Rambler Writes More About Old Washington Hotels

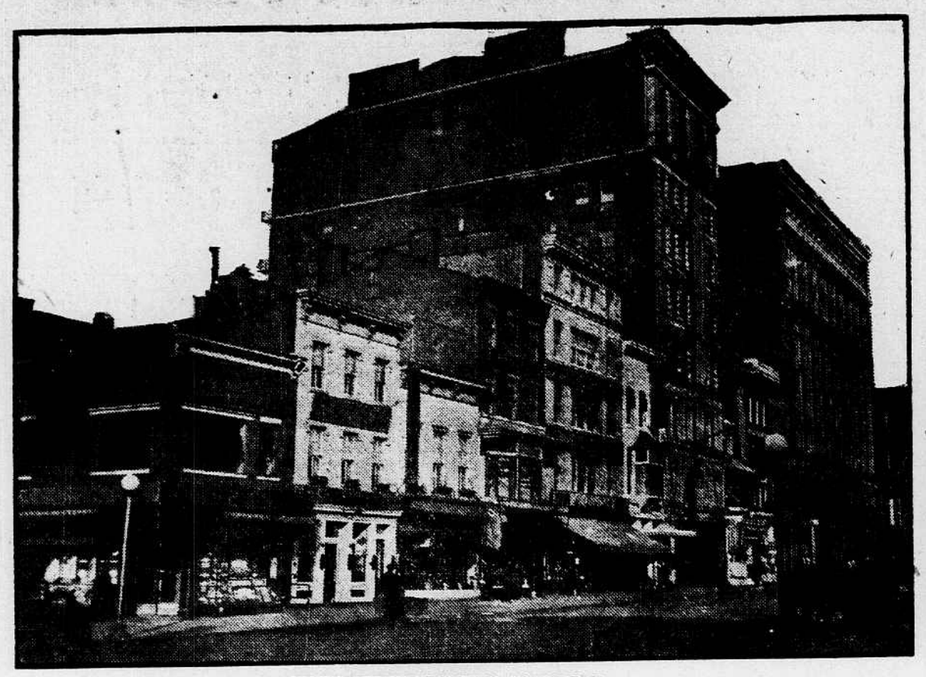
A COMPLETE story of the hotels that were in operation in old Washington—and by "old Washington" one really means the city in its youth—presents a good many difficulties, and some of these difficulties the Rambler never hopes to overcome. Most of the advertisements and announcements relating to the hotels of the olden time do not give the location of the hotels. It was not necessary. Everybody in town knew where every hotel was. To print that a public meeting would be held at Smith's Hotel, at the southwest corner of J and Zero streets, or at Jones' Tavern, the south side of X street between Y and Z, would have been the merest surplusage. It would be as if one should now give the number and street of Union station or the Capitol.

Yet, after the lapse of two or three generations, or four or five, one cannot always determine where Smith's Hotel and Jones' Tavern stood. To add to the perplexity, Jones had hung a sign in front of his tavern on which was painted the legend, "Merryfeast Hotel," and some persons called it by that name. Most persons, however, ignored the fanciful name and called it Jones' Tavern, or merely Jones'. Then, perhaps, the sheriff or the marshal for the District of Columbia sold Jones out and Johnson bought the fixtures and good will of the Merryfeast Hotel and changed its name to the Good Cheer House, while Jones moved farther up or down the Avenue, turned up 11th street or down 12th street or migrated to Capitol Hill and opened a hotel which he called the Popping Cork, but which the patrons insisted on calling Jones' Tavern.

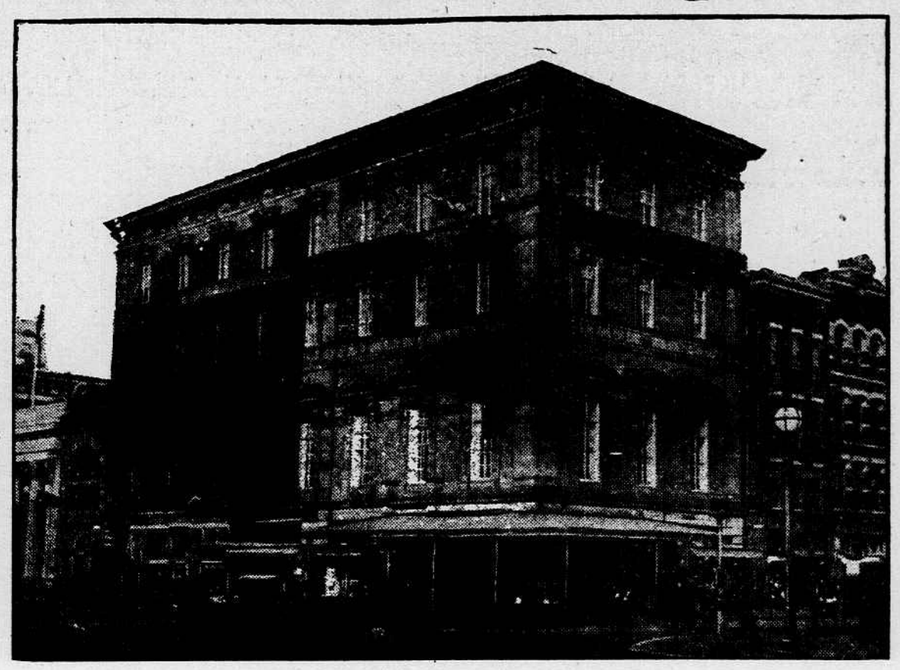
Next, perhaps Johnson retired from business after running the Good Cheer, late the Merryfeast, for about six months, and Taylor, who had been the proprietor of the Taylor House, somewhere in the city, took over the Good Cheer Hotel and changed its name to the Tipple House, though by the general run of the people of Washington it was called "Taylor's." Taylor died and his widow married Robinson, and Taylor's Tipple House soon became known as Robinson's Hotel, the Robinson House or plain Robinson's, though he had changed the name from the Tipple House to the Golden Rye Inn, Bourbon Hotel or the Sour Mash Tavern.

