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THE COCKPIT OF PEACE
By the Same Author

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TO
KINKO.
FOREWORD

FIRSTLY: while this volume has been in the press, one or two events—such as the signing of the Treaty of London, the rise of the League of Nations, the appearance of long-overdue symptoms of U.S. debt leniency towards Europe, and latest, the decision of President Coolidge not to remain aloof from disarmament pourparlers having Geneva as their setting—have tended to modify certain views and observations scattered through these pages, notably in Chapters XI, XV and XXIII. Yet, easy as it might be for me to re-write passages here and there, three considerations deter me from so amending matters "up-to-the-minute," and in the strictest accordance with seemingly shifting international sands:

(a) because these sands have yet to cease shifting,
(b) because this tale was not intended as a stop-press political narrative, but rather as an impression of the maelstrom, taken at a specific moment,
(c) because readers may prefer such an impression (which they can easily amend in their own minds as they go along) to an affair hurriedly re-adjusted to meet the latest pious aspirations of the period.

Secondly: if the personal pronoun be too insistent in these pages, no one can be more aware of the fact than the author, who has done his best to prune
or suppress it in keeping with the general conception, namely: in preparing a slice of contemporary journalism from a viand still warm, as distinct from the cold dish of distant recollection, to develop, in parallel narration, something of the life and environment of an international correspondent, of the fortunes and "reactions," buffettings and caresses, of rather extraordinary times.

F. T.

Câônes, 1926.
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THE COCKPIT OF PEACE

CHAPTER I

AS WF WERE

RATHER a precise point of departure persists to this narrative—the evening of the last Sunday in May, 1919.

On that occasion other promenaders along High Street, Kensington, may have just been engaged in assimilating the sweet nothings of a suburban day of rest; any friend or acquaintance happening, upon the other hand, on the present writer would have instantly deduced from his slow and heavy tread and absent-minded bumping into passers-by, from the last-phase-at-Longwood tilt of the head and disposition of the hands, that one promenader's mind, at least, was other than a pleasant Sabbath blank that evening.

Nor was it such, in fact, by many leagues but quite feverishly occupied in seeing a problem of some considerable consequence—the return to civil life next morning.

What would it be like?

Here, at last was the Restart that had been so debated to death in messes innumerables; by men who had sworn they would never return to their
former jobs (‘I’d rather bust first!’), by others boasting their places were being kept warm for them, by fathers of families at grips with a penetrating fear, by striplings who had never had jobs at all, by serious-minded gentlemen for whom war was a cleansing business, by rebellious spirits gaily set upon extracting the best out of the immediate future with a minimum of effort, by men with plans and by others without. I was one of those going back to my former work by invitation, yet that did not dissipate decided misgivings, doubts and fears which probably assailed most returning ones who chose to be aware of the internal commotion army life had created—

After being “taken care of” for so long, fed, clothed and carted this way and the other without having to lift a finger, and being treated with immense respect the while, after the colour and movement and continuous tension, the mad uncertainty and irresponsible uniformed immunity, the insensate quaffing and bizarre and facile lovemaking, the numbing emotional thumps one collected each day, the financial moral and physical contempt for the thereafter, the somersault of values and standards, the full-steam-ahead-and-damn-the-morrow of 1914–18, after the whole cocaine-like interlude . . . how would this sudden return to the quiet pastures of a normal wage-earning existence work out? Few of us but had longed for the day when we should again select the pattern and direct the cut, yet that day come one felt about as happy and composed of mind as Smith Minor off to a public school. Or rather, as
an Old Boy returning to school after several years of hectic overseas adventure and having to go through the whole curriculum all over again and cut a figure anew amid the usual competition and jealousies. Going back to pick up the threads in Fleet Street, at twenty-eight, and after the most disturbing interval imaginable, was singularly like that. Could the Old Boy be expected to reapply himself with enthusiasm to Ovid and Euclid after having bossed natives like any grown-up white man or triumphed in a cosmopolitan love affair? Had he perhaps not lost the self-discipline, the state of mind, not to mention the talent? Had I not perhaps likewise lost these essentials (I fear it was a very egotistical walk that Sunday evening) could I still write (even journalistically!) after four years of military mental stagnation? Probably not, probably the office was creeping with newly-imported geniuses... thus the reptile inferiority complex. Though it did not have it all its own way by any means, having to compete intermittently with an insistent and clearly defined superiority movement——

After the personal magnificence of war, could one lightly re-adjust oneself to the reporting of infanticides in Tabard Street or interviewing greengrocers on the retail price of strawberries; conscientiously devote oneself to the views of the Vicar of Hoodlethedood on silken hose or pillion-riding... after having lectured to squads of gold-laced generals? Long ago that was all in a day’s work and gleefully, zestfully fulfilled... but now?

Four years of objective glancing at one’s trade,
if that trade be widely poohpoohed and sneered at by most around one, for its vulgarity, its exaggeration, its impertinence, its humbug (so said the Army, not I) did not exactly conduce to a blindly devotional re-embrace. The concluding words of an otherwise favourable army report: ‘but is a journalist’ ame back to mind. Ah well—so the seesaw—lots of that was probably sour grapes. From men bound back for City files and ledgers. Journalism was a pretty good means of earning one’s living, after all. At least when young and without attachments. One got around, saw life, and all the rest of it . . . the jingling sovereigns one used to collect in the olden days and their joyous spending “up West” in the Café Royal, at the Empire, at Covent Garden Ball, on motor runs to the coast, in unspoilt reaches of the Thames! It was rather a shame that two publications which used to pay so well had regretted their inability to revert to an old arrangement—they had got so many new contributors, interveners in the war years, on their books already—still, never fear, that former ‘practice’ would be built up again . . . after a while.

Thus the past, telescoping into the present.

I wondered what would be the first story I should be sent out on. And if I should make a mess of it. What a gorgeous freak my last assignment had been, given nearly five years before: “go out and write up the war scenes in the West End.”

The German goose-stepping with a drawn sword in Jermyn Street, the wild roaring Lieder of the Gambrinus and the Coventry interspersed with
musical hochs for famous sons of the Fatherland, and not a single mug-lid closed that night; the Franco-German scrimmages in Soho, the Marseilleise and Deutschland Ueber Alles echoing and re-echoing across still neutral Piccadilly, the "pass along there, you bloody foreigners", the cheers and counter-booing, the chairing of a drunken redcoat by the statue of Eros and acclaming of the toppling figure preparatory to the bearing of it in triumph to the Palace.

And then? Oh, then things and people had gone entirely daft journalistically.

Next morning, August 4th, had come a summons from the Foreign Editor.

"Can you speak French? Right. Get a hundred pounds in gold downstairs and go to Antwerp. Don't get shut in there. A man shut in with his news is worse than a fellow who can't get any news at all. If you see a siege coming arrange a loophole. Holland or something. And, by the way, you may want some more money before it's over. We'll get it over to you somehow. But go easy. This show's going to cost quite a lot in the newspaper line before it's finished. May last six months or a year. Well, let me see—get a passport and get off this afternoon by Ostend. Good luck!"

I do not suppose that many of the first alleged war correspondents (I recollect assiduously studying the "Manual of All Arms," which positively exuded pipeclay, the whole way to Brussels in order to try and get a footing) are likely to forget an hour of the thirty days which followed; standing out grotesquely rather as a whole year's happenings
than a month's, they form a closed period in the annals of the trade. The mad round of Belgium and France pursuing news and being pursued by Kitchener, the dashes across to England with one's "stories", the spy scares, often centring on one's own person, the wild reports and rumours, the lying communiqués, the detentions and arrests, the lightning romances bred of feminine war hysteria, the Uhlan alarums and excursions, the overwhelming Main Story. A suspect on a continent of woe, trussed up with red tape and weighed down by useless laissiers passer, the correspondent wended his way from town to town the cynosure of every evil eye, compelled to grovel before every pettyminded official, even to smile... a smile for the little scented aristocrat who sneered from his desk "Ah, c'est un correspondant!" a smile for the officious young subaltern who called you a damned nuisance, a smile for the gendarme who grabbed you suddenly by the arm in the street.

My start had been auspicious—arrest at Antwerp by Boy Scouts and, after a precarious interval at the terminus beneath the expectorations of the mob, the next train out of the city under observation. Nor had Brussels better things to offer the following day. Belgian soldiers commandeering, from under my person, the office car temporarily lent me and which J. M. N. Jeffries had purchased but a few hours before with the object of seeking out, willynilly, the missing British Army. Untoward happenings to an untried beginner, these, which caused his prompt reduction to the rank of courier, hot-footed bearer of the deathless prose of
seniors back to Carmelite House and Printing House Square; though not for very long. Courier work entailed an unpleasant parallel function, namely that of having to transmit verbally to correspondents in the field Northcliffe's criticisms, which at this stage were seldom without a nasty personal sting such as "Tell X. he's not still at Spion Kop." A breakaway was indicated—they seemed to be wanting something, anyway, at headquarters, which they were not getting—and so one day towards mid-August I took home, on my own account, a comprehensive treatise on the infant campaign replete with human and strategic incident and compiled on the strength of an odiferous day in the first German prisoners-of-war camp at Bruges. The effect of this was electrical. My dispatch contained the transcending information that the Germans were literally limping to their doom in new boots, that soon the state of their feet would preclude any further advance on their part, and as a war correspondent I was made. Congratulations and "quotes" teemed in, and from eminent critics. Leading articles on military feet and bellies were printed, my name passed into the biggest type and I was sent back to discover fresh and confounding truths. Not that the bosh "from the front" which filled our newspapers in those days was all the fault of its senders, men largely without experience of war and unable to confirm an item in the mountainous aggregate of the fantastic and the possible that accumulated daily ("officers drunk at the guns. Boer War over again") was how my story of Mons should have
commenced had I faithfully recorded the opening observations of the first dispersed Contemptibles). Nor was it without suffering recurrent humiliations, such as being marched off the boat at Folkestone by Scotland Yard men to the cell-rooms and missile-throwing of an enlightened public, that one managed to combat Kitchener’s coastal blockade of correspondents and smuggle through accounts of the entry into Brussels and the flight to Ostend, of Mons and the advance to the Marne and the Aisne, of the infinite service rendered by Winston’s brigade in preventing, by the simple show of British uniforms on the spot, the probable surrender of the dispirited Belgian army in Antwerp.

And then the “Grace Darling”—

That little adventure had come about as the result of Northcliffe ordaining in the first lull of early October:

“Young man (over his shoulder and from the depths of an arm chair) you have the chance of your life. The British Fleet is going to cover a landing on the Belgian coast. There may be a big naval battle—our first real one since Trafalgar. You are to report this for my papers. You’ll find a yacht . . . the darling something . . . down at Dover. I’ve bought her. She’s mine. Sail straight away and mind, keep as near the battle as you can. I want a first-class eye-witness account.”

A Northcliffian conception, yet hardly one that developed quite according to plan—

The “Grace Darling”, a small motor yacht, I found skippered by an attractive young lady named Borthwicke and manned by a stop-gap Flemish crew
of four, one of whom, duly signed on as a mechanic, proceeded to put our engine out of action with Dover Harbour scarcely cleared. Later, in mid-channel, he confessed to being a butcher merely anxious to regain his native Courtrai and to knowing nought about engines, but by that time much worse had supervened. The rest of the crew had struck against salt junk and from their quarters for’rard, in which Captain Borthwicke had locked them, kept up a deafening chorus of oaths and menaces, punctuated by kicking, for the remainder of the voyage, while two clumsy landlubbers—Mr. Lumby of "The Times" was also aboard—sought, under the direction of an English girl in sou’wester, to get the most out of our tiny spread of canvas. An additional duty fell to the writer as the possessor of the strongest vocal chords. Ostensibly the purpose of the "Grace Darling’s" cruise in such perilous waters was the carriage of chloroform to the Queen of the Belgians’ Hospital at Furnes, which terminological inexactitude I would bellow ever and anon through a megaphone when challenged by justifiably suspicious patrol craft and submarines, one of which, sidling by, would have examined us much more closely for our non-existent cargo but for the fortuitous circumstance that we were able to communicate the winner of the Cambridgeshire—thus, at a stroke, proving our nationality and good faith. For two days and nights this strange voyage endured until decisive misfortune in the loss of our rudder overtook us, and, before the danger of drifting out into the North Sea, compelled us to accept the offer of the
cruiser "Brilliant" of a tow into Dunkirk. Not a glimpse or an echo of Northcliffe's naval battle had rewarded our enterprise; yet the voyage was fated to have almost as rich a journalistic yield in another and unforeseen direction—

On the Poperinghe Road, along which in the hope of a 'story' I had innocently erred upon disembarking, an approaching armoured car drew up with a whirl and a skid.

"What the hell do you think you're doing?" a Naval Brigade man at the wheel was shouting. "Well, get in here unless you want to get killed. There's a ruddy battle going on down there!"

The good samaritan was Lord Annesley, killed with his companion in the car, Frank Beevor, five days later above Lille, and to both I was to be eternally indebted, as events turned out, not only for stopping me walking into the Germans but for the first authenticated story of the battle of Ypres, then barely begun, and over which the pair had been flying for ten days. All night, in the saloon of the "Victoria," on which we crossed to England—they on a last lightning leave—the two yarned golden tales of the fight the while Lord Kitchener, for whom the vessel had been specially chartered in connection with his eventful conference on Cassel Hill with General Foch, slept sonorously above in Captain Carey's cabin, blissfully ignorant of the presence aboard of a war correspondent in full cry. More piquant and poetically, just, it was the anonymous publication of this story which led to my nomination as official correspondent for the Associated Newspapers when, a few days later and
having been won round at an expansive dinner-party, “K” agreed to the attachment of a limited few to the Army in France, among them Martin Donohoe, Perceval Phillips, Hugh Frazer, Prevost Battersby, Philip Gibbs. These gentlemen—except the last named, already busy on the first chapters of “Now It Can be Told”—would assemble twice weekly in the room of a Colonel Stuart in the War Office to debate such pertinent matters as the allotment of servants and underclothes and the acquiring of horses and binoculars, the conception being that one day soon we should go prancing about Flanders watching battles from hillocks.

That day, with its eventual title, never dawned—at least for one of the selected. After weeks of waiting and inactivity while Kitchener procrastinated, there came a ring one morning from Valentine Williams and the polite inquiry: “Can you go to Poland to-morrow?”

... Lastly the Russian campaign (wrapped in Lewis Waller’s fur coat, picked up off Leicester Square) the long journey out touching Lapland, the hopeless attempt to “cover” an 800-mile line constantly bursting into battle, the young battalions chanting hauntingly on their way to the slaughter, the nun-like nurses in their hospital trains, the gabardined Jews in their filthy hovels, the pestilence and famine and ravaged countryside, the months of icy trench warfare on tschi and cigarettes and culminating in the Russian advance on, and capture of, unpronounceable Przemyśl (“the noise made by the town when falling,” vide
“Punch”), and precipitate helter-skelter of retreat, the next minute, before all-conquering Mackensen. That had been my last story—the driving of a captured Mercedes car through that sauvé qui peut as the chauffeur of a Red Cross princess who in her day had been the darling of the Caucasus and Ellen Terry of her land...

