminded us of football days, the Artist said, "This is great stuff now, and will be greater stuff tonight. I wonder if we had not better try to get around to other places before dark just to see, you know." Beyond the *Matin* office, in a side street near Marguéry's, we saw a taxi. The chauffeur was shaking a five franc note, and heaping curses on a man who lost himself in the boulevard crowd. We ran to the chauffeur and told him we would make it up to him for the *cochon* who had not been good to him.

"Double fare, and a good *pourboire* beside," Herbert insisted. The Artist opened the door and started to help me in.

"By all the virgins in France, No! A thousand times no!" growled the chauffeur, trying to keep us out.

"We meant triple fare," said Lester. I disappeared inside the cab.

ARMISTICE NIGHT

"Where do *Messieurs-Dame* want to go?" asked the chauffeur despairingly.

"Rue Lafayette, Boulevard Haussmann, Etoile, Avenue des Champs-Élysées, Invalides, and then we'll leave you at the Opéra," I suggested hopefully.

"What you want is an aeroplane," he remonstrated. But triple fare is triple fare. With a show of reluctance, he cranked and we rattled off. An hour later, after we had escaped being taken by assault a dozen times, resisted attempts to pull us out and put us out, promised to pay for a broken window and a stolen lamp, and used cigarettes and persuasive French on the man upon whose goodwill our happiness depended, we found ourselves on the Avenue de l'Opéra. By this time the chauffeur was resigned, so resigned that he tried to cross the Place de l'Opéra. We were tied up in a mass of other rashly-guided vehicles until the taxi's tires flattened out under the weight of a dozen Australians who had climbed on our roof. We were cheerful about it, and the chauffeur seemed to gather equanimity with misfortune. November 11, 1918, comes only once in a lifetime. We abandoned our taxi and our money, and tried it afoot again.

Fortune was with us. We arrived at the moment when Mademoiselle Chénal appeared on the balcony of the Opéra and sang the "Marseillaise." There was the stillness of death during the verse. But the prima donna's voice was heard only in the first word of the chorus.

PARIS VISTAS

When the crowd took up the chorus, Paris lived one of the greatest moments of her history. Over and over again Mademoiselle Chénal waved her flag, and the chorus was repeated. Then she withdrew. Another verse would have been an anti-climax. We were carried along the Boulevard des Italiens as far as Appenrodt's. As Herbert and Lester were talking about the night, more than four years ago, when they watched the crowd break the windows of this and other German or supposedly German places, the arc lights along the middle of the boulevard flashed on. Paris of peace days reappeared.

In the midst of it all, my maternal instinct set me worrying. What if Alice, the *gouvernante*, had taken the children out into the crowd? I had gone off without thinking of my chicks. We tried to telephone. On the last day of the war that proved as impossible as on the first. My escorts were quite willing to return to the Rive Gauche. There was no reason why the celebration would not be just as interesting on the Boul' Miche. I left Herbert and Lester on the terrace of the Café Soufflet, and hurried back to the Boulevard du Montparnasse. When I reappeared half an hour later, Christine was with me. She had begged so hard to be taken to the Grands Boulevards. After all, why not? Christine had lived through all the war in France. It was her right to be in on the rejoicing. And I confess that I wanted to hear what she would say when she saw

ARMISTICE NIGHT

the lights. She was so young when the war started that she had forgotten what lighted streets were.

The two men were delighted with the idea of dining across the river. Despite its reputation for making the most of a celebration, five long years of the absence of youth had atrophied the Boul' Miche. It was interesting, of course, but not what we thought it would be.

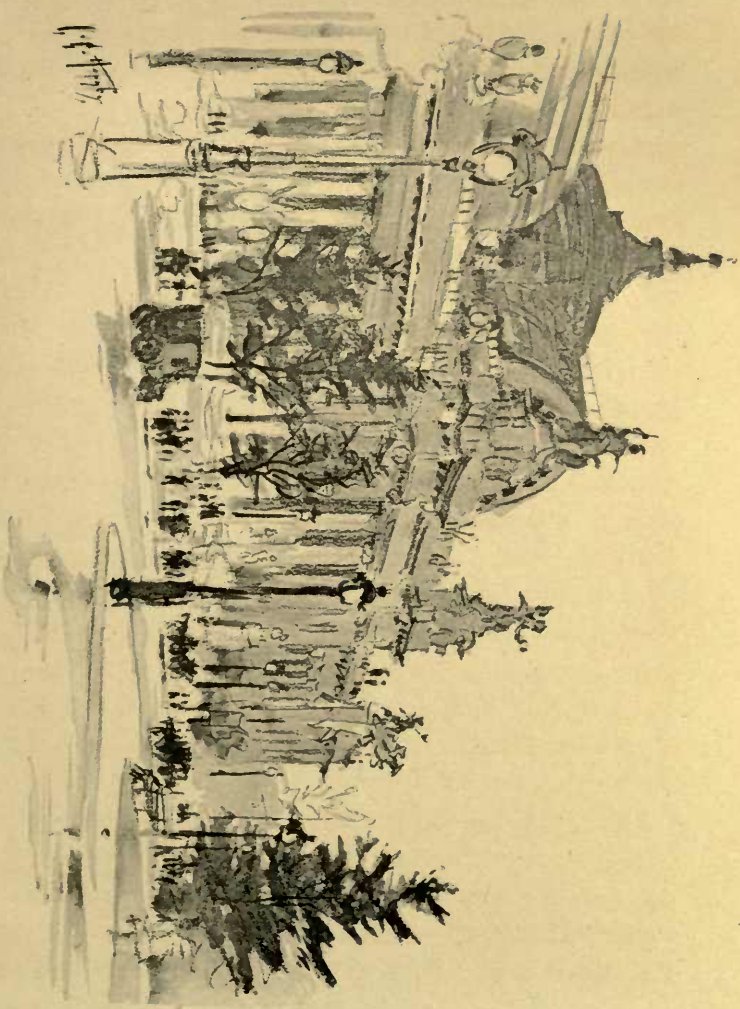
We dined at the Grand Café. We went early, fearing that even being in the good graces of the head waiter might not secure a table. But having a table was not guarantee of the possibility of ordering a meal worthy of the occasion. The run on food had been too severe for the past two days. And the market people of the Halles Centrales, so the waiter said, began their celebration on Saturday, when the German delegates appeared to demand the armistice. They would withhold their produce for several days, and get higher prices. The cellars held out nobly, however, so food could be dispensed with.

During the first hour, mostly waiting for dishes which did not come, there was a lull. The effort of the afternoon had been exhausting. Some groups were just about to leave for the theatre when a young American officer jumped on his chair, holding a slipper in his hand. Pouring into it champagne, he proposed the health of Marshal Foch, with the warning that other toasts would follow. Immediately there was a bending under tables, and other slippers appeared. The

PARIS VISTAS

fun was on. Cosmopolitans have seen New Year's Eve *réveillons* that were "going some," but the drinking of the health of Foch, Petain, Haig and Pershing will live in the memory of all who were in the Grand Café on the night of November 11th. Tables were pushed together and pyramided. One after the other the highest officer in rank in each of the Allied armies was dragged from his place and lifted up between the chandeliers. Over the revolving doors at the entrance a young lieutenant led the singing of the national anthems, using flag after flag as they were handed up to him. The affair was decidedly *a l'américaine*, as a beaming Frenchman at the next table said. There was no rowdiness, no drunkenness. It was merrymaking into which everyone entered. The owner of the first slipper was an American head nurse, and the first Frenchwoman to jump up on a table had twin sons in the Class of 1919. During years of anguish we had been subjected to a severe nervous strain and to repressing our feelings. The French bubbled over and the English, too, and they were willing to follow the lead of the Americans, because we have a genius for celebrating audibly and in public.

Once more out in the night air, following and watching the night crowd, and joining in or being drawn into the fun, we were struck by the ubiquity of American soldiers and their leadership in every stunt which drew the crowd. We felt, too, the spirit of good *camara-*



The Grand Palais

ARMISTICE NIGHT

derie among the merry-makers. Not a disagreeable incident did we see. The stars of a cloudless sky looked down on Paris frolicking. But they saw nothing that Paris, emerging from her noble dignity of suffering and anxiety, need be ashamed of. Policemen and M.P.'s were part of the celebration.

Lines of girls and *poilus* danced along arm in arm. The girls wore kepis, and the *poilus* hats and veils. No soldier's hat and buttons and collar insignia were safe. The price of the theft was a chase and a kiss. Processions crisscrossed and collided. Mad parades of youngsters not yet called out for military service bumped into ring-around-a-rosy groups which held captive American and British and Italian soldiers.

The officers and sergeants in charge of American garages were either taking the day off or had been disregarded. For in the midst of the throngs our huge army trucks moved slowly, carrying the full limit of their three tons, Sammies and *midinettes*, waving flags and shouting.