* * *

When Prof. Jean Francois Piruette came from Paris to Washington "to instruct the worthy citizens of the new Federal city in the pleasantsome pastime, genteel art and indispensable accomplishment of tripping the light fantastic toe before the shrine of Terpsichore" and to "devote himself to giving instructions in the very latest dances, such as the minuet, the lancers, the quadrille, the waltz, the schottishe and the polka," he announced in the National Intelligencer, or the Impartial Observer and Washington Advertiser, or the Sentinel of Liberty, that he would hold his soiree and cotillon at Robinson's assembly room, which, of course, was the dining room of Robinson's Golden Rye Inn, late Taylor's Tipple House, late the Good Cheer House, late the Merryfeast Hotel, and which also for some reason not to be explained had at one time been affectionately called by many citizens the Toddy Tavern. It should also be borne in mind that Smith, Jones, Johnson, Taylor or Robinson did not own the land on which this hotel of many names stood, and no help is to be had from the land records in straightening out the tangle, which, to borrow a simile from Victor Hugo, "resembles the skein of thread entangled by a playful cat."



NINTH STREET LOOKING TOWARD F.



NORTHWEST CORNER OF 9TH AND F STREETS.

In preceding narratives the Rambler has dealt with a number of the hotels, inns or taverns which were within the boundaries of Washington before the removal of the seat of government from Philadelphia, and of a number of other hotels that came into being here soon after Washington became the capital. But in this narrative his purpose is not to dig so deeply into the dust and mold of records, but to tell what he has been able to recall or find out about a few old hotels which Washington people remember.

Two old hotel corners are those now covered by Masonic Temple at the northwest corner of F and 9th streets, and by the Washington Loan and Trust Company's building at the southwest corner of the same streets. Lying before the Rambler is an address which Henry E. Davis delivered before the Columbia Historical Society on November 4, 1901, in which he presented some of his recollections of the neighborhood of 9th and F streets. He told that at the southeast corner of 9th and F was the residence of George C. Whiting, at the northwest corner a tavern called the Model House and at the southwest corner "the more pretentious hostelry then known as the Herndon House and later as the St. Cloud." According to Mr. Davis, the Model House was a bluish-gray brick building. "The present Masonic Temple," Mr. Davis said, "occupies the site of this old tavern, and I had almost forgotten to say that under the Masonic Temple may still be found a living spring inclosed with masonry and bearing an inscription that it was so inclosed during the mayoralty of Robert Brent, the first mayor of Washington, while on the sidewalk near the present western line of the building was a pump, in those days a veritable mecca of all the neighbors and their servants because of the excellent quality of the water."

Mr. Davis told that the Herndon House became the property of Jacob Lyon, jr., and its name was changed to the St. Cloud Hotel, under which name the building remained after its conversion into an office building before it became the property of the Washington Loan and Trust Company.

* * *

In the National Intelligencer of June, 1858, appeared the following advertisement:

The Herndon House:—At the southwest corner of F and 9th streets, having recently been refitted in the best style, the proprietor is prepared to receive both permanent and transient guests. Several very pleasant and desirable rooms are now vacant, which will be disposed of for the summer at moderate terms. P. G. MURRAY, Proprietor.

In the late 60s and early 70s, the St. Cloud Hotel was extensively advertised, and the following sample of its advertisements appeared in 1871:

St. Cloud Hotel:—Corner 9th and F streets, Washington, D. C. The most central location in the city. Opposite patent office, Masonic Temple and one block from the general post office. The F street cars communicating with the Capitol, Executive Mansion, Treasury, War and Navy departments and the Baltimore and Ohio depot pass the door. N. B.—Take the F street cars at depot and get off at 9th street. J. E. LYON, Proprietor.

The advertisements usually carried the picture—a crude wood cut—of the St. Cloud. The building on the corner was four stories high and almost square. Above the roof rose the familiar heavy, old-fashioned chimneys. Adjoining it on the 9th street side was a three-story building, and the words "St. Cloud" were painted in big letters across the front of that building between the second and third stories. The picture shows that the hotel had an entrance on both the F and the 9th street fronts.

The St. Cloud, like so many other hotels and most mortals, had its troubles, and money was the main cause of them—especially the lack of money. In The Star of November, 1874, the Rambler found this advertisement:

By Latimer & Cleary, Real Estate Brokers and Auctioneers, Southwest Corner of Penna. Ave. and 11th St. Star Building.