In Kensington High Street, that Sunday evening, the immediate future loomed grey as grey could be beside such journalistic times as those, historic, moneyed, romantic, far, far away from office hours and news-editors. In the morning it would be, once more as of old, but sounding now how very, very different:

“I want you to go down to Balham, Tuohy, and interview this fellow here (clipping forward) on his collection of hairpins. Seems he...”

... Just then a newsboy came running out of the Underground into the calm and quiet High Street, kicking his contents-bill before him and shrilly crying to left and right; and there was a snapping end to reverie—

HAWKER SAVED!
CHAPTER II
APÉRITIF

NOW it is not the general intention in these pages to go over well-tilled ground. Hawker and Grieve were saved and everyone remembers the outburst of joy which followed upon their restoration to life, England's first real thrill of happiness perhaps, in five long years, the armistice having been more akin to national inebriation.

What is not so well known is that their return, or rather the reporting of it, impelled Lord Northcliffe to add one more unit to the White-headed Boys' Brigade in the person of the exceptionally modest narrator. The fact requires mention since it sensibly affected subsequent peregrinations.

Once recruited to this brigade of favourites of the Chief, one stood about as much ultimate chance of surviving in Carmelite House as an ailing wife in ancient Baghdad; indeed the only survivor through thick and thin who comes to mind must be G. Waru Price. But while it lasted, the going was lovely, highly-placed members of the staff swerving charmingly in the corridors to let you pass and no one bothering if you made such a little break as not to come back after luncheon; while, of course, all the plums would be yours in the way of "stories." Northcliffe usually signalled his new-found admiration in
three ways: by an invitation to luncheon at St. James's Place; by a present in cash or kind (in my case the works of G. W. Steevens), and by a laudatory paragraph in his daily message to the "Mail."

These bulletins of criticism and direction, of praise and abuse, and pinned up daily in the office by order, deserve more than passing mention. Had they been copied down over a number of years by some enterprising member of the staff they must have gone to form a Fleet Street saga hors concours, for, "shop" as they may have been and strictly personal, none the less they contained in succinct flashes all that the Master thought in the first brilliance of grapefruit and Perrier water, not only of his own terrible infant and of its competitors but, obliquely, of the passing show in general. The legend goes that one resourceful individual did actually begin collecting the "daily strafe" with a view to eventual publication but that, his project leaking out in the Carmelite whispering galleries, he was given the shortest of short shrifts after being copiously instructed by the Master himself in the origin and record of his ancestors. I only know, for certain, that these bulletins are literature lost to England. It was, of course, the perverse woman in Northciffe and his idea of keeping the whole house in conflict, divide and rule, that decreed the messages should be exposed to public view, since any normally constituted man would have weighed the good they did against the harm and found it wanting. For example, it would be quite a common thing to arrive in the morning and find some editorial functionary grimly sitting beneath a notice—the
dread morning bulletin—setting forth that, he, Mr. Snooks, was a man of the smallest intellect going by his handling of such-and-such story, that it was easily to be seen that he had had the sketchiest of educations, and that he had better live somewhere else than Ball's Pond End in future if he desired to retain his position on the paper. How laced by that, to generate the necessary respect for Mr. Snooks? Such would be the perpetual dilemma into which these bulletins cast conscientious journalists, and even office boys.

A year or so before the end, when the messages had taken on frankly impossible proportions, being directed, as often as not, against the most influential figures on the paper, the "daily strafe" came to be abridged and amended out of all recognition, ultimately to cease entirely, though its author is said to have kept on dictating imaginary criticisms almost to the day of his death.

Not many days after my incorporation in the W.B.B., silk hatted days spent in describing events of that thrilling first London season after the war when hourly the heart of England regained a steadier beat, I had reached the entrée stage at a weekly house dinner at the Club when a breathless boy arrived with ten pounds, a taxi-cab and orders for me to take the very next train for Scotland, leaving Euston in ten minutes. The Germans had sunk their fleet.

It is the greatest of pities that journalism has not yet reached the stage where one can tell the truth.

Having got up to Scapa days too late to be of any service in reporting the actual sinkings by von
Reuter’s merry men, I arrived back in London nevertheless, with news almost equally arresting, namely that the German sailors had scuttled their fleet with the full permission, not to say encouragement and connivance of the Royal Navy. The story, which I believed then, and do still, developed through one of those accidental and gratifying journalistic situations—two naval officers chatting merrily in the train on their way down to London on leave, ignorant of the profession of their civilian fellow-passenger and unsuspicuous of his conversational ‘leads.’ Perhaps the Navy was not as silent as it should have been, perhaps the wine of leave was working, but anyway this was what was said:

"Why of course we knew all about it—have known it was coming off for months. Quite apart from the damn politicians who wanted them sunk out at sea, do you think we were keen about staying on in that God-forsaken hole guarding these blighters indefinitely? And the Huns? Do you think they were keen about staying there? They knew jolly well that if they sank themselves they’d be home in Germany within a month so we just let them go to it. Don’t know if the Government got busying urging on. Don’t know anything about that. All I know is that old Fritz sank himself by appointment. Why, there was even a special operation order out “in the event of the enemy scuttling his ships.” With all the dispositions taken to save life but none to save the bally ships. Three days before the sinking we had to go through a kind of rehearsal. Do you think we couldn’t have stopped the old beggar had we
seriously wanted to? Great Scott! there were a
dozen ways—just playing round with the sea
cocks for instance even if guarding them would
have been too much sweat! Good show Fritz
made of it too! We catered for far more than
forty corpses."

Not a word of which, however one offered to trim
it, could be urged into the light of day; instead, the
expression in print of dignified amaze at allied hints
of perfidy . . . how could they really think of such a
thing in Paris and Rome, they must be mad, etc.

Things now gathered momentum in the civilian
restart we spoke about.

The Peace Procession writ, London zenith for the
writer, some days after. On coming into the office five
minutes late, the News-Editor first spoke intently
about the five minutes, then said:

"Do you know anything about Prohibition?"
"No."

"Well, go and read up the stuff from New York
in "The Times" for the last day or two. Here's
what the Chief has to say about it."

I read in the moring message:

Watch prohibition. These damned Yanks will
be drying us up before we know where we are.

Intrigued by which, and having duly perused
"The Times" file, I was presently ready to return to
my immediate chief, anxious for his counsel and
guidance. But Mr. X., I fear, was not over com-
municative that morning; for all he said in response
was: "Well, go out and see what you can dig up
about it."
Now here was a tall order. To try and dig up something about something of which nothing was known. How to begin? Perplexed, I strolled up Whitefriars Street when, of a sudden, there flashed up one of those thoughts of a lifetime. This story was about drink. Therefore the best thing to do was to go and have one.

And so it came about that in the Cheshire Cheese, two minutes later, I was raising a gin and bitters to Polly the barmaid, and saying, for no particular reason other than the friendliness of the noonday hour: "Well, cheerio, Polly! We'll be losing this some day if we're not careful!" a statement which, on a million mornings, would have provoked the retort: "What's wrong with you this morning, funny-face?" yet which this million and first caused Polly sharply to look up and say:

"What's that? What's that about losing the drink? Funny you should say that. There was some old fool... Yankee... in here yesterday bleating about that—said in America they couldn't get anything more to drink and that soon it will be the same... don't get excited... look, you are orful always upsetting things... 'e signed Dr. Johnson's book over there... run along and see for yourself—hie! I want another gin, funny old devil?"

That was how the Prohibition Movement in Britain came to be discovered and I insist that if, as one F. A. Mackenzie says in a book on the subject, one day the Drys of England erect a monument to the writer for having advertised them so, that there
be at least a bas relief of Polly pouring out that gin and bitters.

For Dr. Johnson's book said, under the previous day's signatures:

W. E. Johnson, The American Issue, 69 Fleet Street

—and, bounding, I was across the road and upstairs in the presence of him who was to become world-renowned.

Yet in the first minutes of discovery, even if Johnson admitted to being an agent, domiciled in England, of the U.S. Anti-Saloon League, the story had not by a long way taken on the dimensions it was destined to assume next morning. That came about quite accidentally through Mr. Johnson receiving, while talking dull statistics, and opening, and spreading out before him, a copy of the "Kansas City Star." For right across the first page of that estimable publication, in inch-high headlines stretching from corner to corner, ran the joyous line:

PUSSYFOOT JOHNSON TO DRY UP JOHN BULL

"Pussyfoot?" Pussyfoot John... P'ssyfoot. Pussyfoot! But ye gods, what a scrumptious word! Pussyfoot. What on earth could it mean?

I stared down at the paper, then at Johnson beside me, down and up several times. At last I said, pointing to the headline:

"What's that?"

"That's this baby," said Pussyfoot Johnson; and thus was a new world character born, by Gin... and Polly.
CHAPTER III
PUSSYFOOTING

For the next six months, warming to an adventure such as only journalism holds, I pussy-footed. As far afield in fact as San Francisco.

The immediate effect of publicity had been twofold; a distinct rise in the circulation of the paper and in the demand for advertisement space, result of understandable enthusiasm on the part of the Trade; and a positive deluge of invitations from well-known brands and brews to come and sample them—in fact it would have been easy for me, but for the dictates of professional etiquette, to have spent most of that summer wining with Sandeman and swimming with Bass, dining with Gordon, and weekending with Haig, fishing with Guinness and golfing with Johnny Walker. On the reverse side, kindred invitations to high teas and hot milk gambols steemed in from temperance bodies, ever anxious to show what good fellows they were, and some of these, with my friend Pussyfoot, I attended.

Looking back, what rollicking beanos they were; but what abandon.

"Now Mr. Reporter, you see we aren't such poor specimens after all! Are we, Mr. Johnson? Ha-ha-ha! We have plenty of fun in our own way, don't we?" (Over goes the tea-pot) "Have one
of our cream puffs, Mr. Reporter? No? Well p'raps you'd prefer a kipper? You don't really need rum to have a good time, you know. Look at us!" (bang goes the milk jug.)

Look at us! That was, I thought, just where so many of these over-eating ones revealed their most characteristic trait; indeed where prohibitionists in general do.

Still, not for a moment was I permitted to wax serious in my professional saunterings. Once, defaulting, a senior came down like the proverbial cargo of bricks:

"Guy them! Guy them, man! Don't argue with them. They're not worth it!"

Northcliffe, on the other hand, kept ringing up and worrying. The principal thing to him was to demonstrate that unlimited and camouflaged American dollars might easily lie behind this, on the surface, easy-going, good-natured, and innocent-looking movement, that money could effect most things in the long run, and that John Bull, with laughter holding both his sides, had not been sufficiently prodded into alertness. I agreed, chancing to add that such however was not my immediate chief's reading of the situation, that he considered we should take up the invitations of the Trade.

"What?" screamed N.; "and have them say my papers are in the pay of the brewers?" And forthwith, seizing the telephone, he did one of those infernal impulsive things which cumulatively must have contributed much to the general malaise Carmelite House suffered from at this stage. It was the News-Editor who got it—he was quite justified
in thinking I had been carrying tales—and one could have kicked Northcliffe there and then! However, kicking one’s proprietor but seldom leading to concrete advancement, I refrained, and was soon enjoying Natives and Chablis with him instead. Incidentally, it was at this luncheon that another chance remark of mine had unexpected and distressing consequences. It should be understood that at this time my head was almost completely white, that Pio Nono himself could scarcely have wished for greater infallibility.

“‘There’s something wrong inside on my papers,’” wailed N.

“Perhaps the inside men have been inside too long,” I threw off lightly, gobbling down another oyster.

N. thought a moment, then: “‘that’s perfectly true! You’ve put your finger on it! I’ll see to it. X., Y. and Z. have got to travel... got to broaden their minds! They’ve never been nearer the Continent than the Skylark!’”

And in the result three or four able citizens, accustomed to catching their trains to the minute each morning and to leading lives of the most sheltered and stable outer-radius regularity, were wrenched from their lawn-mowers and dispersed across the face of a cruel continent to broaden their minds. For months and months these poor exiles wandered, broadening their minds in the wilds of Poland and the depths of Serbia, and it was interesting to one of the travelling fraternity to see how soon they lost perspective, most vital requisite of the international correspondent. For they sent home articles, strange
articles, now and then, one devoting himself on his odyssey, almost exclusively to the price of market produce in Central Europe—I recall distinctly reading a spirited little piece about the cost of eggs in Zagreb—while a second, on the occasion of a railway strike on the P.L.M. inconveniencing Rivicrivitors for a few days, demanded the immediate dispatch of a battleship by the British Government to take the stranded ones home!

... However. Presently, having exhausted the situation at home, I crossed to Copenhagen, partly after Pussyfoot, who had left London on the very morning of his presentation to the British public, partly to see Schleswig-Holstein come back to Denmark. Johnson, ignorant of the English mentality, I found overjoyed at the whole business.

"Great stuff, boy!" was his greeting, "publicity's the breath of life for us workers in the Cause." A large-sized Pickwick, Johnson was just a rough-cut, cheery adventurer turned reformer for purely business reasons and more than welcome, as a "human" and the possessor of red blood, in the confines of a largely anemic fold. I recall begging leave to doubt if he really had desired all this hullabaloo at such an early stage—why, if that were so, had he not made his presence known to the newspaper offices all around him in Fleet Street? In his own country all had been quiet, ever so quiet work for years and years before the Prohibitionists, feeling themselves at last entrenched across a nation, came out and announced themselves, and such, I have no doubt in my mind, was to have been the strategy in England too. But the day the word "Pussyfoot" passed into
the language that principal "dry" weapon, surprise, was neutralized in England, and if Johnson did not realize it then, in Denmark, he probably does to-day. Another point: oft-times people asked: "but what can these Yanks care, one way or the other, whether we are drunk or sober?" The answer is that the Anti-Saloon League saw from the very first that there could never be such a thing as enforcement of the "dry" law in the United States so long as Scotch whisky and kindred liquors dear to the American palate continued to be manufactured on this side; in other words the presence of the League's agents in the United Kingdom was, and presumably still is, much on a par with the presence here of foreign Communist agitators, since both parties intrude primarily in order to sustain domestic legislation in their own countries.

Dear, delightful little Denmark proved a "study" in the drink line. I love the Danes. I believe there is more natural happiness in Denmark than in any other country in the world. And that the Danish is the only real democracy. But that must not stop my suggesting that possibly one drinks too much there. Even in the theatres there are small electrically lit shelves let into the stall in front so that you may enjoy the national beverage, direct action Akvavit, during the performance. But I shall not risk another syllable that might offend the Danes as once before I stupidly did in writing of them as the greatest eaters of mankind. The Danes have a national ideal, "health and good cheer," and it does one good to watch them evolve it.