The trophies of the Place de la Concorde and the Champs-Élysées and the Place de l'Hôtel de Ville were raided. Big cannon could not be moved, and pushing far the tanks was too exhausting to be fun. But the smaller cannon on wheels and the caissons took the route of the Grands Boulevards. Minenwerfer and A.D.C. (anti-aircraft cannon) disappeared during the afternoon. Why should the Government have all the

PARIS VISTAS

trophies? The aspirations of souvenir-hunters were not always limited to the possible. We saw a group of *poilus* pulling a 155-cm. cannon on the Rue du Faubourg-Saint-Honore, some distance from the Rue Royale. They were actually making off with it! A policeman watched them with an indulgent smile.

"It's too big," he said. "They'll get tired before the night is over, and they could n't hide it anyway. It is good for them to work off their alcohol. To-morrow the authorities will pick up that cannon somewhere."

The clocks on the Boulevard "islands" were stopped at eight o'clock. This was not a night to think what time it was, and whether the Métro had ceased running. Every lamp-post had its cheer-leader or orator.

Confetti and streamers of uncelebrated Mardi Gras and Mi-Carêmes had their use this night, when four years of postponed festivals were made up for in few wild and joyous hours. What had begun as a patriotic demonstration was ending in a carnival. The "Marseillaise" gave place to "Madelon," favorite doggerel of barracks and streets.

The most dignified had to unbend. A British staff officer, captured by a bunch of girls, was made to march before them as they held his Burberry rain-coat like maids of honor carrying a bride's train. He was a good sport, and reconciled himself to leading a dancing procession, beating time with his bamboo cane. All

ARMISTICE NIGHT

the Tommies spied *en route* were pressed into line. A French General, who had unwisely come out in uniform, was mobbed by the crowd. The girls kissed him, and older people asked to shake his hand. He submitted to their grateful joy with warm-hearted and gracious dignity. But when a band of *poilus* came along, brandishing wicker chairs stolen from a café and asked him to lead them in a charge, that was too much even for November Eleventh. The General retired to the safety of a darkened doorway.

There were no bands. It was the people's night, not the army's night, and tin cans, horns, flags, flowers, voices and kisses were enough for the people's celebration. You could not have enjoyed it yourself if you had not the spirit of a child. Children need no elaborate toys to express themselves, and they don't like to have their games managed for them, or to have the amusement provided when they are "just playing."

Some Americans rigged up a skeleton with a German cap. They followed it singing "Onward, Christian Soldiers." The song was as novel as the skeleton. Where all the Americans came from only Heaven and the Provost-Marshal knew, and there is a strong probability that the latter had no official knowledge of the presence of most of them in Paris! Our soldiers were disconsolate over the fact that they could not buy all the flags they wanted. The shops were completely sold out, and the hawkers were reduced to offering *coc-*

PARIS VISTAS

ardes. We heard one boy say: "If I can't get a flag soon, I'll climb one of them buildin's."

"Gee! better not," advised his comrade; "they'd shoot you!"

"Naw! Shootin' 's finished."

The shooting was finished. That is what the signing of the armistice meant to Paris. And, as it meant the same to the whole world, every city in the Allied countries must have had its November Eleventh.

CHAPTER XXXIV

ROYAL VISITORS

ONE night the future King of Siam came to dine with us. I took him into the nursery to see the children. Mimi sat bolt upright in her crib. She eyed the young stranger and frowned.

"Hello, king," she said, "where 's your crown?"

I confessed to a similar feeling when from the balcony of a friend's home in the Avenue du Bois de Bologne I saw the King of England riding into Paris for the first of the welcomes we were giving Allied sovereigns. It was natural that Great Britain should come ahead of other nations. England had been the comrade-in-arms from the first days and aided powerfully in preventing the Germans from reaching Paris in the fierce onslaught of 1914. But it is a pity that the King was not accompanied by Marshal French or Sir Douglas Haig. Parisians are peculiarly sensitive to personality. George V has none. There was nothing in the rôle he had played during the war to make the crowd feel that he personified the valiant armies of the greatest and most faithful ally. If only Beatty or Jellicoe had ridden with him through the Avenue du Bois and down the Champs-Élysées. The war had not

PARIS VISTAS

deepened the enthusiasm of the French for a monarch simply because he was a monarch. A crown and a royal robe might have helped George with the Paris crowd. I am not sure even then. As my concierge put it when I told her that I was going to cheer the royal visitor,

“*Voyons*, what has that king done in the war besides falling off his horse?”

And then the weather was against our British guest. I do not care what the occasion is, rain and enthusiasm do not go together in a Paris crowd.

The King of the Belgians had good weather and received cheers that came from the heart. We thought of him not as a royal personage but as the man who had saved Paris at the beginning of the war because he put honor and his country ahead of personal interest and blood. The French saw in him also a soldier who had lived the life of the camp sharing the hardships and dangers of his little army in the corner of Belgium the Germans were never able to conquer. From the first day of the war to the signing of the armistice, Albert I did not doff his uniform. He never asked of his soldiers what he himself was not ready to do. And he came to Paris with his queen, who had been idolized by the French. No woman in the world was so popular in France as Elizabeth despite her German origin.

The protocol for the royal visits was as elaborate as the ceremony proved to be simple. The guests were re-

ROYAL VISITORS

ceived by President and Madame Poincaré at the little Ceinture station at the Porte Dauphine. Headed and followed by a single row of *gardes républicaines* on horse, they rode in open carriages down the Avenue du Bois de Bologne and the Champs-Élysées and across the Pont de la Concorde to the Palais d'Orsay where they were lodged. Infantry regiments, lining the route, aided the police in keeping order. There was no parade and no music. The attention and the acclamation of the crowd were concentrated on the visitors. As state carriages are swung high, every one was able to see the king. The Avenue du Bois is ideal for a procession. The park slopes up on either side, affording a clear view for hundreds of thousands. And there are innumerable trees for boys.

Those who were unable to get to the Avenue du Bois or the Champs-Élysées at the time the visitors came had a chance to see them in the streets afterward. For visits were exchanged between the royal visitors and President Poincaré, and on the second day of the visit they rode in state down the Rue de Rivoli to receive the freedom of Paris at the Hôtel de Ville. The return from the Hôtel de Ville was made by the Grands Boulevards and the Rue Royale. Then on the first evening was the state dinner at the Élysée and on the second evening the gala performance at the Opéra. If any one in Paris did not see the sovereigns, it was not because of lack of opportunity.

PARIS VISTAS

The evening before we were to receive President Wilson, Rosalie burst into my room in great excitement.

"Hush, hush!" I whispered. "I have just put the baby to bed."

But my pretty little cook did not hear me. She hurried to the window and bounced out on the balcony. I followed.

"What is the matter?" I asked.

"Madame has only to listen: every church bell in Paris is ringing. What is it, Madame? In my Brittany village the bells rang that way only when they posted the mobilization order at the *mairie*. Is it the tocsin? Is the war going to begin again?"

"Of course not," I answered. "It's a whole month since the armistice. Cheer up, Rosalie, perhaps the Kaiser is dead."

The older children and Elisa and Alice were now with us. The bells continued ringing, and we heard cannon, one boom after another. It was the salute that had been given for the royal visitors by the guns of Mont Valérian. Now we realized that the special train from Brest had arrived.

"It is the *Président-Vilsonne!*" said Alice in the reverent tone, that she had been taught to use in speaking of "l'Éternel." If you have heard a French Protestant reciting a psalm, and pronouncing the beautiful French word for Jehovah, you will understand what I mean.

ROYAL VISITORS

My young governess struck the note of the Wilsonian greeting. All that has happened since that memorable December day has dispelled little by little the legend of the Wilson who was to deliver the world from the bondage of war. The French quickly discovered that their idol had feet of clay. Whether they expected too much from what President Wilson had said in his speeches or whether his failure to make good his promises was due to circumstances beyond his power to control is not for us to judge. We do not know the facts and we have no perspective. But at the moment we did not foresee the disappointment in store for us. A merciful providence, veiling the future, allows us the joy of entertaining hopes without realizing that they are illusions. Legends are beautiful and touching. But they are most precious when you think they are true, and nothing can rob one of the memory of moments on the mountain top.

Fearing that the Métro to the Place de l'Etoile would be crowded, we got up very early that Saturday morning. The day of President Wilson's coming—whatever day the great event would happen—had been declared beforehand a holiday. So we could take the children with us. We were none too soon. All Paris of our quarter was going in the same direction. Without a grown person for each child, the Métro would have been difficult. When we came up at Kléber station the aspect of the streets around the Etoile assured

PARIS VISTAS

us that the Wilson welcome would break all records. We passed through side streets to the Avenue du Bois —by the corner of the Etoile it was already impossible, and thanked our stars that the friends who invited us to see the royal visits from their apartment lived on the near side of the street. To cross the Avenue du Bois would have been a problem.

Lloyd struck against going up to the wonderful vantage point on a fourth floor. The good things Aunt Eleanor and Aunt Caroline would certainly have for him to eat meant nothing when he saw boys in trees. Having no good reason to deny him, his father yielded. My son climbed a tree near the sidewalk with Herbert standing guardian below while the rest of us were high above.