By virtue of a deed of trust to the undersigned, dated December 28, 1871, and by the request of the party secured, we will sell at public auction, Wednesday, December 16, 1874, at 4 o'clock p.m., in front of the premises, all that parcel of land and premises, etc., etc., being known as the St. Cloud Hotel, corner of 9th and F streets n.w.
HENRY BOGUE and D. J. FOLEY, Trustees.

In The Star of December 17, 1874, was this news item:

The St. Cloud Hotel property, corner 9th and F streets, was sold under the hammer yesterday by Messrs. Latimer & Cleary, auctioneers, to B. W. Summy for $85,500.

When Washington city was incorporated the lot at the southwest corner of 9th and F was owned by the heirs of David Burnes. That was in 1802. The lot was smaller than those on the west or south, contained 3,542 square feet and was appraised as worth $210. There was no house on it. Two lots on the west were also owned by the heirs of David Burnes and were appraised at $318 and $342. The numbers of these lots were 20, 21 and 22 in square 377. Lots Nos. 19 and 18 on the west side of 9th, south from the corner of F, were in the name of Dunlop & Carleton, and were assessed at $318 and $540, the latter being the assessment on lot 18, which contained something over 9,000 feet. There were no improvements on the F street or the 9th street sides of the square, but on the lot at the northwest corner of 9th and E, owned by John Crocker, there was a house assessed at $3,000, and on Charles Clst's lot, which was on E street either at or close to the corner of 10th, there was a house assessed at $4,500, which marks these houses as being among the large and imposing ones of the early capital.

* * *

Five years later, in 1807, the lot at the corner of 9th and F and the two lots on the west were still in the ownership of the Burnes heirs, and the lot on 9th street south of the corner was owned by Joseph Carleton, and that next on the south by James Pollock. Between that year and 1830 the corner lot had been divided into halves, and the east half, or corner, was owned by John Ellis, and an eighteen-hundred-dollar dwelling stood there, though the value of the lot was still low—$279.

The west half of the lot and the two other Burnes lots on the west were in the name of Joseph Gales, jr., and had not been improved. Lot 19, south of the corner, had been bought by Daniel Brent, but was unimproved, and the next lot on the south had been bought by John Gardner and improved to the extent of $3,000. In 1844 the corner still belonged to John Ellis, and the east half of the lot and the next lot on the east had passed from Joseph Gales, jr., to John P. Van Ness, while the next Burnes-Gales lot on the west had passed to J. C. Hall. The next lot on the west had been divided between H. Howison and Lewis Edwards. The lot south on 9th was still owned by Daniel Brent, and the next lot on the south was in the name of the heirs of John Gardner. In 1844 John Ellis still owned the corner, but between 1844 and 1849 the east half of the lot and the whole lot next it on the west had been bought by Charles Lyon.

Counting west from that lot, the lot owners were J. C. Hall, James Dixon, Lewis Edwards, J. C. McGuire, Mary Cage, Theresa Bryan and Samuel Clouney. Daniel Brent still owned the lot on 9th street, and the lot next to it had passed from the heirs of John Gardner to John Gardner, no doubt his son. The next lot on the south had been subdivided, and the halves were owned by Thady Hogan and Sarah Hogan. In 1860 the Ellis lot on the corner had passed to Charles Lyon, who retained his other land on F street and had also come into ownership of the Daniel Brent lot on the 9th street side.

The next lot on the south was still John Gardner's, but, if the Rambler has not twisted his notes, the south part of this lot had been bought by Henry S. Davis. In 1870 the corner lot was in the name of Georgianna L. Force, the half lot on the west in the name of Jacob E. Lyon, proprietor of the St. Cloud, and the other lots that had been in the name of Charles Lyon were now jointly in the names of Georgianna L. Force—evidently Georgianna Lyon Force—and Jacob E. Lyon, daughter and son of Charles Lyon.

The Masonic Temple corner, where the Model House stood, was in 1802 owned by James R. McDermott and was assessed at $152. The next lot on the west was owned by David Burnes' heirs. There was no house on the north side of F between 9th and 10th streets. In 1807 James McDermott's heirs owned the Masonic Temple corner and the Burnes' lot had passed to James Tharp or Thorp. No building had been set up there. In 1820 the corner was owned by Robert Brown and a building stood there which was assessed at $4,500. The Burnes-Thorp lot, on the west, was owned by William Matthews; the next two lots on the west, Nos. 3 and 4, were in the name of the Catholic Seminary and improved to the extent of $5,000; while the next two lots on the west, which carried one to the corner of F and 10th, were in the name of the Catholic Church, St. Patrick's. The Catholic Seminary and St. Patrick's Church owned other land in the square bounded by 9th, 10th, F and G streets.