I have lived amongst them at various times, once
in a flat honoured in the past, according to a plaque, by Edmund Gosse, and have always marveled at the success of their philosophy of love, laughter and song mingled with masses of hygiene and enough work but no more. If you can find a Dane in his office at ten seconds after six in the evening you are lucky! The Danes work eight hours in order to play eight hours and sleep a like period and who shall say they are wrong, the most contented and carefree, healthiest and happiest people in Europe or out of it? Often I used to lunch in a little fish restaurant on Gammelstrand beside the man who had just polished my shoes and just as well-dressed and at his ease was he as anyone else in the room, Yes, they have solved things in Denmark; the whole country is somehow "friends." Take a party given one evening out on the Oresund by a former Turkish Ambassador to Germany during the war. The villa, next door to Queen Alexandra's, was a dreamy affair with a lawn running down to the water's edge and there were present, besides our host: the First Secretary of the U.S. Embassy, a schoolmistress, the local lobster man, a Danish colonel, his wife and flapper daughter, the British Commercial Attaché, two ballet dancers, a Cabinet Minister, the Turk's stenographer, the girl cashier of the Hotel d'Angleterre, and a young local married Royalty sans husband. Yet with this mixed grill the evening went with a rare verve and swing, to terminate, if I recollect aright, with a swim at dawn in the Oresund in which all the party joined and in the costume of the country, save Mr. Turk. For they do those things in Scandinavia, as in
the Crimea, without thinking twice about them.

Back in England, Lord N. sent for me.

Whether Lady N. ever thrilled much over the telephone when her Lord would announce that he was bringing one of his young men along to lunch, is open to question. Usually, however, there would be some buffer present to neutralize too much "shop"—as for instance, Mr. Hughes of Australia who, on this occasion, very deaf and very loud-voiced, did not cease haranguing the table from the hors d'oeuvres to the coffee on Labour troubles down under, a charming domestic touch being added by young Mrs. Hughes having to withdraw to attend to her infant's lunch meanwhile.

Over a cigar in his library Lord N. began by inquiring what office bonus had been forthcoming for the discovery of Pussyfoot. I answered ten pounds.

"Well, here's forty more" (promptly scribbling that amount on the back of an envelope). His generosity was quite out of the ordinary always. During the war he sent out cheque after cheque to his "young men" overseas and on his last passage through New York I learnt that he had no less than eighteen "pensioners" in America alone.

"Now we'll get down to business," he went on.

"I want you to go to the United States and give, in a series of articles, the germ and growth of the Prohibition movement. Go right down to bedrock. We've had enough fooling. How soon can you get away?"

It was rather an awkward moment. That very morning I had been offered the editorship of a leading Sunday paper, and was toying with the
idea of accepting . . . but now . . . this chance of seeing America . . . and not a second's hesitation possible either! . . .

Well, the Wanderlust won and within a couple of days I had sailed.

I regret to say that the voyage across, and subsequent pussyfooting through America, were distinctly "wet." No sooner did people, in ship or train, city or small-town, learn the object of my mission than it would be a signal for liquid refreshment; in New York, in fact, all with whom I came in contact seemed to take a positive pride and delight in showing how Prohibition did not work, making it important for an investigator not to get a wrong perspective for the country as a whole. Soon, too, the entirely obscure journalist of Europe became inflated, after the manner of the country, into quite a visiting personage, being called upon to make virgin public addresses at clubs and banquets, usually on Pussyfoot, though I also spoke on the Prince of Wales, who had come to town for a second, and—heaven knows why—on women spies in the war. It just amounted to this: if you had a yarn to spin, plus certain credentials, you were good for a talk at any time with American citizens, no matter if ambassadors or cabinet ministers were also on the list of speakers. And, of course, impressions had to be forthcoming in print of American girls, of the billion dollar skyline and of President Wilson.

Poor Wilson! He was then laid out by paralysis, friendless and alone, repudiated and deserted, and well do I remember pacing up and down outside the White House one bleak December day wondering
was it possible that within a stone’s throw lay the Cæsar of London and Rome and Paris of less than a year before! He who had scaled the dizziest heights in history might have been dead, worse, should have been, for he was in the way.

Of the American girl it was more difficult to write, so loftily hirs concours have the males of the species elevated her. Though, verily, a stunning creature she is. The facial revue-of-all-nations variation, Russian, Irish, Italian, Jewish, German, Scandinavian, yet all bearing an unmistakable common imprint, the sense of line and gaiety of colour displayed, the clean-limbed freshness and hygiene suggested, the Eastern undulation produced by corsetless waists and low-heeled shoes, the knack of doing the most with hair and figure, eyes and ankles, the easy carriage, the self-reliance and zest for life conveyed, the type, all its own, the looks, all their own... yes, something new and definite in women and fair, so fair to look upon.

Perhaps, though, one admired them most at a distance. At closer quarters certain blemishes tended to develop. Eyes seemed unnecessarily hard and voices none too soothing. There was an absence too, of illusion, of subtlety... everything in the shop window... and the negation of all repose, a permanent restlessness of mind and body, a ceaseless hunt after "emotions" that jarred as did a taken-for-granted condescension towards men, an imperious command to be entertained. Nor did they gain in "sex-appeal"—vile term—these girls of the future, by a tendency to parade their sophistication in the matter, by a freely immodest dissection
of "complexes" and "inhibitions" (by talking, as it were, the whole hog). American virginity, indeed, all too often appeared as a strangely unhealthy, hothouse affair, in which minds had ventured everywhere if bodies had not followed. Yet if looks and dollars and pedestals seemed to bring with them a disconcerting measure of emptiness, restlessness and sexlessness, as a visitor I kept quiet about it. More than that, throughout my stay (except once, in Washington, when, mistaking a girl's scrutiny I spoke to her and had to run for my life), I scrupulously observed the several curious laws and codes and barriers evolved for the protection of these emancipated women, and behind which they sought shelter, as had they been residents of a famed Ionian isle. Thus there was even a ban on "glad eyes" with vice squads, trained in the detection of game, circulating to enforce the law, one effect of which, I thought, was to make most of the men on Fifth Avenue look dead straight ahead of them while the protected ones sought in vain to capture a masculine glance, if not of quickening interest, at least of common or garden admiration.

But we wander, and perilously.

Before setting out across the American Continent, I had the experience of meeting in New York one of the least attractive people it has been my lot to encounter anywhere. This was William E. Anderson, head of the New York State branch of the Anti-Saloon League and "Emperor of Prohibition." Young and _a giant_ in stature, with sloping shoulders, small head, pink cheeks, little brown eyes and a loose flabby mouth, Anderson
received me on the tenth floor of his skyscraper seated beside a conspicuous glass tank of filtered water. In his every word and movement one sensed the professional reformer who gets to the front rank to-day, insufficiently educated, self-confident and loud-spoken, drawing a princely salary in return for broadcasting propaganda of ignorance and hysteria. As for sustaining an intelligent conversation with this man it was out of the question: he merely bellowed sweeping generalities and reeled off "treated" figures the while he emitted clouds of cigar smoke and donned the smile of an amused benevolence towards his poor, misguided questioner. As an instance, I happened to remark that surely it was inconceivable, as I had heard, that his organization was spreading the information that Christ had drunk grapejuice at Cana.

"Say, sonny," was Anderson's reply, "you're not really worrying about what Jesus" (bows his head) "consumed at Cana! What you're worrying about is your cocktail, eh? Ha ha ha!"

What to do with such people? Pass on, I suppose, and pray hard for the return of some really nice and intelligent reformer like Nero....

I have heard of Anderson once since, and though it be not one of my diverse failings to rejoice in other people's misfortunes, I confess that when I read this man had been arrested for irregularities in his accounts and sentenced to a term in Sing Sing, I called for another bock at the Dome.

In prison Anderson wrote a book called "Put By Bars behind Bars." He was much feted by his fellow Drys on his exit, and has been no doubt
thoroughly re-instated by them to-day. Personally, I wish I had never met the man since the impression he made upon me must always, I fear, colour my writings on this subject. Since, after all, one can scarcely generate much respect or sympathy for a movement the ramifications of which necessitated the employment at the very top of such an one as W. E. Anderson.

The real work of the tour was done in the "one-horse" town of Westerville, Ohio, centre of the World Prohibition Movement. Here, during a freezing Christmas week, I sought to get right down to the origin of Prohibition and to follow up its growth by studying endless books of reference and files, brochures and charts, and coloured prints of human insides; a musty business though far from dull since every little while a fresh starshell of enlightenment would burst o'er the American scene. The World Leader, Ernest Cherrington, I found much the same rough and blustering type as Anderson and my one local amusement used to consist in drawing him out. Once, losing his temper, he thundered: "By God, man, aren't I red-blooded enough for you?" To withdraw the oath, humbly and fearing quotation, a moment later, on my drawing his attention to it. On another occasion I approached him with a placard launching a great, new, nation-wide Lincoln Legion of Drys.

"Really, Mr. Cherrington, this is too much!"

"What's that, sonny?"

"Well is the following true: that on receiving a report that General Grant was drinking too much
whisky during the Civil War Lincoln said 'I wish I knew what brand he took. I'd send it to my other generals.'"

"Say, boy, but that's all historical stuff!"

"Precisely. So why make out Lincoln a dry? Would you have sent a specific cocktail over to Pershing had you heard he needed it?"

"Well, now, that's funny!"

And so on. One could really take offence at nothing. It was all so childish.

On New Year's Day, duly weighed down with material, I moved on my inky way to Chicago becoming more convinced as I progressed that the whole matter of stimulant was closely related to climate and nationality, and that America's trouble was that she had all climates and all nationalities. As an illustration, I was once called upon to arrest two "Jocks" for drunkenness in Venice. I had come over from Treviso on a day's leave—it was in the last weeks of the war—and found our Highland laddies stretched out beneath the Campanile and with the natives betraying a highly forward desire to know more about their kilts.

"What have they been having?" I asked of the Italian military police

"Just a Lasco of Chianti, that is all. That is what amazes us!"

Yet it needn't have. For had I taken any two of those Italian soldiers standing round and given them a double Scotch apiece (pre-war) they'd have probably been in just the same plight as those two excellent Scotties beneath the Campanile.

Evidence of this one found in the sober manner
in which the French of Quebec province stick to their wine though able to purchase spirits without difficulty from government stores. In Montreal, Stephen Leacock proved a refreshing commentator on the subject of my journeyings, as did also the venerable Colonel Sam who placed a parlour car of the C.P.R. at my disposal for the five-day stretch to Vancouver, duly enlivened by the presence on the train of an English pantomime company playing “Aladdin.” A fellow passenger, a monstrous clever fellow, further gingered up the tedium of three thousand miles of snow by holding periodical readings of that no doubt, in certain circles, highly useful and, any way, vastly entertaining volume, then greatly in vogue “Married Love” or, as our reader preferred to call it, “She Stopes to Conquer.”

“Were I a millionaire,” proclaimed our monstrous clever friend, “I should buy thousands and thousands of copies and drop them to-night through the letter-boxes of every house in Medicine Hat” (we were passing that town). “And then in a year’s time return to a town that voted the world was good.” At a later stage, in Vancouver, his enthusiasm was to be somewhat stemmed. Upstairs, in the C.P.R. Hotel, we had assembled a distinguished company, including the local law officers, and Montreal’s noble gift of “Royal Scotch Cream” was being finally drained, when the monstrous clever one suddenly drew out his pet volume and began a reading. For some time all went well, then, of a sudden, a rather important local personage banged down his glass, burst into a tirade of indignation, and stumped out of the room.
Next morning, in the entrance hall, someone in front dropped a book. It was—well, you can tell. And its owner—well, you know who he was too!

San Francisco I was unfortunate enough to strike in no mood for discussing Prohibition. The census was on and with it what was called a "Birth Drive" that 'Frisco might not—oh, shocking calamity—have to give place to Los Angeles by one or two pink infants in the nation-wide returns. By midnight these had to be in, and on arrival I gathered that Los Angeles was leading by a baby or two which accounted for the state of the good San Franciscans, feverishly snatching up newspapers containing, I suppose, the latest bulletins from the City's maternity homes. Nor was it any laughing matter, this decline of 'Frisco's population, as I was very soon personally to discover. Desiring to visit the scene of the catastrophe of 1906, I asked the trolley-car conductor kindly to put me down "where the earthquake was."

"There ain't been no earthquake here!" he thundered back.

Confounded, I said but surely there had been an—

"There ain't been no earthquake here!" he thundered again. "You mean the fire!"

You see, the earthquake has caused a decline in the city's population, so never mention it if you should visit San Francisco. Always say fire.

P.S.—By the way, San Francisco won that Birth Drive by a short baby.
CHAPTER IV
THE FOUR HORSEMEN OF THE HYPOCRISY

Take any social custom or institution, concentrate upon it, turn it this way and that, turn it inside out and back again, ignore entirely the beneficial effects upon the community of the said custom or institution, as manifested in your analysis, and what is the residue?

Evil.

Take any social habit or institution you like. Take fashion and finery (though religion might well afford a simpler demonstration).

Supposing some powerful agency arose and assailed this main delight of Woman and, ignoring entirely its purely natural source of origin, its efficacy in furthering the union sacrée of the species and the rare human happiness afforded by fine feathers; supposing some powerful agency set about proving with the aid of statistics, post-ars, generalizations and all the rest of the devices of modern propaganda, that finery was the live axle of immorality, that it was the greatest source of extravagance and waste in the world to-day and that more women had come to perdition in its pursuit than through any other cause?

One can almost see the great campaign in being . . .
The leaflets giving shoplifting figures; the hoarding evidence of scientists pointing to a stricter morality among the nude of Asia than in South Kensington; nauseating platform details of convent nuns lured into marriage à la mode with jaded coques... à la mode, the magnet.

And the films that could be released! Depicting the steady decline of Billie from milliner's assistant to magnate's mistress. All through love of finery. Or the young wife's neglect of home and children, her own semi-starvation diet, in order to buy a costume and outshine her neighbour.

And the statistics. Were ever such propaganda figures known?

"Last year four hundred and eighty-seven million pounds sterling were spent in the United Kingdom on women's clothes. It is estimated that the male population of the country did not spend more than thirty million sterling on dress.

"When is this appalling waste to stop?"

Telling work, too, could be done in the poster line.

"Why do girls take the first downward step?"

"To get clothes."

(Poster of poorly-clad girl looking into shop window full of finery.)

Some of the principal campaigners against fashion would, of course, be frumps and these might be relied upon to pour out invective and figures in the weekly campaign sheet "Britannia," a feature of which would be "Sirens of History,"
with special reference to their besetting sin, a craving for finery.

In the theatres and music halls, between the acts, the words of the Great would be thrown on the screen:

"Have you stopped to think what some of the greatest men in history have said about female vanity and its moral and economic effect upon the race? Rousseau, Darwin, Schopenhauer?"

(Follow quotations.)

Modern methods ... modern methods ... Here comes a lecturer from Chicago.

"The women of Chicago think of nothing else but clothes, jewellery and cosmetics. They become mesmerised by staring in shop windows and talk of nothing else but finery. More serious than the waste entailed is the peril of the race becoming woolly-brained."

And there would come spellbinders galore.

"I once knew a sweet woman. It was out Wyoming way. She had never done any harm to anyone, as sweet a woman as you could wish to know. Had she remained in her modest hometown all might have been well, this terrible thing might never have happened. But, alas, that was not to be. One day there came a godless woman from that godless city New York and she said to the poor, sweet child: 'Gee, but you're some babe. Quit that hen covering and hitch on to me!"

Four major factors or forces contributed to the saddling of Prohibition, by the above system, upon the United States—the Hysteria of the citizenry,
the national mania for Efficiency, the pursuit of the Dollar, and Self-Righteousness, still rides all from coast to coast across that Continent to-day.