I shall not attempt to describe the welcome given to President Wilson. After the carriages passed and the crowd broke, the children went home. Herbert and I followed the current of enthusiastic, delirious Parisians down the Champs-Élysées, up the Rue Royale and the Avenue Malesherbes. Wilson beamed and responded to the greeting of Paris. He did not grasp what that greeting meant. Clemenceau, Parisian himself, knew that the power to change the world was in the hands of the man riding ahead of him. But this is retrospect! I did not realize then that one of the greatest tragedies of history was being enacted under my eyes. Perhaps I am wrong in thinking so now. Who knows?

ROYAL VISITORS

More significant in its potentiality than the initial greeting to President Wilson was the acclamation that greeted him when he went to the Hôtel de Ville. Belleville turned out. From the heart of the common people came the cry, "*Vive la paix Wilsonienne!*" It was taken up and re-echoed with frenzy when the guest of Paris appeared on the balcony of the Hôtel de Ville.

The coming of the King of Italy was an anti-climax. Paris, of course, responded with her customary politeness to the duty of welcoming the sovereign of France's Latin ally. But heart was lacking in the reception to Victor Emanuel III. The comparative coolness was not intentional. I am sure of that. It was simply that we were coming down from the mountain top to earth.

And when the Peace Conference assembled, Paris very quickly realized that the hope of a new world was an illusion. Our royal visitors came at the right moment. Paris will give enthusiastic welcome to other rulers in future days. But not in our generation! A famous saying of Abraham Lincoln's comes into my mind. There is no need to quote it.

CHAPTER XXXV

THE FIRST PEACE CHRISTMAS

“**P**EACE on earth: good-will towards men!” For five years the motto of Christmas had seemed a mockery to us. Our city was the goal of the German armies. They reached it sometimes with their aeroplanes, and before the end of the war they reached it with their cannon. Scarcely fifty miles away from us—within hearing distance when the bombardment was violent—fathers and sons, brothers and sweethearts were fighting through the weary years in constant danger of death. Each Christmas brought more vacant places to mourn. Of course we celebrated Christmas all through the war. There was little heart in it for grown-ups. But we had the children to think of. The war must not be allowed to rob them of childhood Christmas memories.

In 1918, we were looking forward to a Christmas that would be Christmas. All around us the Christmas spirit was accumulating. The war was over: we had won. Ever since Armistice Night we had been saying to ourselves—“And now for Christmas!” We might have to wait for a revival of the second part of the

THE FIRST PEACE CHRISTMAS

Christ Child's message. But at least the first part was once more a reality.

Three days before Christmas I sent a telegram. I took my brother's enigmatic military address and put two words in front of it, Commanding Officer. I begged the gentleman to have a heart and send me my brother for Christmas Day. I told him that I had not seen my family for five years, that four little children born abroad wanted their uncle, and that we would welcome the C. O., too, if Christmas in Paris tempted him. On the morning of December 24 brother appeared, and before lunch many others I had invited "to stay over Christmas" turned up or telephoned that they would be with us. I had to plan hastily how the studios in the Rue Campagne-Première could be turned into dormitories for a colonel of infantry, a major of the General Staff, captains of aviation and engineers and the Spa Armistice Commission, lieutenants and sergeants and privates of all branches. Last year few of the invitations to men in the field were accepted. This year all came—some all the way from the Rhine. Bless my soul, we'd tuck them in somewhere. And on Christmas Eve we were going to have open house for the A. E. F., welfare workers, peace delegates and specialists, and fellow-craftsmen of our own.

As each house guest arrived, I gave him a job. His "But can't I do anything to help?" was scarcely finished before he was commissioned to blankets, army-

PARIS VISTAS

cots, candles, nuts, fruits, bon-bons, drinks, or sandwiches. "Just that one thing. I rely on *you* for that," I would say. None failed me, and the evening came with everything arranged as if by magic. I have never found it hard to entertain, and the more the merrier: but when you have American men to deal with, it is the easiest thing in the world to have a party—in Paris or anywhere else.

Of course I went shopping myself. Herbert and I would not miss that day before Christmas last minute rush for anything. And even if I risk seeming to talk against the sane and humane "shop early for Christmas" propaganda, I am going to say that the fun and joy of Christmas shopping is doing it on the twenty-fourth. Avoid the crowds? I don't want to! I want to get right in the midst of them. I want to shove my way up to counters. I want to buy things that catch my eye and that I never thought of buying and would n't buy on any other day in the year than December 24th. I want to spend more money than I can afford. I want to experience that sweet panicky feeling that I really have n't enough things and to worry over whether my purchases can be divided fairly among my quartette. I want to go home after dark, reveling in the flare of lamps on hawkers' carts lighting up mistletoe, holly wreaths and Christmas trees, stopping here and there to buy another pound of candy or box of dates or foolish bauble for the tree. I want to

THE FIRST PEACE CHRISTMAS

shove bundle after bundle into the arms of my protesting husband and remind him that Christmas comes but once a year until he becomes profane. And, once home, on what other winter evening than December 24th, would you find pleasure in dumping the whole lot on your bed, adding the jumble of toys and books already purchased or sent by friends, and calmly making the children's piles with puckered brow and all other thoughts banished, despite aching back and legs, impatient husband, cross servants and a dozen dinner guests waiting in the drawing-room?

Paris is the ideal city for afternoon-before-Christmas shopping. Much of the Christmas trading is on the streets. It gets dark early enough to enjoy the effect of the lights for a couple of hours before you have to go home. You have crowds to your heart's content. And Paris is the department-store city *par excellence*. Scrooge would not have needed a ghost in Paris. If you have no Christmas spirit, go to the Bazar de la Rue de Rennes, the Bon Marché, the Trois-Quartiers, the Printemps, the Galeries Lafayette, Dufayel, the Louvre, the Belle Jardinière and the Bazar de l'Hôtel de Ville. Do not miss any of these, especially the first and the last. At the Bazar de la Rue de Rennes the Christmas toys are on counters according to price. Woolworth only tells you what you can get for five or ten cents. The range of prices on the Rue de Rennes is adjusted to all pocketbooks. At the Hôtel de Ville

PARIS VISTAS

you do not have to wait for a saleswoman at the outside *rayons*. You hold up the article you want and catch the cashier's eye. He pokes out to you a box on the end of a pole such as they used to use in churches before we became honest enough to be trusted with a plate. You put your money in. If there is change, he thrusts it back immediately.

On the Grands Boulevards and in our own Montparnasse Quarter, the Christmas crowds were like those of the happy days before we entered into the valley of the shadow. As we did our rounds, falling back into peace habits and the old frame of mind, I realized how hollow was our celebration of the war Christmases, how we pretended and made the effort for our children's sakes. The nightmare was finished! Really, I suppose, we had less money than ever to spend and everything was dear. But everybody was buying in a lavish way that was natural after the repression of years. Bargaining—a practise in street buying before the war—would have been bad taste. We paid cheerfully what was asked.

I was hurrying home along the Rue de Rennes with one of my soldier guests. Herbert and my brother had left us on the Boulevards to get ham and tongue at Appenrodt's and peanuts and sweet potatoes at Hédiard's. A vender, recognizing the American uniform, accosted my companion with a grin, as she held out an armful of mimosa blossoms.

THE FIRST PEACE CHRISTMAS

“Fresh from Nice this morning, *mon capitaine*—only fifty francs for all this!”

“Come, Keith,” I cried, “she wants to rob you!”

The woman understood the intent if not the words. Barring our way, she reached over to her cart and added another bunch, observing, “It’s Christmas and I give our allies good measure.” Keith took it all, saying, “Don’t stop me; I have n’t spent any money for months—and Mother always made such a wonderful Christmas. I’ve got to spend money—a lot of money.” He patted his pocket. “Two months’ pay here that I have n’t touched yet!”

Christine arranged the mimosa in tall brass shell cases from Château-Thierry. “See my flowers!” she exclaimed. “This is better than war!”

The Consul-General (always a Christmas Eve guest in our home); the colonel commanding the hospital in the Rue de Chevreuse; a New York editor and his wife; a *confrère* of the French press and his wife; a Peace Delegate; and the head of a New York publishing firm, who looked in to see if we were really working; sat down with us to dinner, squeezed in with our A. E. F. guests. When the last flicker of plum-pudding sauce died down, we set to work for the Christmas Eve preparations. There was no question of rank or age! Each one fell to the task at hand. Dishes, glasses, bottles, doilies disappeared into the kitchen. The table was set for the big party, piles of plates with knives and

PARIS VISTAS

forks on each corner, sandwiches and rolls, a cold boiled ham, a tongue *écarlate* as tongues come in Paris, turkeys roasted by our baker, olives, salted almonds, army graham crackers, candy, a tall glass jar of golden honey worth its weight in gold, and the fruit cake with sprigs of holly that comes across the Atlantic every Christmas from a dear American friend. People could help themselves. How and when—I never worry about that. My only care is to have enough for all comers.