* * *

The Model House corner, now the Masonic Temple corner, in 1844 was owned by C. L. Coltman and John Boyle; the next lot on the west was in the name of John Boyle, and the remainder of the F street front of the square was owned by the Catholic Seminary and St. Patrick's Church. Across the record of the seminary lots is a faint pencil scrawl, which the Rambler reads as "Georgetown College," yet in 1860 the record reads clearly "Gonzaga College." Between 1850 and 1860 the Coltman-Boyle lot, on which the Model House stood, passed to Gonzaga College, and between 1860 and 1870 to the Masonic Hall Association, and Masonic Temple was standing there in 1871, because the St. Cloud advertisements in that year read, "opposite Masonic Temple and patent office." Nearly all the remainder of the square was owned by St. Patrick's Church and Gonzaga College.

The Rambler has before him an old Washington guide book of 1848, on the title page of which is the following:

Picture of Washington and Its Vicinity for 1848. With 20 Embellishments on Wood by Gilbert & Gibon and 18 on Steel, and an Introduction by Rev. R. R. Gurley. Also the Washington Guide, Containing a Congressional Directory and Much Other Useful Information. Washington. Wm. Q. Force, 1848.

Among the yellow pages of this old book is the following chapter on hotels:

Hotels and Boarding houses in Washington are numerous and excellent. Among them may be named the National Hotel (Coleman's), Gadsby's, the City Hotel, the United States Hotel, Fuller's, Tyler's, all on Penna. Ave., and Beers' Temperance Hotel on 3rd St. Owing to the great number of strangers who visit Washington during the sessions of Congress, the demand for accommodations is great and new and well-directed efforts are annually made to supply it. Those who are best competent to judge on the subject are of the opinion that the number of hotels is at present rather deficient than excessive and it is probable that each succeeding year will witness a large augmentation in the number of persons who may resort to Washington for purposes of business, improvement and pleasure.

An extensive list may be compiled of the hotels that were doing business in Washington in 1871, and the following list probably does not contain the names of all of them:

* * *

American House, 7th and Avenue, J. B. Scott, proprietor; Boyle's Hotel, C street opposite the B. & O. depot; Caspari's House, Caspari Bros. & Co., A street south; Columbia House, William Jackson, proprietor, corner of 11th and G; Continental Hotel, Pennsylvania avenue between 3d and 4½; Dickson House, William Dickson, proprietor, 405 11th street; Dorsey House, 826 7th street; Ebbitt House; Everett House, 1411 F; Franklin House, D. J. Barrick, proprietor, northeast corner of 8th and D; Hamlin House, Joseph Hamlin, proprietor, Louisiana avenue and 6th; Howard House, Howard & Ireland proprietors, Avenue and 6th; Metropolitan Hotel; Mount Vernon Hotel, Daniel Turner, proprietor, 7th and L streets; National Hotel, Tenney & Co., proprietors; Owen House, Samuel W. Owen, proprietor, north side of Avenue, between 14th and 15th; Pennsylvania Hotel, Charles Mades, proprietor, southwest corner Pennsylvania avenue and 3d; St. Cloud Hotel; St. James, John Spicer, proprietor, the Avenue and 6th; St. Marc Hotel, J. H. Semmes, proprietor, the Avenue and 7th; Sanderson House, William Sanderson, proprietor, A street south and New Jersey avenue; the Arlington, T. R. Roessle & Son; Tremont House, F. P. Hill, proprietor, Indiana avenue; Washington House, A. F. Beveridge, proprietor, Avenue and 3d; White House, J. W. Usher, proprietor, 1335 E street; Whitney Hotel, George H. Whitney, proprietor, A street north, 2d and Delaware avenue, and the Park Hotel, Edward Abner, proprietor, 7th and Boundary.

Seeing Paris With Girl Nurses of Uncle Sam's Navy

Special Correspondence of The Star.

PARIS, January 1, 1918.

"WE had to battle with the French proprietor for terms," says Maud. "We got him down to 15 francs ($2.65) per day for room and board, but every time he sees us he tells us that he is losing money on us."

They are American Navy nurses, seeing Paris.

"The worst," says Helen, "is that the dear major, who has been a father to us, invited us by special delivery to motor out to Versailles with him for lunch and the hotel clerk forgot to give us the pneumatique. We were not in when he came."

Tragic misunderstanding!

War girls on five days' leave in the gay capital—then back to the dull French port where they're a fixture. The all-blue suit, long coat and separate cloak lined with bright red of the Navy nurses is the least known uniform in Paris. Their hospital is at the port, for boys in blue. They do not move to the interior of France unless a heavy contingent of marines be sent as infantry. All the same, they differ from the boys in one respect—if they want to see Paris, they just have to mention it.

* * *

"Keep the boys away from Paris!" comes the home cry. So, as the boys cannot be kept entirely in cold storage, we maintain a permanent provost's guard (American military police force) in the gay city, and run hotels, clubrooms and vaudeville shows especially for them. To win a Paris permit, the soldier who "merits his captain's confidence" must pass a controle on quitting camp, be met by the provost's guard at the train in Paris and register at the Rue St. Anne, where a lieutenant examines your papers, assigns you a hotel and reminds you to come and register again on leaving. "Remember, we trust you!" After which, all Paris is yours—with a good chance of meeting the M. P.'s (American military police in uniform) in every promenade and plain clothes men (whom you don't recognize) in every haunt of pleasure.

How different for the girls!

On arriving at their French port these nice Navy nurses were kept ten days on the boat and then transferred to the hotel of that considerable naval base, frequented by Navy officers, contractors and functionaries. After ten days in the hotel, the girls just mentioned that they'd like to go to Paris.