Horseman Number One, Hysteria, was easily enough set in motion. There is something about the very air of North America, to start with, which over-energizes with the inevitable reaction towards "nerves." Then there is a wide-spread ignorance, "hick" and urban, to play upon if we bear in mind that the little knowledge imparted by the popular newspaper of to-day is decidedly a dangerous thing. And I have already referred to the craving of American womanhood to be "emotionalized." Any new movement, any new cult, *anything to get us out of ourselves* (for there is precious little inner life in America) "goes," driving calm from the land. Throw in the non-human pressure under which Americans live and remember the burnings of Salem and you have some, at least, of the main ingredients conducive to Hysteria.

Why ever, many will say, indict Efficiency and dub that the Second Horseman? Well, succinctly, part of what happened across the Atlantic was this: the Anti-Saloon League went to all the employers of labour, big and small but chiefly big, throughout the country, and said to them: "If you help us to put Prohibition over we'll guarantee you from seven to ten per cent greater efficiency from your workmen; that much greater output for the same salaries that you are paying them to-day." And your kings of industry said "bully," some honestly believing Prohibition might do good, as viewed strictly in the material sense, the majority acting
more as so many slave-drivers of white people. If the Second Horseman be allowed to continue his mad career unchecked, sowing a de-humanizing, Robot-like uniformity east and west, who knows that we may not, in actuality, be veering imperceptibly back to a real Monkeyville since apes have rarely been known to drink, have they, even in moderation?

To get Horseman Number Three going hell-for-leather our Pussyfoot protagonists had an easy task. One might have lightly called this Rider "Greed" or "Avarice" yet neither would have been fair; the American is neither greedy nor avaricious but apt to be freehanded within limits. On the other hand he has an almost childish itching to be rolling up dollar bills and putting them in his wallet and this the Prohibitionists played on. For example, they went to a candy store adjacent to a liquor dealer and said "help us to get rid of that liquor store next door and your receipts will go up fifty per cent." Dozens, hundreds, of trades and businesses stood to gain, some slightly, others more advantageously (think it over) by the exit of liquor and they all swarmed in, like vultures, to swat the Demon Rum out of competition and existence. And lo, bank rolls grew fatter and there was joy in Milktown.

And so to Horseman Number Four which might also have been termed, but not so truly, Intolerance.

Need much be said?

No stranger God in the history of the world has ever arisen than the national Deity enthroned
in the United States to-day, His House consisting of a gymnasium, a kinema hall, babies' recreation room, listening-in auditorium, music-hall stage, social room, library, and oh—a church, a plain, austere affair, getting higher and higher up the floors of a skyscraper, almost the one remaining celestial touch about it. Thither shalt thou elevate thyself to hear the word, as I did once, to listen to a pastor jettison the League of Nations, in between a lecture on Samoa by a Colonel and a very pretty duet by two sisters. What cannot a Church, thus equipped, achieve? What gospel can it not afford to "put across," provided the name of the Dcity be repeated often enough in its connection?

"First get the Churches" had all along been the slogan of the Prohibitionists, and get them they did and with the result that ever after all was done in the name of the Lord, and righteousness became a "dry" monopoly ad majorem Stiggins gloriam.

All in all, the most definite and abiding result of Prohibition has been the birth and inauguration of what may be termed the New Bar.

Throughout the United States, in cities as in hamlets, the Drug Store is to-day the social centre and meeting-place of the sexes, and I more than once computed that it dispenses a round half-dozen commodities each one of which, if indulged to excess, may be calculated to work as pernicious an effect as liquor taken likewise. I refer to ice cream soda, demolishing the digestion. Patent foods and medicines to which Americans have become slaves. Candy, the dentist's best friend. Drugs, the worst masquerading under harmless
camouflage apppellations (a certain brand of aspirin taken with Coco-cola, and beloved by "dry" women, can give a rare "kick"). Cigars, smoked at the rate of ten or twelve a day, and cigarettes, puffed and inhaled by the women, in proportion. Criminal literature of the "Two-Gun Dick" order.

But I have drawn out this threadworn subject much longer than it merited. For is there really any danger of our Horse-men turning amphibious and swimming the Atlantic? Who will not agree, on perusing this:

"The ladies abandon sobriety and are seen to roll about in intoxication. After dinner the representation of Solomon, his temple, and the coming of the Queen of Sheba was made or better, was meant to have been made. The lady that did play the Queen's part did carry most precious gifts to both their Majesties [of Denmark, who were visiting James I] but forgetting the steps arising to the canopy did overset her casket into his Danish Majesty's lap and fell at his feet though I rather think that it was on his face. Much was the hurry and confusion—clothes and napkins were at hand to make all clean. His Majesty then got up and would dance with the Queen of Sheba but he fell down and humbled before her and was carried to his inner chamber and laid on a bed of state"—

who, on perusing the above, and comparing it with the extreme dignity of a modern Court, will deny that we are making progress of our own sweet selves?
CHAPTER V
INCOMPATIRILITY OF EXPENSES

IT is surprising, in view of the dissemination of instruction in other directions, that no one has yet formulated a sub-course in journalism entitled "The Art of Expenses."

The synthetic young gentlemen to whom we are gradually handing down our typewriters, the Delanes and Ward Prices of to-morrow, are having everything else done for them in advance, are being crammed and taught how to succeed—like that—so why indeed not board over this further Fleet Street pitfall for them?

There would be heads and sub-heads: "How to make a bit," "When to stand firm," "Camouflage terms for expenditure," "What not to charge," etc. Never, for example, and no matter in what good journalistic cause they may have been purchased, should the young man who really wishes to get on charge up articles of feminine apparel on his expenses sheet, such as:

Gown for Mdlle. Yvonne Charpentier, Brussels . . . £10.

Such an item, in all candour and innocence, once figured in an account of the writer's at the commencement of the war, only to bring down the Aberdonian ire of Andrew Caird, in charge of the Carmelite purse-strings—
"But, Mr. Caird, there's going to be a siege of Brussels and this girl is staying there so I thought it would be a great thing if she kept a diary which we could publish later. So I told her to go and get a . . ."

"Look you here, young man" (deletes the item with thick blue pencil), "we don't mind paying for your wine round Europe, but we're not going to pay for your wimmin!"

So that on my return from "pussyfooting" in the United States, after an expensive trip, I was not wholly surprised to find myself in A. C.'s bad books again.

The tour, running into four months and stretching to the Californian coast, had been a lively and costly affair with every editor along the way trying to prove the dewy "wetness" of his land, hospitality that had, within limits, to be returned.

One colleague, I well recall, and fellow-traveller across the dizzy mountains of the West, was assailed by a most novel form of delusion as the result of his libations, proceeding, propped up in a corner of our parlour car, to edit an imaginary newspaper with the darkie train attendants as his reporters. With the various local sheets spread out before him, and scissors in hand, our editor, a fellow of infinite yeast, would "spot" a story, then press the bell, for a quaking coon to appear in the doorway, eyes rolling in pained expectation.

"Go out, you splendid fellow" (this wasn't exactly what was said but there are the same number of syllables), "and get me the low-down on this murder story. Look snappy!"
INCOMPATIBILITY OF EXPENSES

Beseechingly the darkie would look across at me, then, at a nod, tiptoe gently from the Presence. Meanwhile my job was the exceedingly difficult one, considering we were travelling at sixty miles an hour and that each local newspaper that I ran out and bought viewed the world and its happenings in different perspective, of seeing that “we were not being beaten.”

... What with the “Rocky Gazette” and kindred happenings, it had been a costly tour of investigation; none the less, in the certainty of having sent home some 30,000 words, “bright and cheerful” was the keynote of my reporting back to headquarters.

Alas!

“Mon,” quoth the self-same Caird, now a knight of finance, “I’ve been coontin’ up the stuff we’ve published o’ yours and I find we’re payin’ ye at the rate of a poond a line. *Shakespeare-r-re neve-r-r got that!*”

Hardly a line of all that research into the origin and cause of Prohibition had appeared.

In passing, one may look to the vessel in which I returned for the elucidation of perhaps the greatest mystery every recorded of the London theatre.

Towards the end of a voyage it is customary, as is well known, to organize a concert in behalf of the Seamen’s and Firemen’s Charities and to this passengers invariably lend such talent, amateur or professional, as they may be lucky enough to possess. On the voyage in question the bright particular “star” of the ship was Laurette Taylor and naturally, in making up his list of artists, the Captain first
of all craved the assistance of Peg the well-beloved. Judge of his surprise when she replied:

"No, I'll not appear. Nor shall I allow any of my Company to. We're resting after a hard season and I don't see why actors and actresses should always be made to work in this way."

In vain the Captain sought to point out that all the Greatest, from Caruso down, had lent their support to the charity in question. No! Laurette remained adamant; ultimately however, to relent this much:

"I'll tell you what I'll do. At the next table to me in the dining-room is a carpet dealer. That's his business—carpet dealing. Very well. My business is singing and acting. If you get him to sell a rug or a carpet for the benefit of the Seamen's Charities, I'll sing or act. That's fair enough."

An ingenious proposal which, however, could only lead to further deadlock and with the result that the concert came and went, a "frost," without Laurette's co-operation.

Two days later, at Liverpool, and as she was leaving the ship, a fireman pressed a scrap of paper into Laurette's hand. It merely said: "You will regret what you did," or words to that effect.

And regret it I am afraid she did, and very soon, for they were men of the Firemen's Union, ten of them, who, a week or two later, ruined the opening night of "One Night In Rome" at the Garrick.

While on the subject of this play, and for the
benefit of such as are interested in thought transference and telepathy, I may be permitted to relate a remarkable enough personal happening:

On the night of the production (cf which I stood in entire ignorance, being then stationed in Paris) I was sent to Rheims to write about distress in the champagne fields and all that night had a succession of dreams representing minutely, even to the throwing of coins on to the stage, what actually was transpiring at the Garrick. Knowing someone in the cast, I next morning sat down—still at Rheims—and wrote a humorous account of it all . . . to find, to my dumbfounded amazement, on my return to Paris in the evening, that what I had dreamt had happened. Proof of this story lies in the time of posting, from Rheims, of my letter, which I believe Miss Taylor keeps as a curiosity—though it was not to her that I sent it.

But we digress . . .

With the Shakespearian lineage figure rippling down cloisters, one more White-headed Boy’s hair had begun to show, at the temples, just a tinge of a return to its normal hue. The process was to be short but gay.

In May, 1920, under the headline “Saint Joan” there appeared a charming little piece from my pen in which I yearned to be with the pilgrims, at Domrémy, Rheims, and Rome:

“How I should love to be to-night at Baudricourt . . .”

“Go,” telegraphed Northcliffe, and without the slightest regard for the Baudricourt train service. Still, I managed to pick them up, the pilgrims, at
Orléans, and in time, thank my stars, to witness a scene such as is not reproduced in every era.

Picture the Square at Orléans, at midnight. In the centre, Joan, on a prancing steed, saluting with sword outstretched, and all around horizon-blue poilus formed up in a quadrant, front ran', at the present, rear rank holding torches. The Marseillaise crashes triumphant and out into the centre of the square steps a stocky veteran—Foch. And for five whole minutes, while that great air thrills, he stands there, below the Maid, returning her salute... he who had come from commanding eight millions culled from the ends of the earth, with their gas and their tanks and their aircraft, she who had never commanded more than a few thousand pikemen...

In that midnight salute across the centuries, given so fervently, so genuinely, there seemed to be stored away the true genius of France... no other country, one felt somehow, could have achieved it.

A second salute, also rich in religious and historical connection, remains engraved, if the thrill of its remembrance be not quite that of Orléans: the presenting of arms to the newly-elected present Pontiff by a battalion of Bersaglieri, drawn up across the Piazza San Pietro, first tribute paid by the Royal Government to the Papacy in seventy years.

To return to Joan, the lingering memory of that scene at Orléans rather spoilt the grandiosities of Rome some days later. Apart from the transformation of the basilica into a bear-garden and picnic field with every altar a miniature cloakroom and the litter of Hampstead Heath on Bank Holiday lying round, and an all-pervading odour such as one hopes
is not inseparably associated with sanctity else-
where, and boorish rudeness from functionaries,
quite unsuited to this great House of God, there
seemed, and seems, something singularly unnecessary
about Joan having had, officially and miraculously,
to restore to health two nineteenth-century, bed-
ridden nuns of Arras who had prayed for her inter-
cession (they need not have been nuns, of course)
before she could be made a Saint. Yet such a
physical affair of miniscule importance was embla-
zoned on huge tapestries on either side of the High
Altar as the crowning and governing factor of that
day. A more enlightened choice of miracles, one
feit, might have been made in the case of the Maid,
who performed so many miracles if such exist at
all . . . as, for example, an awed conversion I
once beheld at Rouen—

Scene: The Vieux Marché.
Time: A.D. 1916.
Dramatis Personae: Bill and 'Erb, slightly
wounded from the Somme.

Bill (after passer-by has haltingly translated plaque
commemorating spot where Joan was burned):
Lumme, 'Erb, to fink us blokes did that!

'Erb: Times chainege, Bill, that's wot I sez!

One of the most tantalizing of things must be to
miss, to be unable to capture, a deep or rich emotion
others beside you are able to indulge——

In the case of Joan's canonization I brought with
me, for her impressions, a young English girl about
to enter a convent for life at Grenoble. I had met
her at the house of a mutual friend and, both of us
being fervent admirers of Joan—though for differing reasons—arranged to take her to a tribune for the pageant of red and golden glory. When we met at five a.m., she gowned in black with high neck and wearing a mantilla of similar hue, I in full evening dress, we were both highly exhilarated, also for differing reasons. Whereas I had been dancing all night in a Russian cabaret off the Corso—what was the use in going to bed and, horrors, getting up and putting on evening clothes at four in the morning—as we jolted over the cobbles to St. Peter’s, my companion, flushed and excited, related this:

"The Holy Father received me in private audience yesterday evening! You know, they were trying to stop me entering the convent because I have consumption. Well, the Holy Father tried to persuade me too, but I knelt at his feet and cried and prayed him to let me go.

"‘But God gives us all certain strength, and certain weaknesses, my child,’ he said, ‘and it was never intended that you should enter a convent with your poor lungs.’

"‘I shall die sooner, much sooner, if I am not allowed to take the veil,’ I implored.

"For half an hour the Holy Father tried to reason with me, but no! it was no use. In the end he said, ‘So be it,’ and gave me his blessing. And you see me this morning, going to Jeanne’s canonization the happiest . . . such happiness as mine is inconceivable!"

Which was amply borne out by the glow in her big dark eyes; a tall, thin, pale girl, she was, and not unattractive.
In St. Peter's, during the five hours' ceremony, she fainted twice but would not leave. With smelling salts and brandy, borrowed from the diplomatic tribune next door in which was a friend of war days, we brought her round each time. Though it wasn't so much the fetid, suffocating atmosphere, generated by the presence of fifty thousand French pilgrims, which prostrated her, as the play of her own emotions. Throughout the proceedings she scarcely stopped weeping, positively moaning in ecstasy when the Pontiff, her benefactor, passed in the vicinity, borne aloft in his sedia and with the glorious strains of the Silver Trumpet March resounding. I would steal a glance at my companion on these occasions. There she was, with head bowed low, quivering and gasping into her handkerchief while I stood to attention, the wrong way to receive the Pope's blessing but, then, it was necessary for me to absorb everything that happened for the pen picture that was to follow.