We sent out no invitations. The news simply passed by word of mouth that friends and friends' friends were welcome on Christmas Eve. In a corner of the drawing-room the engineers of the party made the Christmas tree stand up. The trimmings were on the floor. Whoever wanted to could decorate. With the trenches of five years between us and Germany, Christmas tree trimmings were pitiful if judged by ante-bellum standards. I wonder what my children are going to think when they see this Christmas a full-grown tree with the wealth of balls and stars and tinsel Americans have to use. In Paris we had so few baubles and pieced out with colored string and cotton and flags and ribbon. But the effect was not bad with the brains of half a hundred trimmers contributing to work out ideas on a tree that did not come up to my chin.

We started the victrola—"Minuit, Crétien," "It Came upon a Midnight Clear," "Adeste Fideles," and—whisper it softly—"Heilige Nacht." Then our

THE FIRST PEACE CHRISTMAS

guests began to come until salons and hall and dining-room overflowed into bed-rooms. Never again can I hope to have under my roof a party like that, representing many of the nations that had fought together on the soil of France, but with homesick Americans, Christmas hungry, predominating. The first to arrive were patients from the American Hospital in the Rue de Chevreuse who had been unable to forget the nightmare of war when the armistice came.

Crutches and the music, the tree and my children, an American home—the first reaction was not merriment. I felt instinctively that something had to be done. "Heilige Nacht" brought a hush. Someone turned off the phonograph. Bill took in the situation. Everyone in America who reads knows Bill. He backed up into a corner by the bookcase, took off his glasses, and began to make a speech.

"Ladies and gentlemen, I am an unregenerate soul. There is not a respectable bone in my body. I am going to sing you a little ditty, the national anthem of California." Here Bill winked his eyes and opened his mouth wide to sing:

"Hallelujah! I'm a bum!"

"The writer of the song is an I. W. W.," he interrupted himself, "and at the end of the first line from upstairs is heard the voice of his wife demanding (here Bill changed to high falsetto),

PARIS VISTAS

“Oh, why don't you work
As other men do?”

Then the I. W. W. answers gently,

“Why the H—— should I work
When there is no work to do?”

I told you I was an unregenerate soul. I see that I'm not alone, there are others here like myself. I want a volunteer to sing my part with me and volunteeresses, equally unregenerate, for the pointed question of the I. W. W.'s wife.

“The gentleman there with the eagles on his shoulders—I have for you a fellow feeling, you are disreputable like me. Come! And the little girl in the pink dress that only looks innocent. Come you here. And others of like character join us as quickly as you can push your way through the admiring audience.”

The surgeon from New York, who is as military as any regular army man, was a good sport. So was the editor's wife. As he reached both hands to the recruits, Bill did a simple dance step, the contagious step of the Virginia Reel when other couples are doing the figures. Soon the chorus was a line that reached the hall. At this moment there were shouts of laughter at the front door. A parade of alternating khaki and nurse's blue invaded the salon. Each had a flag or horn. The chorus and parade joined forces, with Bill as leader, and soon

THE FIRST PEACE CHRISTMAS

“Hallelujah! I’m a bum!”

was being sung in every room of the apartment at the same time. Crutches were no deterrent to joining the serpentine march from room to room. The chorus grew and the dining-room was deserted. Strong arms picked up babies in nighties and we were all in the parade.

I did not know half of my guests and never will. Some of them are sure to read this and will remember that night in Paris when C. O.’s and journalists tired of the grind, nurses weary of watching, wounded and homesick who had not expected to laugh that Christmas Eve, and soldiers fresh from chilly camps and remote and dirty villages caught the spirit of Christmas. When people forget their cares and woes, they always behave like children. The national anthem of California made my party, where Christmas carols had proved too tear impelling. After “Hallelujah! I’m a bum!” wore itself out, nobody needed to be introduced to anybody else and everything disappeared from the dining-room table.

While the party was still raging, Herbert and I slipped for a moment out on the balcony. Merry-makers with lighted lanterns passed along the Boulevard du Montparnasse, singing and shouting. Before us lay Paris, not the Paris dark and fearful to which we had become accustomed when we stood there after the

PARIS VISTAS

warning of the sirens and listened for the *tir de barrage* to tell us whether the time had come to take the children downstairs, but Paris alight and alive, Paris enjoying the reward of having kept faith with France and with the civilized world.

1919

CHAPTER XXXVI

PLOTTING PEACE

“**W**AS it on purpose, Madame,” said the Persian Minister to Paris, “that you wore a green hat today?”

We were lunching with the Persian Delegation. I took off my turban and dropped it on the floor at the side of the chair.

“Poor hat!” said I. “Look at its color. Brand new, you know, and faded like that. It happened on the first sunny day after I bought it. We need to plot a peace so that we can find good German dyes for our clothes. Why did you want to know if I wore it on purpose?”

“Green is the sacred color of Persia,” said the Minister smiling, “and it pleases us to see it. You were speaking of peace. We need peace and quickly. And after that—what? We were more or less prepared for war, but who thought while we were at war about preparing for peace? Not one of the countries sent delegates with a workable plan. Part of our preparedness should have been a peace program. Nobody thought a year ago to call a conference of specialists. That’s why negotiations drag on forever.”

PARIS VISTAS

"I know," I answered, "we are used to war and we must get used to peace now that it is coming. The other day at luncheon my husband asked the children to define war.

" 'War is men getting hurted. The Germans did do it and I don't like 'em,' said Mimi.

" 'War is men at the front and cannon going off,' said Lloyd.

" 'Yes, and war makes the mamas work in the subway, and when it's war you can't have sugar in your milk and we have air raids and Big Berthas, and it makes people cry when the soldiers go away from the railroad station,' said Christine all in one breath.

"And we realized that although it seemed like another world, we grown-ups could look back to *before the war*; but little children begin to remember in a world at war."

"And what is peace?" said the Minister. "It will not exist again for your children and mine until we educate our democracies in international understanding. The people of one country must know the people of another. When we say France wants this or Italy wants that, we are not talking about the people. How much did our Persians know about America beyond the fact that missionaries came from there? How much did you know about Persia beyond rugs and kittens and the Rubaiyát? I mean you collectively. How many of our people and how many of yours understood what

PLOTTING PEACE

Morgan Shuster was trying to do? No, no, we must not drop propaganda after the signature of peace. We must have exchange students—in agriculture and commerce and the professions. And then," continued the Minister, "peace must bring us work, work for everybody. Work is the only remedy for most of the ills of the world. And that means a common international effort to bring raw materials to, and to aid in the reconstruction of, the countries that have been battlefields."

"Will peace give us all of that?" I enquired. "It sounds like the millennium."

"If we think of peace as an abstract something that will drop on us from one day to another we shall have no change from the war-breeding conditions of the past. Permanent peace is a state of mind. A state of mind among the people and strong enough to control the actions of political leaders. Understanding, I tell you, understanding is the only way."

"I am afraid," said I, "it will be a cold day before the people will have much to say about war and peace. Throughout our politicians are all tarred with the same brush. Invite a doctor, a brick-layer, a parson and a mother of five children to come from each country. Sit them down together at one big table and I'd wager they'd make a good peace quickly. We like to say that the five per cent. of educated men rule the other ninety-five per cent. What is the fiendish power that

PARIS VISTAS

lets rotten diplomacy order us out to kill each other? The world will have to suffer a good deal more before we learn the lesson. When wire-pulling and economic jealousies wish it, the politicians can plunge the peoples into a war again without their knowing how and why!"

"The war that was to end war," said the Minister, bitterly. He was thinking of the mockery of the Society of Nations as applied to his own country.

"This war that was to end war could have ended it," I cried, "if the Peace Delegates had n't come here covering their greed and their imperialism with a camouflage of *belles* phrases. For the life of me, I cannot see why some real leader does not emerge at this crisis, and force the peacemakers to do what the doctor, the concierge, the little tradesman, the professor,—the people—all knew in the beginning had to be done. First make peace with Germany. Then sit around the table men representing the world and draw up a League of Nations. A league without Germany and Russia is only an offensive or defensive alliance. Same old game over again. This peace conference does n't recognize give and take. It is all take. And they refuse to allow themselves and their frontiers to be measured by the same tape-line we propose to use on our enemies. This means simply that we are going to have once more the old-fashioned peace of might making right. I believe in a League of Nations founded on Christian principles. It is the only kind of a league that will give the weak

PLOTTING PEACE

a chance where the strong are concerned. Civilization is on the upgrade. The reason we are disappointed now and the cause of the unrest is that we thought we had got far enough along in the process of evolution to establish a new order of things. And we have n't. Nobody is willing to give up special privileges, secret treaties, and the balance of power. The Golden Rule is too simple to try."

"Ah, Madame," said the Persian Minister, "our peacemakers are like the sparrow in the Persian fable. The sparrow heard that the sky was going to fall. She flew to her nest and sat there stretching out her wings so that it would not fall on her little ones."