"Certainly," beamed the chief of the unit, and he immediately procured their tickets and put them on the train. "The dining car at X———," he reminded them. "Here are your coupons."

Gay Paris. Pshaw! they came sad, almost sobbing!

"We've had such a lovely time in port," mourned Jane. "It spoiled us. On the boat it brought tears to our eyes, the goodness of those United States Navy officers. They would not let us have a care or moment's loniness. In port they came to our hotel. They took us motor trips along the coast in quaint old French towns. Of evenings they would come again, to dance or chat or go to movies. We were just worn out for sleep and rest, but wouldn't let them know it for the world. Now, they've sailed back home."

Where can we get bargains in gloves? Which is the best perfumery? How much should I pay for a really elegant handbag? And umbrellas? And blouses?

I was ready for all that.

* * *

"We have visited the Bon Marche," said Maud. "We are told that there are two buildings. We must have got into the cheap one."

"Were things cheap?" I asked.

"Only in quality," she answered politely.

I was all upset. Here's a new kind of tourist girl.

"For goodness sake, what do you want?" I faltered.

"We would see Napoleon's tomb," they answered.

The boys (to do them justice) regularly ask the same thing, but the boys are taken about in "seeing Paris" carryalls. For girls, all on their own, a taxi is absolutely necessary. Item: taxi for four girls, to see Napoleon's tomb, the War Museum, Eiffel Tower, Arc de Triomphe, Champs-Elysees, Place de la Concorde, Tuileries Garden and the Louvre Palace costs exactly 17 francs ($3).

Along the river.

"This is the Cour la Reine. The queen's court, girls. This long stretch with marble balustrades is very old. Here the court promenaded in the first carriages, all gilded and painted, when the streets of Paris were too narrow for driving. They were gala carriages from Italy. They built this avenue to drive them, slow and solemn, back and forth, while saluting each other. Wouldn't that cramp you? My, these taxis skid fierce!"

IN TUILERIES GARDENS. THE UNIFORM OF THE NAVY NURSE IS THE LEAST KNOWN ONE IN PARIS.

At Napoleon's tomb. (This part is short.)

"Why, Maud, it's shut! We've got to come again, tomorrow. Look, the sign says, 'Open Tuesday, Wednesday, Fridays and Sundays.'" (Contretemps that will cost the girls $1.20.)

Just behind, however, was the open-air museum of the army, in the courtyard of the Invalides. They stood reverent before the aeroplane of Guynemer, in a markee-tent, with French folks coming to lay flowers continually. They saw the Zeppelin cars brought down at Bourbonne intact. And giant howitzer shells of 1914. And a maze of German machine guns, cannons of all sizes, planes of all dates, styles and belligerents.

American soldiers crowded round us. They talked with the girls like sisters.

"We must be very nice to them," whispered Helen. "We must try to have good influence. They're alone in Paris."

The hearts of gold! Rosy, blooming, clear-eyed, self-reliant! They are beautiful and feminine, trained nurses, almost doctors.

"I would go 'round Paris with those boys myself," Maud murmurs, "if it would aid to safeguard them."

Tut, tut! Don't worry; there's a plain clothes man from Washington, D. C., just over there, behind them. He is seeing all the sights, too, but the boys don't know it.

"Nor don't need it!" flames up Maud, indignant, sweetly inconsistent. Who would have her otherwise, the little heart of platinum.

At the Eiffel tower.

"What are those gray strips, almost invisible, floating from the top, like kites or streamers? Wireless apparatus? Listen, girls, those things up there are the most powerful in the world, communicating straight with Washington. Do you hear that? They telephone by wireless. How near home it brings us!"

A cascade of blinding sparks, a momentary waterfall of fire, a tumbling veil of flashes seems to fall, once, twice, three times, from the tower, and all is dusky twilight again.

"What's that? What can it be? Nobody knows? Some new discovery against aerial attacks? Girls, do you hear? Nobody knows in Paris."

Winter dusk, at 4 p.m. in Paris.

The Arch of Triumph of Napoleon stands against a red glow. The Champs Elysees stretch blue-gray. There's the Grand palace, where they used to hold the salons; now it has 4,000 wounded. This is the Concorde, Jane; on this spot the beautiful Queen Marie Antoinette was guillotined. And the Hotel Crillon, where Col. House stayed. Isn't it wonderful?

The Rue Royale, past Maxim's.

The gray eyes grow grave and apprehensive.

"All are not so, really? Could we do it? See a real cafe, and take tea in it? Are you sure? Would it be proper? Won't we!"

Now, we're all the same in Paris, however different. The Grand is, doubtless, the most correct, luxurious and grandiose cafe in the capital. Quantities of ladies, even French, stop in for tea and to repose; but before the war it was not so. The Grand Cafe, like everything in Paris, is undergoing an evolution. Tribulation means a "thrashing out." The French have been much purified. Also, inevitably, these countless Americans, received with love and shamefacedness, are not without their influence. Paris is liable to become unrecognizable. But, here and there, remains a bit of the old leaven dough, so to speak, lost behind a chair or table. The girls have sharp eyes for it.