It was confusing to a degree, this terrific emotion of the future nun, though perhaps slightly less so later when she handed me a virginal rhapsody of the Maid, a most human document (I wish I had it now) of which, however, the pundits in London would have naught. It was even discreetly conveyed that I was suspected of doing Catholic propaganda and with the result that my return to headquarters was again a hushed, not to say a silent one.

The end was now nigh.

The same summer came a thoroughly costly and foolish journey out to Turkey in connection with the
Kemalist rising. Little news of any consequence was to be had in Constantinople, where the cost of living was simply fearsome; six or seven pounds sterling a day barely sufficing, and after a while I suggested returning home. Vain effort to save money for the paper! A further spell of inaction following, until one day, tired of all the spending-for-nothing, I decided to betake myself to the lovely isle of Prinkipo, ten miles away in the Marmora.

The very name, redolent of nymphs and dewy lawns like Hitchykoo, drew me on, as it nearly drew Mr. Lloyd George on about the same time. And a very charming place, too, he would have found it for a conference with Lenin, for when I landed I found Prinkipo peopled by some twelve hundred of, on an average, the most attractive Russian women one could well encounter in the mass, refugees from the Wrangel débâcle and mostly of the cream of the South, and no men at all, or scarcely one, an embargo on them, like in the long ago on another island down the coast, though not, of course, for quite the same reason. On this isle, the Mytilene of to-day, I recollect once landing for lunch, and, out of the purest curiosity, to see where Sappho had lived and sung and burned; only for utter disillusionment as I steered ahead through olive field after olive field, past really quite the plainest, nay, most repellent collection of femininity contemporary Europe can well be breeding—fat, greasy creatures, evil of eye and hue, munching cheese and bursting through rags of garments. . . . Notting Dale a-hopping. Still . . . who knew? . . . at the very next turning might not I come across a ravishing trio,
Daphne and Chloe and Phryné, diaphanous and lightly striking the lyre, arms entwined and tresses floating in the breeze? Surely, surely there must have been something "to" that story; though how much greater finality of treatment, removing doubt, would have been introduced by the modern headline writer, over our Attic versifiers, had chance selected the former as handler of the facts:

ATHENS SHEIKS GIVEN GO-BY.
"FISHES MORE SEXED" SAYS SAPH,
NEW SETTLEMENT STAR, SPURNING
MASCULINES IN EXCLUSIVE TALK.

... But, to proceed, no Phrynés or Chloes did turn up, so that at last, over oily olives, I was driven to cross-questioning a frowsy, Levantine waiter in the matter.

"Where," I inquired, "are all your beautiful women?"

"Comment, M'soo? Femmes... jolies?...

The frowsy one looked puzzled.

"But your island was famous for them!" I insisted.

The frowsy one still stood puzzled. "I go demander patron," he said, and toddled off, presently to return with this thoroughly unsatisfactory information:

"I ask patron about jolies femmes and he say with much thinking he sorry there were two on island but they gone Noo York."

... But to re-strike Prinkipo, mine had been a special permit from "Intelligence" and on arriving it was necessary to report to Sergeant Jones,
A.S.C., in complete control of the settlement and a potential Pasha without precedent so lovingly did the outcasts "make up" to him and within my very vision. For did not the Sergeant distribute splendid British Army rations daily, whereas from two neighbouring isles, controlled by Italian and French gendarmerie, had not dreadful tales been semaphored by sisters in distress, of nothing to eat but macaroni and omelette respectively?

Prinkipo! Prinkipo! Despite your typhus and your insects, what halcyon days were those of Crimean sun-bathing on little beaches dotted round the island, of moonlight donkey excursions up through the pine woods, of wild, Russian musical nights?

And Sergeant Jones, A.S.C., from his café chair, flicking his cane at this and that beautiful lady with a casual: "she’d marry me all right, she would, only I got me ole woman back in Chatham, see?"

I even was rash enough to write an article about the place.

Next morning the Northcliffeian bulletin read thus:

Why is Tuohy spending my money on Russian women in Turkey when he ought to be in Scotland writing about Drink, a subject of which he should not, however, be allowed to get too full?

And it was homeward bound for a final bout with the finance section over the price of cabs or pilaffe or something in Constantinople, and farewell for many years to Fleet Street.
CHAPTER VI

THE PRIMROSE ... SIDEWALK

IT is as inevitable for the possessors of certain temperaments to fall in love at one time or another with Paris, or rather with the 'Quarter' there, as it is for them to fall in love with a woman; more so, one would imagine, nowadays, judging by what one hears and sees.

To draw out of the mad rush and take a café chair in Montparnasse becomes an obsession preceded by certain well-defined premonitory symptoms, such as revolt at a fortunate lot and shaving every second morning; nor do victims pause to consider such trifles as the likely effect of their dalliance upon character, health, talents or subsequent careers. The 'Quarter' claims them—to the 'Quarter' they shall go, as to a ravishing mistress.

In such a state of mind it was, at all events, that I made my surrender in the second winter after the war when the Left Bank had not yet become the noisy annexe to Greenwich Village and show place for tourists, replete with American bars and fancy-priced restaurants, that it is to-day. Neither the Dôme nor the Rotonde had then been horribly rebuilt and one could sit in comparative peace at either, nor had the "night joints" that have since sprung up like mushrooms been even dreamt of,
while prices were relatively low and accommodation possible of obtaining.

Duly in thrall, I rented a "third floor-back," took out a pipe, and went in for the serious business of free-lancing or "writing for the magazines." After all, what was the use in this other business—all this tearing round Europe and America, this chasing from city to city after news and never a night spent out of an hotel cell and ever "on the job"? What bliss this being able to let the news happen after the lonely wanderings of a special correspondent, the nervous tension attendant upon constant travel and the meeting of new people, the incessant strain lest one should "miss something."

Garçon! Un bock!

Intoxicating first days of saunterings in the Luxembourg Gardens and merry reunions over the apéritif, of a little work just when one felt that way inclined, of dinner têtes-à-tête and mad studio parties and occasional sallies forth into hostile territory up the hill to Montmartre. And fun everywhere... even in cemeteries... for what was more ludicrous than the tomb of Monsieur and Madame Duval, hard by Baudelaire's at Montparnasse, the departed pair carved life-size reclining in bed, Monsieur filling in his diary and Madame apparently asking him for heaven's sake to put the light out?

The mood for the 'Quarter' may only come once in a lifetime in full, enfolding measure; when, to ignore or combat it, is to miss the perfect pause—or was.

From a world in which everything mattered, even how you tied your tie, you slipped into one where
nothing did; where hours became days and days weeks, without your caring a fig for the driving calendar which used to remind, ordain. Did you wish to live by night, for a few days, it was open to you to do so, width and breadth of existence ensuing; and none to stare, titter, or whisper your undoubtedly asylum past, should you order breakfast at 8 p.m. You could go abroad, either spick and span or in negligé; the matter didn’t arise. In fact, very few matters arose which would be the main delight of it. You could be sombre or elated, serious or Falstaffian, and always find others, in some corner, of your temporary mood. A Vita Nuova in which nobody, and nothing, jarred. Since, did you not happen to like somebody or something, you just moved on to another table at the meagre cost of another bock. Enchanting hiatus after the readymade raiment one had borne so long! Your life was your very own, however relatives might shake their heads and foretell for you a canine progress.

“Dreadful,” “horrible” people; “frauds,” “psexual,” “wasters” and “sluts.” So, in Christian characterization, would well-wishers pin down one’s ‘Quarter’ friends; knowing little about them save what they had gleaned from chit-chat in the daily Press. The heights to which these people could climb when others were in the depths; their understanding and vivid intelligence; the absence of all sham and pretence about them, making life simple and direct; these and kindred things would be swept aside or never even thought of. Enough that these dreadful people “sat in cafés all day long, didn’t wash, had no morals and wrote home for
money.” Nine-tenths of mankind thinks about the remainder just what it intends to think.

Yet all this far niente, and so sweet, scarcely advanced the problem of existence; that was the dickens about it. Knock, knock, knock on the door echoed the unsettling reminder—for one soon discovered that “going on one’s own,” journalistically, called for exceptional qualities both of industry and perseverance wedded to a formidable business sense. One might be able to write and yet fail miserably in the marketing of one’s wares; a notable handicap being the quick demise of subjects posted across the Atlantic for publication “over there.” An article became as a consignment of fish to be packed and forwarded with all speed marked “perishable goods,” only, more often than not, to perish on the journey. Nor could I ever gaze again upon the returned article; which was where I was wrong, yet the thing seemed so tainted, rejected, unclean.

In sum, for those who elect to break adrift, life is freely apt to unfurl itself in a series of shocks and so it came to pass that within a very short time of clasping the ‘Quarter’ in passionate embrace I found myself, one crisp Spring morn, caught up and being borne along by a phalanx of one hundred percent, go-getting New Yorkers, the transition complete and shattering.

For eighty dollars a week I was to describe, in America’s leading journal of opinion, the daily passing show from an European’s standpoint; liberation of Irish innocence, as it were, that humour might prevail. Which it sometimes did. Reporting a baseball game, in lay English, can, of itself, be
odd, but when one innocently wrote of Babe Ruth, Sultan of Swat, as haq he been some ordinary breathing mortal . . . well, that meant "loud laughter" over the patent breakfast foods next morning! The Dempsey-Carpentier fight afforded a second case in point. Forty working members of the staff, including some twenty descriptive writers, crossed the Hudson by special tug for that affair, my particular destination being the "bleachers" or cheap, far-away seats, where I was to portray an American sporting crowd in action, and very sportingly it bore itself, I remember, notably when most of the ninety thousand present rose and frantically cheered Georges as the Frenchman got Jack groggy in the second round, only to miss a short right upper-cut to the jaw which, had it landed, might have changed the history of boxing.

Reporting in New York is easier than elsewhere. Hours are shorter; if you do one "story" a day that is all that is usually required of you; one is left freely to oneself as regards individuality of treatment; a great deal more use is made of the telephone obviating hours of often useless running round; while, to cap things, the reporter himself enjoys a far higher status with the public, his life being correspondingly simplified. Indeed, in the craze for publicity that rules from coast to coast—any sort of publicity, good or bad, but publicity!—the public emerges as an ally of, and co-worker with, the reporter who finds "copy" literally hurled at his head, in most instances, compared with the belowstairs condescension of Belgravia and the doorslamming of the Avenue du Bois. Communications,
furthermore, are a positive joy across the Atlantic. Most European reporters have, I suppose, in their time worried more about "getting the stuff through to the office" than about the actual collection of the narrative. Think, then, that no matter where you may be in America (provided you keep a civil tongue in your head) press messages get priority of treatment and that you may send "in full" even to commas and colons, not the slightest skeletonization being necessary, so absurdly cheap are telegraphic rates!

Writing, on the American Press, is vivid but slapdash: "fine writing" not being encouraged one little bit. Speed kills everything—only for groups of men to be standing round, sometimes for hours, at the end of the day doing nothing. Reporters write their "stories" in a general editorial room, a vast smoke-laden affair in which the din of telephones and typewriters never ceases although a few specialists, society columnists, and the like, retire into silent cubicles with silent machines. "Terseness and accuracy" is the slogan of the New York Press, and if the second exhortation may amuse many in Europe, I have often thought that much of the bad reputation U.S. newspapers have acquired has been more due to their wildly exaggerated and screaming headlines than to the printed matter which follows beneath. It is quite erroneous to imagine that there is no law of libel, affecting newspapers, in the United States while reporters are rigidly held to facts by the existence, in most offices, of a "Fair Play" Department: fair play for the public. The men who write for the New York newspapers are,
as a body, of exceptional "social grading"; in fact most important offices have on their pay rolls young men of millionaire upbringing or even possessing traceable grandparents and who have sought employment as reporters in order to learn the ropes—of life. Salaries are about the same as in England, if we take into consideration the high cost of living in America; that is to say, they may range from £12 a week in the case of a "cub" reporter to the £10,000 a year, and a percentage of the profits, of a Managing Editor. But there is this fundamental difference to Fleet Street; American journalists do not envisage the "sack" as the end of all things; they are always playing musical chairs from one office to another or striking out in some totally different line. Whereas, in England playing for safety is the rule with dread, latent fear of an old age of penniless down at-heel slavery, the American journalist has endless opportunities and seizes them. Of my three closest colleagues in New York, one, on having a difference with his Editor, became alter ego to Will Hayes, "Tsar of the Films," while a second thought of showing famous golfers on the screen in slow motion action and made a fortune. Mention of this personal side reminds me, too, that I can scarcely ever hope for a nicer milieu than the office in which I worked in New York, from its great and lovable Editor, the late Frank Cobb, down to a bediamonded office boy—I think named Jo—who used to help most of us out in regard to the more pressing of our social engagements, such as a meal at Child's, and who was generally believed to be in the direct running for the managership of the paper.
Not that I would paint New York newspaper conditions as all couleur-de-rose. Only recently I was told that forty applications are made daily for jobs on the "New York Times" alone; a situation arising from the curious activities of the late Mr. Munsey who bought up newspapers only to suppress them out of existence next day, his idea being to make fortunes from the few and to Hades with the many... and, all too often, unfortunately, with their entire staffs as well. New York has now only seven or eight morning and evening newspapers remaining; nor are circulations what one would imagine for a seven million city. If we except a successful picture paper, I doubt if any publication exceeds the half million mark. On the other hand, revenues derived from advertising are simply gigantic, while there is the additional money-making factor of the syndicate by which articles and news are sold to other papers across the continent. Thus, Clemenceau's swan song in America, which I describe elsewhere, paid for itself, while our subsequent exporting from France of Coué earned the paper, I believe, four thousand dollars. It is this syndicating, incidentally, which enables such big sums to be set aside for foreign correspondence, undoubtedly, in American newspapers, the most extensive and informative to be found anywhere. American cartoonists and editorial writers are others who excel, the former absolutely, the latter relatively.

Each week I had to contribute a long topical article, sometimes a whole page, to the Sunday Paper—that monster which, with its eighty odd pages, is rapidly devouring all the wood pulp in the
United States and beginning to make serious inroads on Canada’s supply. One of these articles, dealing with the Irish situation, had an unpleasant enough sequel (we were within a few weeks of the Treaty at the time and feeling ran fever-high). In it, I advocated “as a kicking-off point in case Ireland wished later to go further” the acceptance of Dominion Home Rule; only to bring down upon my head the united wrath of New York’s whole half-million Irish.

“Only a traitor,” wrote their highest ecclesiastic, “could write such things,” while others, in fascist style, threatened personal violence, so much so that I nearly had to leave the Greenwich Village apartment house, owned by a Tammany man, in which I had taken rooms.