In my attitude toward the Peace Conference I believe I reflected all through the attitude of the common people of France, especially the Parisians. We had suffered too much and too long to want to see Germany let off easily. Our internationalism had nothing in it of pity for the Germans. We did not worry about how they were going to feel when they found out what they were up against. We knew that we could not make the Germans suffer as they had made us suffer. But we wanted written into the Treaty conditions that would make our enemies realize their guilt by finding out that the enterprise had not proved profitable. But along with this natural and justifiable desire we yearned for some greater recompense for our own suffering and sacrifices. Our hatred of war had become as intense as

PARIS VISTAS

our hatred of the Germans who plunged us into war. We hailed with joy the assurances of our statesmen that they would make this time a durable peace, avoiding the mistakes and errors of the past. Imagine our consternation when we realized that the delegates to the Conference at Paris were not making peace along new lines. They were plotting peace along old lines. Weary months passed. The censorship still muzzled the press. But Parisians knew instinctively that something was wrong. Before Easter we lost faith in the Conference and hope in its intention of changing the old order of things.

But the great fact remained that the war was over and that, despite the soaring cost of living and labor unrest, we were free from having to go through the horrors of the previous winter. We counted our blessings.

Paris had been the centre of the world during the whole war, the prize for which the Germans fought, because they knew that success or failure depended upon taking Paris. When they recrossed the Marne a second time and retreated from Château-Thierry, the war was lost: and they knew it then, and only then. You know that last poem of Rostand about the Kaiser climbing to the top of a tower to witness the final assault against Paris. Paris deserved the Peace Conference. So logical was the choice that none protested. It was the only point on which the "principal Allied and Associated Powers" were agreed. As a resident of Paris I

PLOTTING PEACE

was proud that we were going to continue for another winter to be the centre of the world—without certain decided disadvantages the honor had cost us in the four previous winters! As a writer and the wife of a writer, tied up by contracts to report the Conference, it meant that we could stay in our own home and in our own workshops instead of living in hotel rooms in some other place for long months.

We kept open house for all—from premiers of belligerent states and plenipotentiaries to delegates of subject nationalities, ignored by the Big Five. Greeks redeemed and unredeemed, Rumanians and Transylvanians, Jugo-Slavs of all kinds, Russians from Grand Dukes to Bolsheviks, Lithuanians, Esthonians, Letts, Finns, Poles, Czecho-Slovaks, Ukranians, Georgians, Armenians, Syrians, Egyptians, Arabs of every persuasion, Albanians, Persians, Siamese, Chinese, not to speak of the specialists and propagandists and newspapermen of the Big Five, wrote their names in my guest-book, ate at my table, and discussed each other over cigars and cordials before my salon fire. Few lacked honesty of purpose and sincerity and loyalty to ideals. But the ideals were those of their own national or racial interests. Aside from a desire to see justice done to France and Belgium, there was no unity, no internationalism in the views of my guests. Most of them I respected; many of them I admired; for some I came to have real affection. My husband and I formed per-

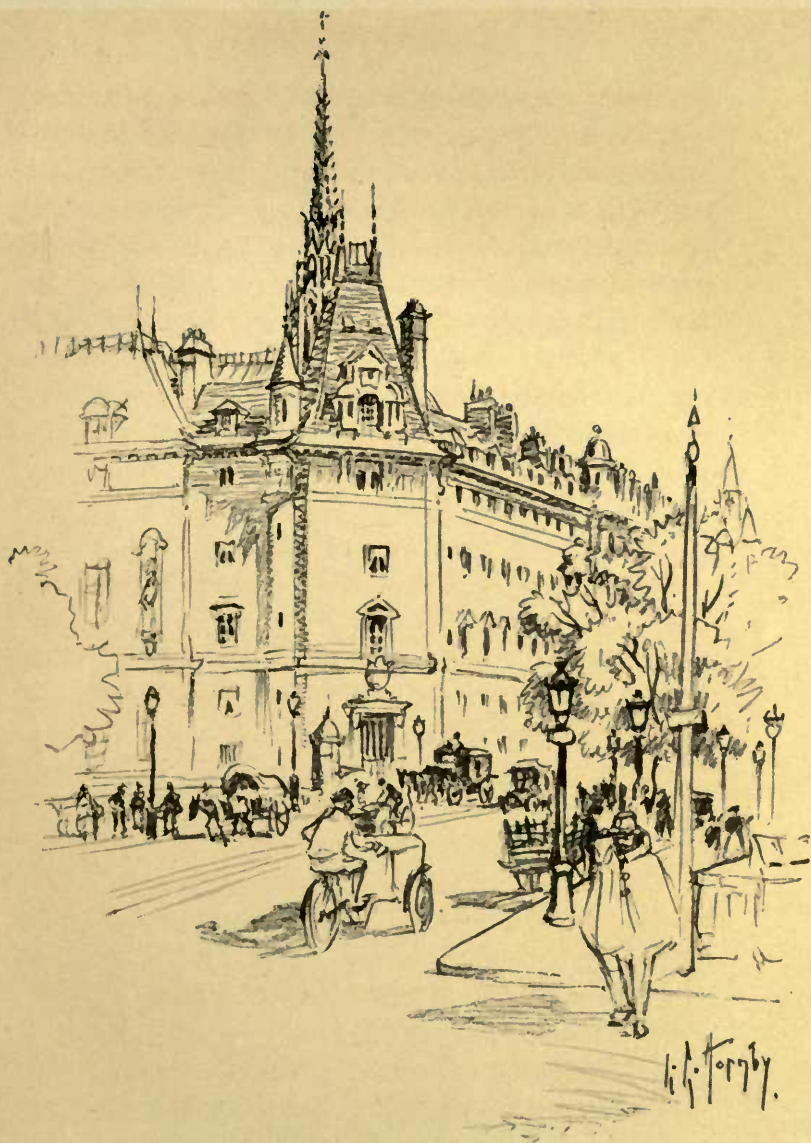
PARIS VISTAS

sonal ties that I trust will never be broken. But I confess that the more I listened to tabletalk and salon talk in my own home, the more bewildered I grew. I saw the Society of Nations vanishing in the thin air. My own narrow nationalism, that had been gradually reviving ever since the A. E. F. started to come to France, was strengthened. After all, was not all human nature like the nature of my own paternal ancestors, who believed—as they believed the Bible, with emphasis on the Old Testament—that

Ulster will fight
And Ulster will be right?

I took refuge in the humorous side of the Peace Conference, as I did not want to get mad or to become gloom-struck and weep. When Fiume came up, for instance, I would talk to Jugo-Slavs and Italians about getting seasick on the Adriatic and the respective merits of Abbazia and the Lido and whether they ever felt like d'Annunzio's lovers talked. The best fun was with my own compatriots. We Americans had nothing at stake as a nation, and (if I except a few of Wilson's specialists who never were listened to but always hoped they would be) the members of the American Delegation lost no sleep while they were remaking the map of Europe.

A Pole was explaining to us one day that the Ukrani-ans were not and never had been a nation, and he was



Spire of the Saint-Chapelle from the Place Saint-Michel

PLOTTING PEACE

in dead earnest. A captain in the American Navy had been listening politely for an hour. Then he thought it was time to change the subject. He turned to me and broke in out of a clear sky, "Helen, you have no idea how fussy Colonel House is. Found he could n't get waffles in Paris. Telegraphed an S. O. S. to Brest. My machinist spent the better part of two days making a waffle-iron, and it was so precious and the Colonel was in such a hurry that I sent the machinist to Paris to take it to him. Don't you think that was the right thing for me to do, Doctor ——sky? House is pretty close to our Commander-in-Chief, you know."

When touring Paris starts up again, the Cook megaphone man will add a new item to his history of the Place de la Concorde: "See that building on the corner opposite the Ministry of Marine I was tellin' yuh 'bout? Number Four it is. Offices of the American Peace Commission during the famous Conference, 'n b'fore that f'r t'ree years American Red Cross Headquarters. 'N at tother end of the row is th' Hotel Crillon, where th' Merican delegates lived. There President Wilson tried to make a 'Siety 'v Nashuns!"

And from now on I shall never pass through the Place de la Concorde without thinking of our press-room at Number Four, where we swapped rumors and waited for an open covenant, openly arrived at. Press headquarters were housed in the former concierge's *loge* —three wee rooms on the ground floor to the right of the

PARIS VISTAS

porte-cochère as you enter, and one of those was the post-office of the Delegation. The quarters were prophetic of the importance and dignity of the press as looked upon by the leaders of the Conference. The Americans arrived in Paris with different ideas. The name chosen by the Delegation and printed on all the stationery was a sign of American naïvety, and caused much merriment among our British and French friends. **AMERICAN COMMISSION TO NEGOTIATE PEACE.** *Negotiate* peace? Our European allies wondered where and how such a notion entered the heads of the Americans. We stuck to the name throughout—but not to the idea.

The Hotel Crillon and Four Place de la Concorde were filled with Americans—college professors, army and navy officers, New York financiers, the mysterious Colonel and his family and family's friends, the other Delegates, Embassy secretaries and clerks, stenographers, soldiers and sailors, and journalists. The sensible ones were profiting by the months in the center of the world to see Paris, old and new; hear music; and do the theatres. For the time spent on their specialties, trying to influence the course of the peace pourparlers and being sympathetic to the swarm of representatives, official and otherwise, of downtrodden races, did not budge a frontier an inch or write one line into the Treaty of Versailles.