* * *

Two Parisiennes, quite unmistakable, were primping and pow-wow-ing with their rouge sticks and hand mirrors at a nearby table. Yea, the cholera, and obvious. The war girls did not stare, but I could see them nudge each other.

"Oh," I said innocently, "painting up was all the rage before the war. All the fun was to do it in public. At Biarritz, where it began, girls of the best society, still in their teens, carried their make-up."

"GIRLS, IT IS PARIS. IT'S ALL BEAUTIFUL!"

The war girls pretended to believe it.

"Daughters of Spanish grandees, fourteen years old, set the example," I floundered. "But now———"

The conversation languished.

"See here," I said. "It isn't up to date in Paris any more, but I ca'n show you relics. In this cafe there used to be a beautiful 'make-up' room, where an experienced theatrical dresser sat, with a notable layout, ready to aid any lady who might have forgotten to bring her materials. It still exists. Want to see it?"

Didn't they!

Out! it was accomplished. Thus did I hand them over to the matron of the dressing room, having almost despaired to know how to do it.

Toast and tea.

"Girls," I said, "you know that this is war bread."

They found it delicious. Entire wheat bread, it seems, has been a fad at home. At their French port hospital, they have common American white bread. This is different. It gives pains. I did not tell them.

"The food at our hotel in Paris is good," said Jane. "For lunch we had baked eggs with a sauce, a delicious ragout, cheese and fruits."

"No grill? No roast?"

It seemed not, but there is roast chicken at evening dinner. Also, the place is well heated, which cannot be said of some more fashionable joints.

"My room, on the third floor, is modest but warm," said Maud. "I walk up, because I seldom find any one to run the lift for me."

Doubtless it is snug and central, but the proprietor ought not to follow them about with information that he is losing money on them at 15 francs. When the place was arranged with (not "taken over") as the Women's Red Cross Club and Hotel and inaugurated with fracas, it was understood that the rates would be quite special. Upstairs thereon re spacious Red Cross parlors, with a Red Cross matron supposed to sit in permanence.

"It's Paris!" says Jane. "It's all beautiful!"

The boulevard in the dark.

We strolled along the famous boulevard. Subdued lights came from the shop windows. Taxi lamps darted like fireflies. There was nothing to see but the big shops, brilliantly illuminated.

"Shall we try the galleries?" I suggested. The girls hesitated.

"We've been," said Maud. "They're like the Bon Marche."

Then Jane let the cat out of the bag.

"We don't want to buy anything," said Jane. "There's nothing here that tempts us."

* * *

Wouldn't that liquid-fire you? A new kind of tourist girl in Paris! She is coming by thousands, young, ardent, laughing, but interested in few of the things which delighted the tourist girl before the war. Along the boulevard, their eyes were fixed on American soldiers, strolling in bunches. The girls seemed always looking for a face among them—the face of some American boy they left at home, yet who is due in France for fighting.

In the lounge of the hotel we met Mignon, the fourth of the war girls, who had quit us early in the day to visit her mother. Mignon's case (of course, I've changed the names) is most amusing and unusual. Here is a complete American girl, but born in the Franche-Comte, France. At the age of eleven she was taken to America by an aunt. She has lived and grown up an American girl to the age of twenty-two, while her mother (except that she made two American visits) remained in France. Now, the purely American war girl comes to see her purely French mother.

"She put me to bed!" exclaimed Mignon, with great eyes. "And she won't let me laugh! She says no French young girl laughs nowadays, with all the dead!"

"It's true, I have a cold. As soon as I got in the flat mere felt my forehead, and she said I have a fever. She put me to bed at once and piled the covers on me, and she made me drink a great big bowl of scalding tea. I told her that I could not stay but just two hours. No use, she heard but did not listen. 'You will sweat, my girl!' she said. I did," giggled Mignon. "When my time was up I dressed and came away. Mere wept. She is ashamed of me because I laugh."

Mignon sighed.

"I just have to!"

And we all laughed.

A new kind of tourist girl in Paris.

Rara avis in terris.

Yet, a few days later, my conscience worried me, all the same, for not having offered (at least) to take them out somewhere at night. I went to make good. To save my face I plunged on famous Paris sights, the well known old audacious promenoirs of before the war, which (surely) they'd refuse, and so have missed nothing.

"The Folies Bergere?" I suggested.

"We've been," they answered gently.

"The Olympia?"

"We've been."

Their smile was good and kind.

No, can you beat it?

STERLING HEILIG.

Colonization Plan to Put Millions of Acres at Work

BY JAMES B. MORROW.

MEN of action are thinking as well as fighting. With their hands on the present and their hearts in the cause of the nation, they are looking also toward the days that are to come. Hundreds of the leaders of such men are in Washington. They see the wreckage that all will see when peace begins the healing of a torn and distraught world. There is no statesmanship where there is no vision, and so in the blood of today thought is taken of tomorrow, when wounds are to be bound up and the country is to be rehabilitated in its strength and power.

A computation, simple in its elements, but sobering in its magnitude, crowds itself into the minds of those who, as legislators and administrators, are carrying on the war. If before the sword was drawn against the Huns it cost $1,000,000,000 a year to maintain the government of the United States, what will be the cost hereafter?