Greenwich Village! As I conjure it back again to-day, surely the strangest “village” in all history, with elevated trains roaring above it and subways rumbling beneath it and tram-cars clanking and motors honking in ceaseless procession. And the village green! Pitiful patch of veldt overrun by screeching Neapolitan children. A queer place, New York’s defunct ‘Quarter,’ stamped upon in the name of morals and efficiency and now as ludicrous as an old trollop relaunched in business, with its surviving Chelsea appellations and layers of “atmosphere” plastered on by business bohemians, its horn-rimmed Mimis in sex-rebellion over cigarettes and candy and serious young men Baudelaireing on ice cream soda, its book stores featuring the latest social clairyoyance from Moscow and Munich and Chicago, and cabarets waxing Cossack on pie and jovial inns replete with flowing bowls of iced water
labryinth o' childish fake and show place for dollars whose every true appurtenance had vanished, freedom and spirit, quaintness and quiet, laughter and lais ser-vivre.

Still, the "Village" was almost the only convenient place in which one could live on eighty dollars a week. My weekly budget comes back as something like this:

Two rooms and bath . . 25 dollars
Laundry . . . . 5 
Plymouth Gin (1 bottle) . 10 
One gilded night . . 20 
Food, cigars, transport, etc. . 20 

Total . . 80 dollars.

By the gin there hangs a tale—

For eight months it used to be supplied to me regularly by appointment each Friday night by Patrolman O'Blank who obtained it, in turn, from a depot where was stored all the liquor confiscated from mansions in the vicinity of Central Park, i.e. it was the real thing. But alas, ultimately, through seeking to slake another's thirst, I was to lose my precious ration! At the beginning of our acquaintance Patrolman O'Blank had laid it down quite firmly that under no circumstances was I to introduce anybody else to him, ever. One night, unhappily, I did—a poor, parched young Englishman fresh off the boat and knowing no one in the City, the worst kind of case, in fact; and the effect of our joint arrival at the rendezvous spot was sulphurous in the extreme:
“Didn’t I tell you not to bring anyone else along here?” bellowed O’Blank. “Well, get to hell out of here, then, you and your doggo ile limey!’ Think I need yer custom? Why, I got in automobile and can’t be seen in it!”

Reverting to my budget, the expenditure of only twenty dollars a week on food and general living may surprise. Well, let me confess it, that was where American hospitality came in; about which I can add nothing that has not been said a thousand times before, save perhaps that I do not recollect spending more than two or three week-ends in New York throughout my sojourn there as an impoverished reporter.

As for the gilded life on Broadway, frankly it wasn’t very much missed. Once a week a dinner tête-à-tête, with foul Sauterne at eight dollars a bottle, followed by a very dear theatre, and that would be all. For mad and dazzling as New York-by-night may be, for the monied, the Renewed Glacial Age in North America usually made of the restaurant prelude something too depressing for words from which one never really recovered.

Everybody and everything seemed to be on ice, behaviour included, manners, brains, possibly even hearts in cold storage (since, of necessity, internal freezing all the year round must have begun to act upon Americans even as Sicilian sun and wine infuse warmth). Here were women to rave about, ravishingly “turned out” in the best of Paris-grafted-upon-New-York and attended by tuxedoed immaculates, consciously correct and restrained of movement and speech, calmer and more collected than any escorts
of history; a perfect gastronomic setting, too, of shaded lights and glistening tables and swift and peaceful Central European service... and yet, when somebody laughed it would seem as if that person had swung a rattle.

"It all comes down to this," a distinguished native author once observed, "we Americans think we can blend grape juice, woman and song and the result's been a nasty, sticky, mess. We've just placed girls before wine and proceeded to exaggerate the former as we used to do the latter. It's nothing but sex, sex, sex now, all of the time. After all, it's bound to happen. Think a moment. Say we humans are each like a fountain with several jets of water spurting up—work, play, love, exercise, religion, anything you like. Well, put your thumb on one jet, like we've done with wine, and what happens? Jet next door spurts up higher, d'ont it? Get me?"

Though perhaps about none can it be more unwise or unsafe to generalize than the Americans, a thin but thickening layer of whom, for one thing, and if it be not over-presumptuous to say so, one finds difficulty in classing other than as the nicest people in the world. For if in all countries there be a race within a race, nowhere is that phenomenon more marked than in the United States to-day.

As the year wore on, professional happenings drooped somewhat through failure to launch a new feature, "Europe Yesterday," and intended as a live commentary on the news emanating every twenty-four hours over the cables from that continent.
My last assignment was to ride round New York in a "rubber-neck" motor-coach, jotting down a foreigner's impressions of the megaphone man and his sayings en route; a trip which terminated, not unsuitably, in a note of interrogation.

The megaphone man showed us Altman's, "the only store in New York City that doesn't put its prices in the window"; he showed us Millionaire's Row and the house of T. F. Ryan "who divorced his first wife after fourteen days of matrimony"; he showed us the hotel where David Belasco lived and he showed us Bud Fisher's bedroom, but when we drew abreast of the monument to Columbus he was showing us the Cadillac showroom.

Next day came further translation across the ocean, as abrupt and unexpected as before:

"I have decided," wrote (approximately) my chief, "to send you to Paris, France, where there should be greater scope for your talents. The paper has a right to require your fullest sense of responsibility. Furthermore, in the executive line, you have yet to show your capabilities. Your cables and other stuff should invariably represent an unbiased picture of events. Don't let the French get round you, and remember mighty few can both play hard and work hard.

"When you get to Paris call on the Marquise d'Hautpoule with my regards—she may be useful—and have the Prime Minister know at the first opportunity that I have been following his recent policy with keen interest."

Before sailing, President Harding received me at the White House.
"I envy you your job, young man," said the Chief Executive in his rich drawl, and after I had explained something of the work of a foreign correspondent, "when I was your age I wanted to send myself to Paris for the 'Marion Star' but I couldn't afford it."

The President died eighteen months later from Prohibition.

Four years after the passage of that law, and two years after he had entered the White House, the First Magistrate of the United States forswore liquor, in private utterance, pledging himself never to take it more. A risky thing for certain men in the fifties to do, if they have been used to stimulant all their lives, and a sacrifice which in Mr. Harding's case was to have a tragically swift sequel. Weakened and undermined by the régime of iced water and "soft" drinks to which he heroically stuck during the last four months of his life, the President had no more power of resistance left when stricken with pulmonary trouble on the way down from Alaska to San Francisco.
CHAPTER VII

THE "HUMAN HURRICANE"

The original "New York World" used to have as its driving force a nerve-tortured old millionaire, Joseph Pulitzer, who couldn't bear to hear a pin fall in the next room. Rain thunderbolts all around his successor, the animator of current American journalism, and you would not incommode him in the least degree; rather would you be adding enjoyably to his choice of element.

As much as any prominent American one car summon to mind, this functionary (hereinafter called HH, short for "Human Hurricane") embodies with his fine, taut frame, his keenly chiselled, sensation-hungry features and fiery head-crop . . . a handsome, red-haired eagle about to swoop . . . the personification of post-war Uncle Sam, no longer the leisurely old Southern gentleman of legend but an over-engined human machine racing on all six cylinders. And he has other claims on our attention, for apart from his signal power to modify, even to inspire, U.S. policy towards Europe, quite serious students of affairs have seen in this editor Bayard, barely turned forty, a potential future holder of high Government appointments, should he ever turn to politics. Whereupon heigh ho! for a merry time
in Washington and no more monosyllabic, iced-water luncheons.

For HH. talks——

With a limp and drooping Mary Pickford on his right, he was once known to establish a Marathon record of four consecutive hours of talk at one of his own dinner-parties at which he invariably emerged as the complete host but for keeping his guests waiting for two or three hours (they could always play adverbs or croquet) and then gagging them for the remainder of the evening. Yes, he could get away with murder in that line. An unbounded hospitality and genius for parties linked to a "pep" without parallel, relieving everyone present of the customary grim necessity of being, all of the time, either interesting, entertaining, amusing, or a medley of all three, made of him the darling of the ladies and a homo admirabilis with the men.

Great guns, listen!——

"Harry Wills' secret punch"... "How I pulled Caillaux's leg"... "The low-down on Estelle Rodger's death"... "The next President of the United States"... "Mary Pickford as vamp"... "The winner of the Kentucky Derby"... "Hylan's Jeal with Hearst"... "What I told the Prince of Wales at dinner"... "How Hollywood gets the 'snow'"... "Abd-el-Krim's request for my advice"...

A score or more, and prominent people among them, would sit delightedly mute around the board while HH. leapt ahead in his lightning, laryngitic rasp, scarce pausing for breath, lest one of the company should intrude a commentary, a query, a word,
a witticism. It seemed indeed as if most of his guests were quite content to be mentioned occasionally in dispatches in the running personal banter which HH. would ever and anon be pleased to intersperse with the bigger stuff, beaming triumphantly and at his audience as the sparks flew this way and that—and to do him justice it would be brilliantly amusing most of the time, the play of a quite exceptional mind.

But to get in a word edgewise! Eventually I devised this interruption formula:

"What I have got to say will take three seconds," whereupon I would say it, off at terrific speed, to stop as short as a horse at a cliff’s edge. But alas! the observation usually fell flat, even in its sponsor’s ears—that was the horrible part about it. To follow upon HH. was to feel, definitely a fool, a person of scant ideas or wit or personality; such was the annihilating effect of contact with this Americano furioso; an inferiority complex, in the jargon of the day, which one felt, nevertheless, was none too... still, to spend an afternoon with this declamatory Colossus, or within earshot, was to feel as limp as if one had been tied to a fire engine and dragged up and down Fifth Avenue, and if that wasn’t the inferiority complex (in America at all events) what was?

Now, however, as I stood aside in the editorial sanctum, awaiting final instructions prior to sailing next day, it was another matter, for as newspaper man HH. owed deference to none. From the day, back in 1912, when he literally took the Rosenberg-Becker murder-for-graft case out of the hands of
the District Attorney, HH. had been marked down for high estate and able reporting of the battling of the Germans followed by a period of close co-operation with President Wilson and Colonel House at the Paris Peace Conference were to confirm matters, for our subject to touch zenith, in 1924, when almost alone, he succeeded in bringing the Democratic National Convention to New York City. That may mean little or nothing to Europeans; to New York it meant mammoth publicity and the spending of untold dollars, while to HH. it meant SIX WEEKS PANDEMONIUM!

... Just now he was tackling, brilliantly as usual, the Ku Klux Klan and his "functioning" was almost as entralling a performance as his entertaining.

He rarely addressed less than three members of his staff simultaneously on different topics and as often as not would maintain a running monologue with half a dozen silent and efficient artificers of sensation, standing round his desk in semi-circular formation. Instructions, criticisms, "bawling out," personalia, raillery—all strung together and telescoping. And letters dictated, in between, and long telephone conversations, sometimes to San Francisco, mingled with the feverish business of "making up" the paper, that hectic presentation of each new day and conceived with a solitary purpose—stun them! Hit the public between the eyes... in politics, in sport, in crime, in "sex stuff," in personalities, in "human interest" stories, in accidents, in death, in tragedy, in scandal, in finance... "play up" everything to the skies... stun them!
With the nose of a connoisseur in stunning, HH. was just then charting the morrow’s shocks, an incomparable artist in giving the American public what it wanted while withholding the one thing it wanted most of all—calm.

Suddenly he whirled round.

“T I know what you’re thinking, Tuohy, in your sleepy old British way! You’ll have to get out of that now and work. Gentlemen,” (he addressed the patient semi-circle) “Exhibit Number One, Ferdinand Tuohy. Observe him well. I’m sending him to Paris, the newspaperman’s cemetery. The only query is—how long will he last? Trouble about Paris is that you all want to go there and that none of you are qualified—except the guys who dig their graves there. Ha! You men are all far better off commuting,” he concluded, or rather interposed, since HH. never concluded.

“All set to go?” he raced on, fixing me. “Passport? Money? Ticket? Where’ve they put you? That’s no darned use! When you go aboard see the Captain, tell him I sent you and that I expect you to get an outside stateroom on C deck amidships. Who is he? Who? Never heard of him . . . Well, I don’t know that there’s anything else. You know the ropes. What we want is the low-down. Remember, we’re not here to shield anything or anybody. Also, bear in mind that although we’ve got to follow the political situation closely—that guy there says the public’s not interested but it’s darned well got to be—bear in mind that for quite a while each summer Paris is New York with the lid off—this burg as it used to be
before Prohibition. Americans cross now to let off steam and most of it's hot stuff. Well, that's about all," (hearty handshake) "good luck and bon voyage. . . . Daly, why in hell's name didn't you play up that story about Babe Ruth more this morning. . . ."

Below it was rush hour, harsh nightly sauve qui peut of a million New Yorkers from skyscraper to subway. Caught up in the scrimmage, I sought to thread a way through without unnecessarily bumping or jostling others. This was difficult and once, on colliding with a neighbour, I apologized.

"Keep that stuff for Yurrup, bonehead!" came the acknowledgment; while there followed varying endorsements from an arm-linked row of flappers pressing from behind, bold, bobbed, rouged.

"Crazy loon!"
"Poor fish!"
"Saphead!"
"Big boob!"

Standard men, late of Genoa and Jerusalem and rolling cigar stubs from side to side in their mouths, agreed by elbowing me forward, and, thoroughly quashed, I allowed myself to be carried along to the accompaniment of gibes about my hat and stick and gloves ("Gee, but he's ali dolled up, ain't he?") until a taxi-cab slid by.

There was only one way of reaching it—with the shoulder.

"Well," I resolved, "when you're in Rome," and forthwith shoved a way to the kerb, expecting all kinds of trouble. Yet, curiously enough, none
supervened. No one seemed to mind my acting like that in the least, and a moment later, having given an address in the Forties, I was serenely surveying the turmoil, feet up on the strapontin opposite.

No wonder I had cut such a poor figure in America—no push, no zip! These people were Go-getters. They each of them, man, woman and child, had a fixed objective ahead from morning to night. And they were going and getting it—never mind what, never mind how. The thing was to oust the person in the way, friend, enemy or stranger, and to plant oneself there instead—one pace nearer Realization and Success. No "letting-up"! That was decadent, old-world stuff. And everything was fair in Go-getting since no one had ever laid down any rules governing the national gospel.

Yet if the eminently Christian nature of Go-getting, as emphasized in its adjuncts Service and Uplift, had long appealed, I had still, on this last day in America, to be convinced that its exponents derived more material, aside from spiritual, comfort from its practice than did Old-World residents, glad to mark time occasionally in quiet content; rather it seemed as if New World residents were giving an animated and powerful imitation of ants before Everest.
CHAPTER VIII
EUROPE AHoy!

"CHAMPAGNE cocktail, sir? Just passing the three-mile-limit, sir."

After the covert and camouflaged consuming of America there is something ethereally satisfying about the first reproffering of a man's refreshment in the open and above board. It is like nothing so much as being re-instanted as a grown-up; one cannot help expanding.

"I should like," I said to the trim young steward and raising a sunlit glass, "to write a long, symbolical piece about you."

"Very kind of you, indeed, sir, I'm sure," observed the trim young steward, and blazed onwards the re-discovered trail of liberty in the general direction of the next table.

Presently I hailed him back.

"I was under the impression, steward" (surveying the dozen or so eminently respectable-looking patrons of the smoking-room), "that you had wild queues of Wets besieging you for drinks on these occasions?"

"Them's all newspaper stories, sir. Once they know they can 'ave it they don't kinda worry. Most of these 'ere gents are soberin' up-like."