When I applied for a press-card, an American major,

PLOTTING PEACE

whose acquaintance with a razor seemed no more than what anyone could gain from looking at a display in a drug-store window, looked me over doubtfully. Was I really writing for the *Century* and newspapers to boot? At length he called a soldier. "Take this lady to get her photograph made," he said. Up four flights of stairs we climbed. On every landing was a soldier at a desk. "Through this way, mom," said my guide. He opened a tiny yellow door all black around the knob, and there were more stairs.

"Would n't it be fun to play hide-and-seek at Number Four and in the Hotel Crillon?" I asked.

"That's just what they're doing here most of the time," said Atlanta, Georgia. "You never saw anything like it. But you must n't speak of the Hotel Crillon. This is the Island of Justice, mom. Yes, mom, it certainly expects to be that if it is n't yet."

In the garret room of the Signal Corps at the top of the stairs were five soldiers.

"Hello, boys, what do you think you are doing?" I asked.

"We're still making this here peace," answered a stocky brown-eyed lad, occupied vigorously with chewing-gum. "Since these guys've come over from home to help us, though, it is not going as fast as it was before. Mistake to have thought they'd do it quicker by talking than fighting."

"That's right, too," put in another. "The dough-

PARIS VISTAS

boys c'd a-finished it 'thout all these perfessers and willy-boys. Sit down here, please."

In the gable window was a chair with screens behind it. On the screen above the chair they put up a number—1949.

"My soul!" I exclaimed. "What's the matter with me? Is that the date?"

"No, ma'am, that's the date when the Conference is going to quit talking and we can go home."

CHAPTER XXXVII

LA VIE CHÈRE

H. C. OF L. is an abbreviation I see often in American newspapers. From the context it was not hard to guess what it meant. In Paris we call that "preoccupation" (note the euphemism for "nightmare") *la vie chère*. But we never mention it in any other tone than that of complete and definitive resignation. We do not kick against the pricks. We gave up long ago berating the Government and thinking that anything we can do would change matters. We pay or go without. Our motto is Kismet. These are good days to be a Mohammedan or a Christian Scientist. The latter is preferable, I think, because it is comfortable to get rid of a thing by denying its existence.

For the sake of record I have compiled a little table that tells more eloquently than words the price we have paid—from the material point of view—for the privilege of dictating peace to Germany. Is it not strange that peace costs more than war? The greater part of the increases I record here have come since the armistice. The figures opposite the names of commodities represent the percentage of increase since August 1, 1914:

PARIS VISTAS

FOODSTUFFS

Beef	400	Salt	150
Mutton	350	Pepper	250
Veal	350	Sugar	225
Poultry	400	Olive oil	350
Rabbit	400	Vinegar	225
Ham	400	Coffee	150
Bacon	225	Macaroni	150
Lard	225	Vermicelli	250
Pate de foie	300	Rice	25
Potatoes	325	Canned goods	200-400
Carrots	325	Butter	350
Turnips	450	Eggs	400
Cabbage	850	Cheese	400-600
Cauliflower	725	Milk	150
Artichokes	650	Bread	50
Salads	200	Flour	200
Radishes	500	Pastry	300-400
Oranges	200	Ordinary wine	300
Bananas	400	Vins de luxe	50-100
Figs	500	Champagne	150
Prunes	650	Ordinary beer	200
Celery	1900	Cider	400

HEATING AND LIGHTING

Coal	250	Gasoline	125
Charcoal	250	Wood-alcohol	500
Kindling-wood	300	Gas	100
Cut-wood	300	Electricity	50

CLOTHING

Tailored suits	150	Collars	150
Ready-made suits	300	Shirts	150-350
Shoes	200-300	Gloves	150-250
Hats	250	Millinery	150
Neckties	150	Stockings	150
Cotton thread	500	Needles	500
Cotton cloth	275	Yarn	500

LA VIE CHÈRE

LAUNDRY

Laundry work	150-200	Soap	550
Potash	350	Blueing	200

FURNITURE

In wood	200	Mirrors	400
In iron	300	Bedding	300

HOUSEHOLD LINEN

Sheets	750	Dish-towels	600
Linen sheeting	900	Bath and hand towels..	400
Cotton sheeting	900	Napkins	500
Pillow-cases	400	Table cloths	400

TABLE AND KITCHEN

Cutlery	125	Crystal ware	225
Plated-ware	150	Cut glass	200-350
Table china	300	Ordinary plates	200
Kitchen china	200	Fancy plates	150
Coppen kitchen ware... .	125	Brooms and brushes... .	125
Aluminum ware	100	Lamps	250

MEANS OF TRANSPORT

Railway tickets	50	Taxi-cabs	75
Excess baggage	250	Omnibuses	35-50
Sleeping births	400	Tramways	35-50
Commutation	75	Postal cards	100

STATIONERY AND BOOKS

Writing-paper	900	Newspapers	100
Wrapping-paper	1000	Magazines	50
Paper for printing..	500-800	Books	100

DRUGS AND PERFUMERY

Fancy soaps	300-400	Lozenges	250
Toilet waters	200	Powdered drugs	150
Tisanes	150	Prescriptions	100
Eucalyptus	400	Bottles for Prescriptions	
Patent medicines	150-200		*300-525

PARIS VISTAS

TOBACCO

Smoking tobacco	50-60	Ordinary cigars	50
Ordinary cigarettes	40-75	Cigars de luxe	100-150
Cigarette de luxe	100	Snuff	50

While we decided upon what to do with the Germans, the rest of our enemies, and the very troublesome races we had liberated, the Chamber of Deputies passed a national eight-hour law. This did not bring down wages by the day. In fact, shorter hours of labor led to more insistent demands for higher wages to meet the increase in *la vie chère*. Everyone borrowed from Peter to pay Paul.

On the day the German plenipotentiaries arrived at Versailles, my children insisted on going out to see them. We had to wait until Sunday, when my husband was free. Out we went on a bright May morning. There were six Gibboses, four of them very small, and one of my American soldier boys. Of course we ate in the famous restaurant of the Hôtel des Reservoirs, where the Germans were lodged. We did not see the Germans. The only sensation of the day was the bill for a simple luncheon—two hundred and eight francs.

“It pays to be the victors!” I exclaimed.

“Those who have anything to sell,” modified my husband, grinning cheerfully (God knows why!) as he bit the end off a ten-franc cigar.

LA VIE CHÈRE

“The children will never forget this historic day,”
he added, handing the waiter twenty francs.

“Nor I,” said the children’s mother.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

THE REVENGE OF VERSAILLES

THE memory of my introduction to Versailles is a confused jumble of stupid governess and more stupid guide-book. When I was sixteen a governess piloted me through endless rooms of the palace with a pause before each painting or piece of furniture. To avoid trouble I was resigned and looked up at the painted ceiling until my neck was stiff. But I never forgot the Salle des Glaces. It had no pictures or furniture in it. An historical event connected with it was impressive enough to hold my attention. I remembered a picture of the crowning of Wilhelm I in a school-book. Bismarck looked sleek and content. The kings stood with raised arms, crying "Hoch der Kaiser." Underneath was the caption: **THE BIRTH OF AN EMPIRE.**

I did not like that picture. I resented it as I resented the thought of Alsace and Lorraine under German rule. Ever since a German barber in Berne mistook me for a boy when I was a little girl and shaved my head with horse-clippers I have had a grudge against the Germans. And then, when you have lived long in France, that day in the Salle des Glaces becomes unconsciously a part of

THE REVENGE OF VERSAILLES

your life. I cannot explain why or how, but the Salle des Glaces and Metz and Strasbourg are in your heart like Calais was in Queen Mary's. I have lived under two shadows, the shadow of Islam and the shadow of Germany. In Constantinople you do not forget the minarets towering over Saint Sofia. In France you do not forget Soixante-Dix.

Possessor of Aladdin's lamp, would I ever have dared to ask the genie to transport me on his carpet to the Salle des Glaces to see Germany, confessing her defeat before France, sign away Alsace and Lorraine?

All this was in my thoughts on the morning of June 28, 1919, when Herbert and I were riding in the train to Versailles. Could I be dreaming when I looked at the square red card in my hand? And yet at three o'clock in the Salle des Glaces the German delegates were to sign a dictated peace, which they had not been allowed to discuss, and which would wipe out the dishonor and the losses of Soixante-Dix.

We went early and we took our lunch with us: for we said to ourselves that all Paris would be going to Versailles. For once we felt that the vast lifeless city of Versailles would be thronged. Except on a summer Sunday when the fountains were playing I had never seen a crowd at Versailles: and on the days of *les grandes eaux* the Sunday throng did not wander far from the streets that lead to the Palace. Always had

PARIS VISTAS

we been able to find a quiet café with empty tables on the *terrasse* not many steps from the Place des Armes.

We might have saved ourselves the bother of bringing lunch. To our surprise Versailles was not crowded. After we had wandered around for an hour, we realized that even the signing of a victorious peace with Germany was not going to wake up the sleepy old town. The automobiles of press correspondents and secret service men were parked by the dozen at the upper end of the Avenue des Reservoirs. Along the wooden palisade shutting off the porch of the hotel occupied by the German delegation were as many policemen as civilians. We ate a quiet luncheon in front of a café down a side street from the reservoir. Besides ourselves there were only a couple of teamsters on the terrace. Inside four chauffeurs were playing bridge. Had we come too early for the crowd? At first we thought this was the reason: afterwards it dawned upon us that the Parisians were not attracted by the affair at all. How far we had traveled in six months from the welcome given to President Wilson a week before Christmas!