A debt of $30,000,000,000 at the end of another year of war would require $100,000,000 a month for the payment of interest only. More than $6,000,000,000, therefore, would have to be obtained by taxation. But the debt may reach $50,000,000,000, or even $75,000,000,000. And so men in Washington are thinking as well as fighting. Courageously they face the future; and confidently. It is either a fraction for liberty or all and slavery.

THOMAS NIXON CARVER,
Adviser in agricultural economics to the government.

* * *

In every city and village two years hence there will be homeless men and dependent women and children—widows of Americans, widows of aliens, and their little sons and daughters. It will be a great multitude, a pathetic multitude, and the nation, in one way or another, must take care of them.

Three men, two of them senators, are at work on the problem. The senators are Charles Curtis of Kansas and Morris Sheppard of Texas. Helping them with his counsel is Thomas Nixon Carver, until recently professor of political economy at Harvard and now adviser in agricultural economics to the government in Washington. Their plan is to establish colonies in all parts of the country—colonies of friends and acquaintances, of races and of religions. They would have idle lands turned over by the plow or planted in orchards. The pictures they see contain new villages, new factories and new railroads.

"The foundations of a nation's strength," Morris Sheppard says, "are in the homes of the people. Of the 20,000,000 families in this country, 11,000,000 are not living in homes of their own. Of the 9,000,000 who do, less than 6,000,000 have homes that are free of debt.

"Forty-seven years ago more than 90 per cent of our people resided in the rural districts. Today more than 50 per cent live in cities. The percentage of tenants in the farming sections, as well as in the cities, is growing with appalling rapidity. Hardly a half of the arable area of the United States is occupied and scarcely a half of the half so occupied is actually being cultivated. Is it surprising that we are confronted by a shortage of food? Even before we went to war with Germany our surplus of food was rapidly decreasing.

"Something must be done. If prompt action is not taken to make farm life inherently more attractive, this republic, although it contains enormous reaches of remarkably productive soil, will be menaced by a constantly mounting cost of food and the serious lowering of American standards."

What is that something? Sheppard answers "Colonization." So does Curtis. "Organization," says Carver, which practically is the same answer. What the three men hope to see is a real and sensible movement of certain classes from the cities to the country. In these classes there would be Americans and aliens, men and women, preachers, teachers, laborers, lawyers and doctors.

The movement, in its first stages, is under way. Senator Curtis has introduced in Congress what he calls a war measure. It is a bill "creating a board of administration to develop a practical standard for rural colonies and to establish the same for dependent families of soldiers of the United States and to make a national colonization survey."

"I start with the dependent families of soldiers," Senator Curtis said to the writer. "My view, however, includes thousands of others who will be provided for hereafter."

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"At what money cost to the government?" the interviewer inquired.

"None," Senator Curtis answered. "There are millions—hundreds of millions—of acres of idle land in the United States. It is everywhere, almost, in the east and in the west, and there are empires of it in the south. The soil of this land—of all land, in fact—has been studied and mapped. Go to the Department of Agriculture and officers there will tell you about the soil of a township in a county of Indiana, Illinois, Massachusetts or Pennsylvania. States, too, have information with respect to the soil within their own boundaries.

"There are all kinds of agricultural information in this country, but it has never been headed up. I would use it in classifying the unoccupied and uncultivated lands of the United States. The labor could be done with hardly any expense. The classification would show many essential things. If a man desires to purchase a farm, under the methods of doing business at present, he goes to some one who is engaged in selling lands. The fountain of knowledge in that event is the agent himself. He wants to sell. His policy, therefore, may be to tell only that part of the truth that will not hurt the commission he hopes to receive.

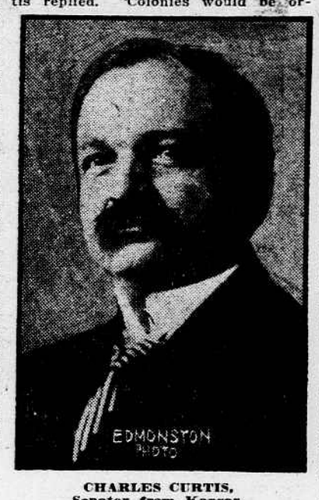
"Such a classification as I have in mind would locate land that could be bought and would describe it in detail. Now, most persons who want farms or a few acres for themselves are not competent to search and bargain for themselves.

"Likely as not if an editor in poor health or for any other reason were looking for a farm on which to grow corn, he would buy one in Minnesota near the boundary of Canada. If he purposed to grow spring wheat he would settle, probably, in Florida. He might buy an orange grove in Michigan or a sheep ranch on the sandy plains of New Jersey.

"I am using the editor, of course, merely as an illustration," Senator Curtis remarked, "and with no feeling that a writing gentleman, in such matters as I speak of, is especially in need of a guardian. But whether the would-be buyer of a farm is an editor or a shoemaker, a man or a woman, the person so determined should proceed intelligently. My proposed classification would show climate and rainfall, among other things. Only dry-farming can be done in certain regions. Irrigation is necessary in other sections. Apples will grow better in one place than another. It is the same with potatoes, sugar beets, strawberries, cotton and beans. The classification would tell the man who purposed to raise celery exactly where to settle. If he meant, however, to specialize in green vegetables the classification would prevent him from locating fifty miles from a railroad and 200 miles from a market."