"Really!"
Yet it would be idle to pretend that the Prohibition Law has not affected the Atlantic crossing eastwards. Americans are using Europe, for better or for worse, more and more as a playground and clinic for the dispelling of "complexes" and "inhibitions", and the "relaxing" or "letting-up" commences as soon as they turn their backs on the Statue of Liberty, and with the effect that if human relationship always thrived at sea compared with its snail's-pace development ashore, nowadays scarcely has a liner left port than she begins to open out in flower. Lots of people beginning to take a varying interest in lots of other people and to think, say, and do things which they would never dream of thinking, saying or doing on such short acquaintance ashore... the bacillus of sea life abroad, breeding audace.

Take this "snappy" meeting, on B deck forward, on the day of which I write:

Betty (a Titian American girl, surpassing comely to gaze upon, glancing up from deck chair): You're just going to tell me what a beautiful evening it is. Why not ask me if I like peanuts? Just as good an introduction!

F.T.: Well, do you like peanuts?

Betty: Love them! Adore them! Let's come and have a cocktail!

On the way down: "And I haven't got a mother on board and I don't know why I'm in this ship and I hope you've got something interesting to say because so far I've been spoken to by two Babbits and a Methodist minister and I'm getting bored."
Such may be the forerunner of a long and wonderful companionship of six days...

A modern liner "in flower" splits up chemically into recognized ocean sets almost the first day out:—the dancing set, the card players, the bar-room crowd, the deck games adepts, the spectacular Grill Room group, the exclusive stateroom hermits, the chic paraders, dressing and redressing, the indecently-healthy and exercise-mad, the library group, the noisy organizers and souls of the party. A rare few may belong to no group, and many may belong to several sets, but after a day or two, so intertwined is life at sea through passengers being constantly thrown together, that most people know roughly to what set or clique everyone else belongs.

In a vessel like that of which I write (built by patient Hamburg oxen), with her theatre and cabaret and Paul Whiteman band, her ball-room and Ritz restaurant and squash racquets court, her colonnade of fashionable shops and French café and Turkish bath and swimming pool, replete with two-piece nymphs, her listening-in and her newspaper office and miniature Bois de Boulogne for the children—nearly sixty thousand tons of terrestrial luxury and environment gliding noiselessly forward at record speed, the whole so motionless that a glass filled to the brim refused to trickle over—in a floating pleasure city such as this, news is apt to "break" with disconcerting freedom and so "look out for something on the boat" is now-a-days the mot d'ordre to sailing scribblers. Time was when one of the very few occasions upon which a "traveller in news" felt himself secure from the
office and able to become a mere onlooker of the passing show instead of having eternally to chronicle it, used to be at sea. Sad, but with the advent of ocean Savoys and high jinks afloat involving international celebrities, and continuous wireless communication with the paper, that benign release has also lived. Although my experience has been that such news as may signal itself daily on an Atlantic crossing is usually quite unsendable if only because of the Captain’s tight hold on the wireless.

For example, the suicide of Miss X. Y. of erstwhile “movie” renown——

Sir Johnston Forbes Robertson and I, taking a turn round the deck, were the last to see her a few minutes before she apparently went over the stern when all had gone below to dinner.

This unfortunate woman, in the last stages of “dope” and depression through private sorrow had, all the ship knew, from the boasting of various “gentlemen” of their successes, been free of her favours on the voyage. But when news of the tragedy circulated, and the New York police wireless the Captain for statements from all those who had been in the deceased’s company since leaving port, these same Don Juans, frightened for their good names, made a point of brazenly going from group to group in the lounge and on deck, denying now that they had ever spoken to the lady as assiduously as, twenty-four hours before, they had been crowing in detail of their conquests; ghoulish enough form of self-rehabilitation at the expense of a corpse dangling in green fathoms.
Or, again, the "blackmailing" of a certain Celebrity . . .

This gentleman, too, was of the boasting breed and had so sickened fellow-travellers in the smoking-room with tales of his "affair" with a pretty American girl passenger that a novel form of correction was thought out and administered. In effect, one evening on adjourning to his state-room to dress, he found a written demand for ten thousand dollars, to be placed in a given spot by the morning, failing which his wife, who, it was known, was meeting him at Cherbourg, would be informed of the whole business!

Terrified, the irresistible one duly placed the money where he had been told to, though not without fulminating against the extortion to one or two acquaintances who, he little dreamt, were in the "plot," and planning all manner of vengeance and police action—until in fact, on the last night out, a tall, grey-haired Canadian came nonchalantly into the smoking-room and handed him an envelope with the remark:

"Here's your rotten money back! But you jolly well don't deserve it."

—signal for all present to rise and leave the precincts.

Or the story of the Blackest Fast in Jewry, and how it came about . . .

It was in the "Olympic" and among those who had been visited upon the doctor, at his table in the saloon, was a very orthodox young North Country Hebrew; so orthodox, in fact, that he
had brought all his food for the voyage along with him in a basket which would be kept in the pantry. Nor might any Christian steward’s hand descend upon so much as a crumb of it; the orthodox one would do all the getting and serving of it himself, arising periodically during lunch or dinner and returning with aniseed bread or awfully pale-looking chicken.

Well, it was midsummer; and the use of ice being apparently against the rules——

The third day out, it became impossible to sit at table any longer with delicacies from that basket; for the unrest to communicate itself, next morning, to the pantry staff.

The Black Fast starting that lunch time, to continue three days and nights until New York was reached, a cat having somehow or other got at the basket in the pantry.

While, naturally, liners continue to board and lodge a majority company of quiet, normal folk, on business or pleasure bound, none the less an Atlantic crossing nowadays tends more and more to take its tone from the “flash” passengers aboard and their gyrations. Thus, in recent years a night life has developed well calculated to make captains of the past twirl in their graves did they hear tell of it. In the olden days a captain’s word was law and anyone causing, say, a commotion after 11 p.m. was lightly detained in his or her cabin for the rest of the voyage. But now you very rarely see the Captain at all—he seems to live remotely somewhere up near the crow’s-nest—and as for the eleven o’clock rule, try it on Hollywood!
Discreetly, before the striking of that guillotine hour, a maître d’hôtel will sidle up in the restaurant, ostensibly to hope all has been in order that evening, actually to take cabin—I beg your pardon—stateroom orders for champagne (I have seen as many as a dozen bottles cooling subsequently in a bath). These stateroom parties are now all the vogue, enduring sometimes through the night to merge into early morning mixed bathing in the swimming pool for poor throbbing heads. In fact, quite a number of the gay travelling set, in the winter months, scarcely see daylight from Nantucket to Cherbourg, their “days” beginning with the 5 p.m. cocktail and concluding, as I have said, with a swim in the pool next morning and so to bed. After which hectic voyages, the rapide from Cherbourg down to Paris is a truly wondrous spectacle with strong men and perfect dears “resting up” for the Gay City in various stages of recovery and with the French ticket-collector seeking in vain to rouse them—

“But what people, all the same!”
“They are very tired,” you explain.
“The sea, then, was bad?”
“Not at all. But they have much made the bomb on board.”
“What a country! What will they visit on us here now! Never mind!” (Shrugs shoulders). “They have the dough, that is the principal!” (Exit without tickets.)
CHAPTER IX
A PARIS OFFICE

OPENING his or her morning paper in London or New York, and espying, under a Paris date line, half a column of politics and one or two subsidiary messages describing a railway accident, a murder, or some new aeroplane record, the lay observer is entitled to the fleeting reflection: "What an easy time these correspondent fellows must have to be sure! An hour or so's work and probably scribbled off in some café or other!"

Well, that wouldn't be quite correct—

Since the armistice Paris has expanded beyond imagining as a news centre, due in the main to its having become the political centre of gravity of Europe, with its Conferences and its Reparations Commission, its Experts and its Council of Ambassadors, its Poincarés and its Caillauxs, while concurrently, the annually increasing Anglo-American invasion has made of the French capital a city whose doings have to be minutely watched aside altogether from the chronicling of the general flow of native news. The political message and its dependents, mentioned above, constitute merely the outward and visible yield of as tangled and busy a day as belongs to contemporary journalism on either side of the Atlantic, a day in which the
Paris correspondent has not only to be a fashioner of news messages but also an executive chief in charge of a minor newspaper office in all save printing, his own manager, editor, news-editor, and reporter, the representative socially of his firm, and last, but not by any means least, reception clerk and visitors’ guide. And the bigger the office, necessarily the more arduous and involved the day.

This starts usually towards 11 a.m. with the perusal and answering of correspondence and cables, seldom a day passing without one’s paper requiring this politician or that celebrity to be seen; and if little may ensue in the way of a “story,” that is all in the game. Next comes the business of reading through the morning papers, some twenty in number, and from which one cuts such news, political or general, as may suggest itself as the basis for cable dispatches that day or for “mail” stories posted off subsequently. As indicating the variety of subjects one has to keep in mind, here are two typical letters of instruction:

“I should like you and X. and Y. to pick up at once the sending of special feature stuff to include books, theatres, music, women’s clothes, and personalia. Bertelli’s Monday feature of frocks worn at the races is rather good. It is always well to send us light stuff in the spring.”

And this:

“I want you to mail about 2,000 words of Parisian gossip weekly. The stuff should be, of course, interesting and of a semi-intimate nature,
ranging from politics to petticoats, and from gambling to science. It should be in the tenor of a man of fair culture and of eager interest in life, talking to a group of people who have similar interests."

The morning newspapers may take an hour to "do" once one has mastered their intricacies and learnt their individual bent and ways, not one of them taking half the time to absorb that Lord Northcliffe allotted to his terrible infant—seven minutes. Thus, for good crime stories one turns to the "Parisien"; for sound politics to this sheet; for gay and risky matter to that one. Certain stories, according to the policy and way of thinking of one's paper, are apt to be "up your street" more than up your neighbour's, and, as such, require special attention. As a case in point, we were permanently interested in the scandal of the French reconstructed areas, in the war zone, and the "Quotidien" would be the paper I would turn to for facts. Succeeding French Governments have paid out the most colossal war damages to inhabitants of the rescued provinces, no bigger "ramp" having followed on the conflict. The manufacturing world has benefited most—the poor having mostly had to rest content with new tin hutments in the way of reparation—and I believe that it was no less an authority than Louis Loucheur who once declared, concerning Lens and Rheims, that those cities had had their war damage overpaid six times.

The French papers are for ever interesting, and if they contain precious little scandal they make up
for that by printing some of the most colourful, best written, and interesting special articles of any Press in Europe. French special correspondents are always disappearing on "grandes rapportages," and then coming back with gems for serialization—such as Georges London’s "Au Bagné". The reading of that series, depicting the lives on Devil’s Island and in Cayenne of famous criminals of the past, such as Ullmo, the naval officer traitor, and Dieudonné, the brain of the Bonnot motor bandit gang, afforded Parisians the sheerest delight, if one may use the term in such connection. For the author also horrified the country so by his accounts of fractious convicts, forty or fifty strong, existing like animals in huge cages, tattooed and naked, and in the uttermost pit of bestiality, that no more criminals are ever to be sent out of France.

At midday follows the daily visit to the Foreign Office or the ‘Quai’ where a Press Bureau official recites anything the Cabinet wishes to have transferred to English and American correspondents, and then sits back to answer questions—or not to answer them, as the case may be. The ‘Quai’ is really resorted to, not for big news, but as a check on intended "intelligent anticipations," for clarification of this and that angle of the general situation, and in order that the Government spokesman’s mind may be read by what he omits to say and how he says...what he says. Meanwhile, assistants are usually out and about on inquiries, visiting the hotels in search of interesting new arrivals, seeing lawyers about impending divorce suits, and generally making nuisances of them-
selves. The "Paris Divorce" is now quite an institution with wealthy Americans, and with some English, a sliding scale of charges existing according to the rapidity with which clients wish their cases to be put through. For example, for five thousand dollars, you may get a high speed decree in six weeks, this sum being divided between the Anglo-American lawyer in charge of the case, who gets the lion's share, and a dozen different barristers and functionaries in and around the Palais. For two thousand dollars one can be freed in, say, three months, and so on. No cruelty or misconduct is necessary for these decrees; men and women (nearly always the latter) just have to prove domicile in France for six months and that during that period their other halves have not come near them—et voilà! In the fashionable hotels off the Champs Elysées are to be found all the year round prospective divorcées lying absurdly low while the wheels of justice are turning in their favour; declining to go out on parties, and generally giving imitations of poor, deserted dears. All this pushing-by-graft of foreign divorces ahead of thousands of French cases has made a deal of bad blood, the effect of the practice being that French couples have to stay joined many months, often a year or more, longer than they would normally have to do.

When it is sitting, the Chamber of Deputies may claim your attention directly after luncheon, correspondents looking in mainly in search of "scenes" or "atmosphere" since, later in the evening, it is always possible to get a résumé of the day's oratory. The French Chamber can be the
maddest house in creation, when Royalists and Communists get out of hand, and more than once I have looked down from the Foreign Press box on a scene of struggling, earsplitting confusion that would disgrace any ordinary public-house on a Saturday night. Nowhere in Christendom, or out of it, can the word “restraint” be less known, less practised, than in a French Parliament the impotent gong-ringing of whose President, seeking to obtain order, merely accentuates the turmoil.

Returned to the office towards teatime, an exasperating feature of the Paris correspondent’s day has to be faced——

The problem of disposing of visitors to the office, either complete strangers desirous of making themselves known because they feel so adventurously far afield or are readers of your paper, or tourists with letters of introduction, or, most delicate to deal with, travelling members of the staff and their friends and relations, has come to occupy a set portion of every correspondent’s time, varying only with the attractiveness and location of his office (the Americans suffering much more than the English).

Unhappily my office was enticing to a degree. Practically next door to Cook’s on the Place de d’Opéra, a sign, illuminated by night, invited all and sundry to come upstairs and use the place both as reading-room and information bureau. Some even used it as a doss-house, after a night up at Montmartre, yet even that wouldn’t have mattered had visitors not almost invariably insisted on seeing “the boss of this place.” They simply had to see
him, and would sit around if told he was out and come back the next day and the next, many of them. When, despairingly, one at last surrendered, as likely as not a whole half-hour would be wasted while the visitor, especially were she a woman, would run off her impressions of Europe in general and of Paris in particular. For that was what they really came to do—by Vanity out of Good Intent to let you have their reading of things; longwinded, superficial and empty ramblings for the most part but quite impossible of curtailment. Your persecutors were being sociable, developing the national get-together sentiment, and any brusqueness would have been, in the circumstances, unnatural; yours but to sit and smile.

Usually the stranger's eventual exit would devolve to this exchange:

"You're not a citizen, are you?"

"No."

"Thought not from the accent. Britisher, eh?"

"Irish."

"Funny not having an American as correspondent for our chief newspaper!"

"My father did it for thirty years and never saw America."

Greater delicacy had to be shown in dealing with people armed with letters of introduction; indeed a predecessor in some measure owed his departure to the fact of his declining to see certain callers who turned out to be influential friends of the management. Some of these hurriedly scribbled notes, commending this and the other
person, would be nothing if not to the point. I retain this one:

You are one of the four people I call friend. Do your best for this guy. He likes the usual trio and will pay his share.