The ceremony was spiritless. I pitied the men who had to cable several thousand words of "atmosphere stuff" about it that night. If only the Germans would balk at signing! Or if the Chinese would enter at the last moment in order to get into the League of Nations! The only ripple of excitement was a signed statement of protest handed out by Ray Stannard Baker at Gen-

THE REVENGE OF VERSAILLES

eral Smuts' request. The South African, remembering perhaps when he was a vanquished enemy and all the painful years that followed the Boer War, registered his disapproval of the Treaty, although he felt it was up to him to sign it.

It was all over in less than an hour. Cannon boomed to announce the revenge of Versailles; out on the terrace a few airplanes did stunts overhead; and for the first time since the war interrupted mid-summer gaiety the fountains played.

Margaret Greenough and I had the good luck to meet General Patrick at the Grand Bassin. He offered to take us back to town in his car. Thus we became part of the procession. Because of the stars on the wind-shield and the American uniform, our car was cheered as we passed in the line. Along the route to Saint-Cloud people gathered to see the plenipotentiaries. But we felt that they were simply curious to pick out the notables. There was no ovation, no sense of triumph. It was so different from the way I expected it to be, from the way I expected to feel.

In my book of mementos I have the program of the plenary session of the Peace Conference that was to crown six months of arduous labor, following five years of war, and to mark a new era in world history. Beside it is the program of the plenary session in the Palais d'Orsay, when I heard President Wilson present the project of a League of Nations. They are simple

PARIS VISTAS

engraved folders with a couple of lines recording the events under the heading AGENDA. I ought to regard them as precious treasures. But they seem to me only the souvenirs of blasted hopes.

June 28, 1919, should have been an epic, an ecstatic day. It was a day of disillusion and disappointment on which we abandoned the age-old and stubborn hope of a peace that would end war. Were we foolish to have forgotten in the early days of the Peace Conference how slowly the mills of the gods do grind, and that our diplomats were children of their ancestors, still fettered by the chains of the past, still confronting the insoluble problems of unregenerate human nature?

The Peace Conference was a Tower of Babel, where different tongues championed divergent national interests. The only Esperanto was the old diplomatic language of suspicion and greed. The mental pabulum that fed the public was clothed in new terminology. When hammer struck anvil in the high places, sparks shot out. We caught flashes of liberty, brotherhood, the rights of small nations. But in the secret conferences decisions were dominated by the consideration of the interests (as they were judged by our leaders) of the most powerful.

One day there appeared in our press room in the Place de la Concorde a Lithuanian, who had made an incredibly long journey, much of it on foot, to come to the Peace Conference. He had been fired by President

THE REVENGE OF VERSAILLES

Wilson's speeches. He wanted to tell the American prophet how the Poles, in his part of Europe, were interpreting self-determination. He did not see the President. Although touched by his sincerity, we wondered at his naïvety. Did he really believe that the same principle could be applied everywhere? Practical common sense urged me to believe that the liberty propaganda was overdone and that it was impossible to give justice to everybody. But I was clinging to my idealism as the Lithuanian clung to his. A plain body like me could not know or understand what was going on. But why preach idealism in international relations, if an honest effort to apply justice impartially was impossible? Surely the Great Powers could act as judges in assigning boundaries between the smaller nations. Liberty, like the love of God, is "broader than the measure of man's mind."

Quoting from a hymn I learned in childhood brings me to what I think was the reason of the failure of the Peace Conference: men forgot. They labored for the meat which perisheth. They posed as creators of a new world order but ignored the means of establishing it. They forgot that Jesus said, "He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."

"But wait a minute," I hear one say, "did you expect a peace conference to be run on those lines?"

An ordinary peace conference such as we had always

PARIS VISTAS

had, where the victors divide the spoils—certainly not! But this was not to have been an ordinary peace conference. We had been given to understand that the Conference at Paris met to incorporate in a document the principles for which millions had given their lives. Germany stood for the unclean spirit that was to be exorcised. Men had died on the field of battle for a definite object. There was the poem that was like a new Battle Hymn of the Republic, "In Flanders Fields the Poppies Grow."

When nations are not ready to love their enemy or even to love each other, the creation of a League to do away with war is an absurdity.

Either we believe in the coming of God's Kingdom or else we do not. The remedy for sin and evil, the means of securing the triumph of right over might, is in keeping the commandments. The peace-makers forgot the summary of the law as Jesus gave it in two commandments. If they had tested their own schemes for world peace by this measure, strange and rapid changes would have followed. If they had listened to Him as He spoke to them, it would have been as of old when "no man was able to answer Him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask Him any more questions."

The ceremony of Versailles did not lift the shadow of Germany hanging over France. And when I look at my son, I wonder what will come.

CHAPTER XXXIX

THE QUATORZE OF VICTORY

WE may not have been sure of the peace. We were sure of the victory. The soldiers had done their part. Academic newspaper discussion as to when the victory parade would be held amused us. The only uncertainty was the date of signing the Treaty. Once the Treaty was signed, it was taken for granted that the Quatorze would be the day. Protests about shortness of time were overruled. It was not a matter for discussion. Nobody paid any attention to the argument of those intrusted with the organization of the event. Public opinion demanded that the Allied Armies march under the Arc de Triomphe and down the Champs-Élysées on July Fourteenth. After the Quatorze of testing, the Quatorze of victory. There was no question about it. So the powers that be got to work.

There was no need to decide upon the route of the procession. Ever since August 1, 1914, Parisians who lived on the Avenue de la Grande Armée, the Avenue des Champs-Élysées, the Rue Royale and the Grands Boulevards, had been realizing how numerous were their friends. From every part of France letters had

PARIS VISTAS

come from forgotten relatives, passing acquaintances, business associates, who wanted to be remembered when

Le jour de la victoire est arrivé.

Public opinion dictated, also, two changes in the program as it was announced. Marshal Joffre must ride the entire length of the route from the Porte Maillot to the Place de la République beside Marshal Foch. And the grandstands put up around the Arc de Triomphe and along the Avenue Champs-Élysées for those who had "pull" must come down. This was to be the day of the people, and everybody was to have an equal chance. When it was seen that selling windows and standing place on roofs at fabulous sums was to give the rich an unfair advantage, the Chamber of Deputies was forced to pass a bill declaring these gains war-profits and taxing them eighty per cent. This resulted in the offering of hospitality to the wounded that big profits might have prevented.

In looking down my vistas of the past year, I see Paris reacting differently to almost every great day.

On Armistice Night we went mad. From the *ex-altés* to the saddest and most imperturbable, Parisians spent their feelings. The joy was acute because it was the celebration of the end of the killing. When a soldier is frank and you know him well he will tell you, "Any man who claims not to be afraid at the front is lying." That fear was gone. Men could unlearn

THE QUATORZE OF VICTORY

blood-lust: and with honor now. Along with the relief of the end of the fighting was the joy of the end of separations.

On June 28, Paris thought her own thoughts, pondering over the peace that had been won. Friends dined with us that night. My victrola played The Star Spangled Banner—La Marseillaise—Sambre et Meuse—Marche Lorraine.

“Why don’t you dance?” I said to the Inspecteur-Général d’Instruction Publique. “It’s peace! I want to celebrate. I need to shake off the impression of Versailles this afternoon.”

“I asked my concierge that same question,” said he, “and she answered, ‘We don’t rejoice to-day—we wait.’ *Les Parisiens ne s’emballent pas.* Wise woman, my concierge.”

On the night of July 13, Paris paid her tribute to the dead. Respect for *les morts* is ingrained in French character. At the moment of victory those who had fallen were not forgotten. They came ahead of those who lived. A gilded cenotaph, placed under the Arc de Triomphe, contained earth from the many battle-fields on which the French had fought. That night we passed with the throng to pause for a moment with bowed heads before this tomb that represented the sacrifice of more than a million soldiers. I thought of Dédaille’s picture in the Panthéon, and looking at the crowd about me, mostly women and children in mourn-

PARIS VISTAS

ing, I asked myself if this were *La Gloire*. The level rays of the setting sun fell upon the soldiers on guard. People spoke in whispers. None was tearless. It was "*Debout les Morts*"! They passed first under the Arc de Triomphe. Had they not blazed the way for those who would march on the Quatorze of victory?

Half way down the Champs-Élysées, at the Rond-Point, were heaps of captured cannon that had stood along the Avenue and in the Place de la Concorde through the winter since the armistice. They had been gathered here, and surmounting them was the *coq gaulois*. But around the Rond-Point huge urns commemorated the most costly battles of the war, and in them incense was burning.

"Are you going to see the parade?" I asked a friend who had lost two brothers.