"The classification having been made, what would be the next step?" the interviewer asked.

"Starting groups of city dwellers toward the rural regions," Senator Curtis replied. "Colonies would be organized, composed of men and women with families, who, longing for homes of their own and being incapable of always earning a living in crowded cities, were desirous of trying their fortunes with gardens or on farms.



CHARLES CURTIS,
Senator from Kansas.

"A society at work on the East Side in New York found that most of the men and women whom it was teaching home economics and the English language understood more or less about agriculture. They were born and brought up on farms in Europe. Although they wanted to get back to the land, they were unwilling to go alone, to take up their homes among strangers in a strange country, and, besides, they were poor and without credit.

* * *

"Back of the plan I am describing are wealthy men who are willing to purchase large tracts of land and to cut it up into small holdings. The scheme, when carried out, will be financed in that manner. No funds will be asked of the government.

"Let us say that four sections of land are bought in Ohio, Louisiana or Texas and divided into fifty farms ranging from 5 to 100 acres. The land would be sold to colonists at cost. Each farm would be fenced and on it a house and a barn would be constructed. A well would be dug. Agricultural implements, a horse or mule, a cow, two pigs and a dozen chickens would be supplied to every colonist.

"Private capital, remember, would pay for everything. The colonists, after harvesting two or three crops, would begin to meet their indebtedness. Year by year their payments would go on until the land was clear and their own. Probably they would belong to one race or to one religion. Perhaps, if they were Americans, they would be old neighbors and acquaintances. Each man would buy and pay for his own property, but on the installment plan, as I have stated, and at a low rate of interest. The enterprise as a whole would not be communistic in any sense, but co-operative, if the colonists so desired.

"Dr. Carver says the organization of the whole community for self-help is desirable wherever possible. The plan that he has worked out is similar to that of chambers of commerce in some of our cities, where the membership of the organization is divided into committees, each member being assigned to the committee whose work interests him the most.

"When a colony settled on a tract of land, a sanitarian would give instructions as to the arrangement of houses and the location of barns and other buildings. An agricultural teacher would be present to map out a scheme of plowing, planting and harvesting. A market expert would teach the colonists how to pack and sell their produce and crops.

"The dwellings of a colony could be built on the farms or could be centralized and thus form a village, with a church, a school, a recreation hall, a store and so on. Each colony, whether the houses were grouped together or built on farms, should be socialized. There should be a place of amusement, where meetings of fathers and mothers and of children could be held.

"At first, of course, a colony would be poor. Some of the members might be able to pay cash for their land. Most of them, however, would be in debt. Gradually the community would grow in wealth. Houses would be enlarged. Machinery would be purchased. The live stock would be improved. Land outside of the colony would increase in value. All of the merchants and other business men for miles around would share in the prosperity enjoyed by the colonists.

"The young people, I think, would remain on the farms. Home schools would educate them and lecturers from the outside would keep them in touch with the world. They would marry, more land would be obtained and the nation would be made stronger and better by their labors, their characters and their citizenship.

* * *

"Food was already dear in the United States before Germany began its war on civilization. It is an old story, I know, and a very serious one, I may add, but our rural regions are being slowly depopulated. We are moving to town that we may clerk in stores, work on street railroads and go to the 'movies' in the evening.

"Something will have to be done to make farming attractive to the young. It has become profitable at last, after years filled with drudgery, poverty and isolation, and that was necessary before anything practical could be accomplished toward making the country interesting to those who lived there and elsewhere.

"After the war, food will not be cheap. Perhaps it will never be cheap again. We shall need the productive service of every worker in the country to hold our own in the struggle for trade that will follow the disbandment of armies now in the field. First of all, we must have bread and meat.

"Other nations are preparing for the great contest that will begin the very moment that the world returns to the ways of peace—preparing to control markets and preparing to have an abundance of food for their inhabitants.

"Nearly all of the great nations have adopted land purchase and land settlement policies. The people are assisted at public expense in getting farms and homes for themselves. England, Scotland and Ireland are following such policies. So is Germany, where more than 80 per cent of the farmers cultivate their own land. France lends money at 2 per cent to persons who desire to have gardens or to buy farms.

"The colonies I have in view will not be socialistic. There will be a community of interests, but the head of each family will own his or her farm. By a community of interests, I mean organization to increase crop production, to better the ordinary rural educational and marketing facilities and to build roads and telephone lines.

"Every man and every woman, you understand, would be a willing colonist. There is no thought of compelling any one to leave a city tenement and go into the country. Go or stay, take your choice, is the first item on the program. And, I suppose, there would have to be a scheme of selection. Persons with no liking for the country, practical or sentimental, should remain where they are.

"Millions of dollars are yearly spent by those who desire a little land of their own. Most of the money is lost. It is not visible, but back to the cities there is a straggling and constantly moving procession of disappointed men and women who, without wise direction, have tried their hands at agriculture and have failed.

"Colonies will stop that procession and increase the one that is moving toward the valleys and hills, toward freedom and on a mission of real service to the nation."

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