"Certainly," she replied. "Last week my mother went to the grave of my little brother in the Argonne. She put wreaths on it and prayed there. The other brother was blown up by a shell. There is no grave for him. So to-night we shall think of him when we pray before the cenotaph. We shall spend the night there to have a good place to-morrow."

Herbert and I thought of her and her mother and of many other friends who were in the crowd around the Arc de Triomphe. We had our own reasons for bowing before the cenotaph. Dear friends had been lost during those awful years and in the last weeks

THE QUATORZE OF VICTORY

one of our own family fell on the front between the Le Cateau and Guise. It is strange how you go on living in the midst of war, seeing others suffer, sharing their grief, and never thinking that the death that is stalking about will enter your own family circle until the telegram comes. You have helped others at that moment: and then it is you.

There is a fine sense of balance in French character. One remembers the dead, but one does not forget the living. Most of those who intended to go with hearts rejoicing and smiles and laughter to greet the *défilé* of the Quatorze could not have stood the ordeal unless it had been preceded by the quiet night watch with the dead.

The Quatorze has always meant to us an early start for the Bois du Bologne to see the review. Throughout the Third Republic the day had a distinctly military atmosphere. Who does not remember Longchamp before the war? Each year Paris went to the review with pride not unmixed with anxiety. There was a serious aspect impossible for the stranger to realize and appreciate. After all, the army was not a small body of men who had given themselves to a military career. It was the youth of the nation performing a duty imposed upon it by the geographical position of France. The army was the nation in arms, an institution as necessary for well-being and security as the police. Longchamp on the Quatorze was the assurance that the

PARIS VISTAS

job of protecting France was being well looked after. And the spectators were the fathers and mothers, the brothers and sisters, of the army. Every Parisian had passed through the mill. How often after the review, when the soldiers came from the field, have I seen middle-aged civilians joking with them in the way one only does with comrades of one's own fraternity. It was hard for the Anglo-Saxon to understand this before the war. The Barrack-room Ballads would be incomprehensible to a Frenchman. "Tommy" was everybody in France.

But this review was different. The intimacy, the sense of the soldiers belonging to the people and being of the people, had always been there. Added to it now was the knowledge of what the army had done for France. There is no country where *la patrie reconnaissante* means more than in France. And the great danger was so fresh in our minds! From the standpoint of the soldier it was different, too. For five weary years the *poilu* constantly on duty and not knowing which day might be the last saw in the soft blue rings of his cigarette smoke the *défilé* under the Arc de Triomphe and prayed that he and his comrades would be there. That was the only uncertainty—whether he himself would be spared for the *jour de la victoire*. If France's soldiers had doubted that the day would arrive, they could not have continued to sing the *Marseillaise*—and the war would have been lost then and

THE QUATORZE OF VICTORY

there. The Quatorze of peace days was fun to the spectators but a *corvée* for the soldiers who marched. The Quatorze of victory was the realization of the dream that sustained the soldiers throughout the war. It was the reward for having believed what they muttered doggedly through their teeth, "*Nous allons les écraser comme des pommes de terre cuites!*"

One of our *poilus*, a boy to whom we had been through the war as next of kin, who wore the *médaille militaire* and whose *croix de guerre* carried several palms, came to us late in the night before the victory parade. He said with tears in his eyes,

"The chains are down!"

"What chains?" I asked.

"The chains around the Arc de Triomphe. They have been there since Soixante-Dix. Do you realize," he cried seizing my hands, "that the last time soldiers marched under the arch it was Germans? Ah, the Huns, I hate them! We are supposed to keep our eyes straight before us during the march, but I shall look up under that arch. I shall never forget the moment I have lived for."

"And Albert, the ideals that made you enlist, have they survived?"

"They are here," he replied, slapping his chest until his medals jingled. I made up a lunch for Albert, and off he went to get to the rendezvous at the Porte Maillot at two A. M.

PARIS VISTAS

We had determined that the whole family should see the *défilé de la victoire*. The younger children might not remember it, but we never wanted them to reproach us afterwards. How to get there was a problem that needed working out. The children had an invitation, which did not include grownups, from Lieutenant Mitchell whose window was in the American barracks on the north side of the Avenue near the Rue de Berri. Dr. Lines asked Herbert's mother and Herbert and me to the New York Life Insurance Company's office at the corner of the Rue Pierre-Charron on the south side of the Avenue. How take the children to the other side and get back to our places? There was only one answer. Taxi-cabs that could go around through the Bois du Bologne and Neuilly or the Place de la République.

In the court of the building where we have our studios in the Rue Campagne-Première lives Monsieur Robert, a taxi-chauffeur. Herbert arranged with him to be in front of our house at six-thirty A. M., promising him forty francs, with a premium of ten francs if he got there before six-fifteen. Then, to guard against breakdowns, he found another chauffeur to whom he made the same offer. On Sunday afternoon Herbert began to worry. It was bad to have all your eggs in two baskets when you are looking forward to the biggest day of your life. So a third chauffeur was found to whom the same offer looked attractive.

THE QUATORZE OF VICTORY

We got up at five, had our breakfast, and prepared a mid-morning snack. Lloyd was on the balcony before six to report. Three times he came to us in triumph. Our faith in human nature was rewarded. When we got down to the side-walk we found our chauffeurs examining their engines. My heart sank. But they explained that feigning trouble with the works was the only way of keeping from being taken by assault.

We sent Grandmother and the baby directly to Rue Pierre-Charron. That part was easy. Then, in the other two autos, we started our long morning ride to get to the other side of the Champs-Élysées and back. Fortunately, the chauffeurs had seen in the papers that a route across the Grands Boulevards would be kept open from the Rue de Richelieu to the Rue Drouot. After waiting a long time in line, we managed to get across, and made a wide detour by the Boulevard Haussmann to the Rue de Berri. Shortly after seven we delivered the kiddies to the *caré* of Lieutenant Mitchell. Our own places were just across the Avenue. But it took us another hour and a wider detour to get to them. We were glad of the two taxis. If one broke down, there was always the other. We wanted to play safe.

From our place on the balcony of the New York Life we had the sweep of the Avenue des Champs-Élysées from the Arc de Triomphe to the Rond-Point.

PARIS VISTAS

On many buildings scaffolding had been run up to hold spectators. People were gathered on roofs and chimneys. Every tree held a perilous load of energetic boys. Hawkers with bright-colored pasteboard periscopes did not have to cry their wares. Ladders and chairs and boxes were bought up quickly. But the Avenue is wide. All may not have been able to see. But those behind were not too crowded and at no time during the morning was all the space taken from the side-walk to the houses.

At half-past eight the cannon boomed. Another interval: then the low hum that comes from a crowd when something is happening. Then cheers. The *défilé de la victoire* had begun. The head of the procession was like a hospital contingent out for an airing. There were one-legged men on crutches and the blind kept in line by holding on to empty sleeves of their comrades. The more able-bodied pushed the crippled in rolling-chairs. The choicest of the flowers, brought for the marshals and generals, went spontaneously to the wounded. Once again the French proved their marvelous sense of the fitness of things.

Then came the two leaders of France, Marshal Foch keeping his horse just a little behind that of Marshal Joffre. For two hours we watched our heroes pass. Aeroplanes, sailing above, dropped flowers and flags. The best marching was done by the American troops.

THE QUATORZE OF VICTORY

The French readily acknowledged that. But they said:

"It is still the flower of your youth that you can put into the parade. Ours fell *la-bas* long ago."

After the crowd began to disperse, we made our way across the Avenue to get the children. As I brought them out through the vestibule a soldier caught sight of us. He cried:

"Gosh, these ain't no tadpoles!"

When the children acknowledged to being Americans, he asked Mimi whether she liked rats.

"Yas, I do," said Mimi.

"You wait there a minute. I got a rat I bought from a *poilu*. It's a tame one."

The soldier brought his rat and did wonderful stunts with it. Mimi squealed when the rat ran from the soldier's arm to hers and up on her head. She did n't know whether to like it or be afraid. But the rat evidently won, for when asked later what she liked best about the parade, she put that rat ahead of Pershing and Foch.

We never thanked our lucky stars for the view of Paris from our balcony more than on the evening of the Quatorze of victory. To see all the wonders of the illuminations we did not need to leave our apartment. From every park roman candles and rockets burst into pots of flowers, consellations, the flags of the Allies.

PARIS VISTAS

The dome of the Panthéon glowed red. Sacré Cœur stood out green and pink and white against the northern sky. Revolving shafts of red, white and blue came from the Tour Eiffel. Church bells rang and on every street corner there was music.

The dear old custom of the night of the Quatorze was revived. We looked down at the lanterns across the Boulevard Raspail at the intersection of the Boulevard du Montparnasse. Tables and chairs overflowed from the sidewalk into the street. But there was a large open place around the impromptu bandstand. People were dancing and the music never stopped.

We heard the call. And we obeyed. When we reached the corner and got into the street, Herbert held out his arms.

"To everything there is a season," he said.

"A time to mourn and a time to dance," I murmured.

THE END

University of California
SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY
305 De Neve Drive - Parking Lot 17 • Box 951388
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90095-1388

Return this material to the library from which it was borrowed.

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



A 000 123 139 8