And this:

The bearer of this is virtuous, though she looks, and will try and make you believe, the contrary. Otherwise she is a charming companion and dances divinely, but keep her off D. H. Lawrence.

Or the big serious stuff:

I want you to meet Jules B. Morgenstein, one of our best-known fur dealers. Mr. Morgenstein is making an exhaustive study of the moral, economic and political forces at present at work in Europe and would, I know, be mighty glad of any information you could put in his way.

Whereupon Mr. Morgenstein would occupy an hour of the busiest time of the day listening vaguely but refusing to go, his wandering eyes betraying the truth: namely, that he wasn’t the slightest bit interested in Europe really but had hit upon the notion of pretending to be in order to gain the offices of the principal American correspondents, for business reasons.

In the summer months there would be a positive procession of Morgensteins interspersed with members of the staff, although the latter were, naturally, entitled to the "run of the place" and to everything one had to impart. None the less they
descended so thickly at times that I was ultimately constrained to put a telephonic ruse into operation. Unseen, I would press the button of my house telephone, signal to my stenographer in the room adjacent to start ringing me. Whereupon, taking the receiver, I would develop an imaginary conversation down the mouthpiece on these lines:

"Great Scott! My dear old fellow, I'm so sorry! I forgot all about it! Truly! Look here, I'll be with you in five minutes... Why, yes, of course we must go..."

Usually that would suffice to clear the room, but on occasion, with more leech-like ones who would offer to "see you on your way," it would be necessary to go through the annoying farce of putting on one's hat and coat and starting off to keep a non-existent appointment! I often thought that the one way to have coped with the whole collection, with a few exceptions, was to have made a dictaphone record and to have turned it on for each fresh arrival: politics, where to go in Montmartre, how to visit the battle areas, the best restaurants for raviolis and bouillabaisse, where to see naughty things, etc.

There were odd individual callers at times. One young man, an American, once gave me the option of giving him fifty francs or being indirectly responsible for his death.

"I have a young Turkish wife," he pleaded, "and we haven't a cent left. If I don't get something to-night I'll throw myself into the Seine!"

Instead, he wrote an excellent article on wedded life with a Turkish girl and got several hundred
francs. On another occasion, a lanky, loose-limbed female, with pale depravity seared across her features, flopped unannounced into the easy chair.

"I'm an American," she said, lighting a cigarette about a foot from her face and flinging one leg over the other, "and I want to start in on this journalistic game. What" (puff) "can you" (puff) "offer me?"

The number of people who imagine they can just "flop" into journalism has always baffled; I mentioned the fact.

"Give you the finest series on dope you've ever had," she ignored.

"Personal experience?"

"Sure! Cocaine, heroin, hashish, opium, morphia—all the bunch."

I well believed her; and I learnt more about drugs and drug-taking that afternoon than ever before or since, but as for business... well, few newspapers, even of to-day, could print the unexpurgated ravings of a woman dope fiend.

The weirdest caller of all was also a woman. She was travelling back from Germany to New York with the body of her husband, but had got that engagement mixed up with her betrothal to a German baron whom she had apparently met and loved in Berlin while collecting the coffin—

"He's just the dearest old thing! Why, you must meet him: My poor husband—he's at the depot, you know, starting for Cherbourg in the morning—always wanted to be buried back home. The Baron's been so helpful. I'm coming back to
marry him in Munich just as soon as my poor husband’s burial’s through.”

One almost wanted to order the wedding cake there and then at Rumpelmayer’s . . . something in the nature of a sugar-coated coffin by design.

Thus far I have dealt only with transatlantic visitors. There would be also, besides, the periodical inruption of colleagues, a steady stream of Paris callers, such as one of Clémenceau’s daughters trying to sell fashion articles, Jean Longuet, Karl Marx’s grandson, anxious to turn a journalistic dollar, ladies from the Latin Quarter submitting well-thumbed fashion drawings, Morris Gestis booming Miracles and lesser things, and people trying to sell all kinds of stories. A further note of confusion being introduced as evening drew on when the strains of Ciro’s orchestra would float up from down below, never to cease again till early morn—and very nice music it would be to dance to, later on, on our parquet floor! As the accompaniment to the writing of a political cable, however, and colliding as it did with a deafening and continuous traffic roar arising from the Avenue de l’Opéra, Ciro’s tripping melodies could have been dispensed with.

The presentation of the political situation from day to day is the preserve of chief correspondents and occupies much of their time, in my humble estimate, too much of it, the situation but seldom undergoing daily modification and dispatches forwarded to one’s paper being consequently too often in the nature of “political pontification,” subsequently unsustained. But offices demand a daily dose, so that one has no option. What they
require is a daily "cross-section" of political happenings as viewed in, and from Paris, and in order to produce this, correspondents have to keep clear heads, so confused can the native Press make a situation or a development. In this connection, I once received a long questionnaire from an American magazine, asking if the foreign correspondent was much interfered with in Paris, i.e. if attempts were freely made to "dope" him. My answer, I recall, was that "dope" lay all around him, but that his job was, recognizing it, to pass on; and this is what correspondents manage to do in the majority of cases.

English correspondents usually telephone their day’s news to London at 6 p.m. and 10 p.m., the Americans putting their’s on the cable around 8 p.m. and midnight. Besides sometimes “working in” together, where interests do not happen to clash, most correspondents are linked up with a French newspaper, usually of the Grande Presse, for the purpose of getting late news. Our arrangement was with the “Petit Parisien”, and in return for allowing us to go through their proofs at midnight, our New York office would cable a daily bulletin of American news, likely to be of interest to French people, to the “Parisien”. The whole upkeep of my bureau, including salaries, came to about £10,000 a year of which the chief item was cable tolls accounting for £6,000. Cable tolls could easily be kept down, with a moderate display of initiative (details tiresomely technical), but one soon learnt that saving money, for an American concern, at all events, was not only not appreciated in the measure it should
have been, but passed more or less unnoticed, if, indeed, the bigwigs back in New York did not actually develop, subconsciously, maybe, a suspicion that the service was not as it might be (on the principle that a thing that doesn’t cost dollars can’t be up to the mark), mingled with the faintest suggestion of contempt for the non-slower of shekels, as something of a “poor fish.” Sometimes, in other respects, keeping in tune with one’s paper was no light task. The French are ever quick to pounce upon published inaccuracies reflecting on them, and to the extent that a Paris correspondent may find himself suddenly “hauled up” by the Quai d’Orsay for the sins, or supposed sins, of colleagues in other capitals. A humorous case in point concerned the French occupation of the Ruhr, in reporting which event a man on the spot saw, or thought he saw, black French troops on the march.

Now the word “black” is a serious affair, always, in American eyes and so, when the paper came out in New York with headlines, expressive of outraged feelings, something in this style:

**BLACK TROOPS TO POLICE GERMANS**

I was immediately summoned to the ‘Quai’ and shown into the lofty and tapestried sanctum of Monsieur Poincaré, busy, in minute handwriting, as I entered, on one of his cemetery speeches scheduled for delivery next day.

“It is not true what you say in your paper about black troops in the Ruhr,” rapped out Raymond after tugging me towards an armchair with a cold
and nerveless hand—well-known, both, that tug and that hand.

"The message did not come from Paris, Monsieur le Président."

"It did. Here is a copy of it. From our Central Post Office."

"Excuse me, Monsieur le Président. But this message came from Essen, and I merely relayed it through to New York."

"Ah, pardon! But still, this cannot be allowed to endure. Why do you write always lies about France in the American papers?"

"I try not to, personally, Monsieur le Président. That is one of my difficulties at the present time."

"You are, then, a friend of France?"

"More than of any country in the world, Monsieur le Président."

"Then see that this lie of black troops is corrected!"

And I was being thrust without the portals again.

Next day, however, I had to return, having received, in reply to an urgent advice to New York, a cabled rigmarole insisting that coffee-coloured troops were in the Ruhr, that this hue went for black in America, and that Poincaré was to say just what he considered coloured.

The little Lorrainer cut in, exasperated, as I read.

"We foresaw this black troops anti-French cry in America," he shot out in his metallic way, "and took special pains so that offence should not be given to Americans with German sympathies. On
the first afternoon of the occupation two hundred Senegalese—real black troops these—somehow crossed over into the Ruhr by accident but they were immediately evacuated again on instructions from me. As for all this coffee-coloured nonsense, it is a racial misunderstanding. You have black negroes. Our Algerians and Moroccans are a totally different race and are as white as southern Italians. They are in the Ruhr, and they shall stay there!" And the speaker rose as if to terminate the interview.

"Just one thing, Monsieur le Président! My instructions are that if you will write out in your own handwriting a denial that black troops are in the Ruhr, they will publish it on the front page to-morrow morning."

Poincaré thought a moment, then: "Well, it is a great impudence. But it is for France. So I do it!"
CHAPTER X

THE GANG

THERE may be in the region of fifty active English and American correspondents in Paris, occupying varying strata from a Rambouillet château to the drear loneliness of a bedroom in the Rue Blanche. The seigneur of Rambouillet, C. F. Bertelli, of the Hearst Publications, must be the highest-paid correspondent in Europe; but then, his work extends beyond mere journalism. He has also to be animator of Mrs. Randolph Hearst's parties when, for example, that hostess of ideas elects to sup with her guests on a Bridge of Sighs in the Hotel Crillon and with gondolierwaiters warbling serenades as they proffer the cantaloup. Bertelli is lucky. Early on, his proprietor is reputed to have announced: "Never cable more than fifty words of politics a night," so that B. is freed of a burden which weighs heavily upon others and can hunt and shoot and entertain the nobility, while finding time, all the same, to export some of the most spectacular stories of the day.

On the whole, in view of the exchange, Paris salaries are good, ranging from the £30 or £40 a week of a leading U.S. correspondent to the £200 or £300 a year of a junior assistant. Yet it is my
experience that chief correspondents are just unable to pursue that degree of social life their proprietors and editors unconsciously trace out for them in freely arming the moneyed and visiting world with letters of introduction to "our man in Paris"; and that missing this level, some may be driven to seeking gaudier joys in its stead. A Paris dinner-party at la suite can lightly run its host into two or three thousand francs without undue "frilling" and for not being able to afford that kind of thing correspondents are unable to circulate habitually in that realm where colourful news affecting celebrities abounds. The cosmopolitan world "where they amuse themselves" is there, tantalizingly near, yet one may only hang on to its outer fringe, and sometimes take a nasty toss off that like one or two misguided colleagues of other days who thought to help our matters with the aid of a baccarat club in the Boulevard Haussmann.

The best thing to do, of course, is to "settle down," and lucky are they who temperamentally can do this. Such a settlement exists out at the Porte de Versailles captained by Wilbur Forrest of the New York "Herald-Tribune", although a majority favour the Left Bank up Montparnasse way. Forrest is our crack golfer, cracking everything, including his clubs, when he makes a bad shot, while he also has a playful little way, after topping his tee shot, of driving all the balls in his possession successively into St. Germain Forest. Forrest captained us on the last occasion we played our London "opposite numbers" when, among other operation orders, his instructions to me were clear
and unmistakable: as I was in the last degree unlikely to beat the man I had been drawn against, I was to manœuvre him beneath the weather the night before in Dieppe Casino so that his play should not be exactly up to par on the morrow. With little difficulty the fell deed was done, in fact the fates decreed that a Channel gale, blowing on the heights next morning, should add to the difficulties my partner experienced in approaching the first tee. Tall and willowy, he tried many times to tee up his ball only for, first the ball, then himself, to be blown over; while I stood by for the honour of Paris, feeling rather like a Medici. Still, Forrest's strategy turned out to be thoroughly sound. But for my walk-over, we should have been beaten 6-0.

Among other seekers of serenity without the gates are Henry Noble Hall, of several leading publications, and G. Falla, perhaps the shrewdest journalist I have ever met. Noble Hall is Romanly handsome, and our star after-dinner speaker, his French on one occasion even causing Poincaré to look up in reverence. A tale there is (probably ben trovato) that in bygone times, Noble Hall, desirous of re-acquiring Northcliffean favour, once purchased a “Daily Mail” hat, and donning it, strolled up and down outside the Crillon, where N. had his customary suite, until the Chief espied the phenomenon on the skyline, though with what results I am not instructed. Farther afield, at Les Andelys, lives Wythe Williams, now amassing riches writing for the “Saturday Evening Post”. A year or two ago there came a pause in Williams'
journalistic career which he bridged by broadcasting the following circular:

"I hereby announce my resignation as Paris Correspondent of the 'Philadelphia Public Ledger', which post I have held for the past four years, to accept the position of General Director of Publicity for Inspiration Pictures Incorporated, of New York and Rome.

"In making this change, I am of the opinion that as a social power, the motion picture even now rivals the Press. It has ceased to be merely an amusement and is taking its place among the great educational and spiritual forces of our civilization.

"This opinion is greatly strengthened by the immediate program and future plans of Mr. Charles Holland Duell, President of Inspiration Pictures Incorporated. His attitude and ideals easily surpass the best present day conceptions of what the motion picture should be. I, therefore, am delighted at the opportunity to associate myself with this organization."

To which Mr. Duell tossed back the bouquet:

"On behalf of Inspiration Pictures Incorporated, I am deeply grateful that I am able to announce the association of Mr. Wythe Williams with the future development of the company.

"Mr. Williams's great experience as one of the leading journalists of the world, both during and after the Great War, officially recognized by the French Government in creating him Chevalier of the Legion of Honour, justly entitles him to play a leading part in the greater development of the motion picture industry. Accordingly, I am heartily
appreciative that he has chosen Inspiration Pictures Incorporated as the medium through which to express his views, and I welcome him into the organization."

Which is, unquestionably, the way to do things.

Williams's successor, Ray Carroll, in order to escape from constant interruptions and be able to do some work, has reverted from the flamboyant post-war bureau to the obscure and unfindable den of long ago. It is almost impossible nowadays either to get Carroll on the telephone or in the flesh; indeed, one doubts if, at times, he knows where he is himself. One method of speaking to him is first to ring the Printemps Stores, which puts you through to Maisons Lafitte, which in turn connects you with the Armenian Consulate, and so to Carroll. Or if you stand long enough by the south portico of the Trocadero every second Thursday evening Carroll may pass by in a limousine, eyeing the pavement suspiciously; otherwise he is not available.

George Slocombe of the red "Daily Herald", and redder beard, is the most picturesque of our company. Dreadfully handsome in his black sombrero, he keeps in sinister touch with Moscow and, like all sound "Reds", thoroughly enjoys the good things down here below. He is, in fact, the moving spirit of a club of thirteen correspondents known as "The Trough" and which meets once monthly, the rules being that every month a different member digs out a restaurant unknown to all the rest, a difficult enough proceeding and one that often
takes the gorgers far out of Paris. Slocombe and I once came near death together, no, not in Paris, but on the Mountain of Lyons outside that city. We were motoring down to Nice, stowed away in a tiny Citroën cabriolet, and the cold was so ferocious that S. had acquired a sack full of hay in which he sat, the sack tied round his neck and only a spare arm free with which to manipulate our central heating apparatus: Negrita Rum. On the road all would go well. On pulling up somewhere or other, S. would simply roll out on to the road (leaving the interior of the car like a stable) and wait until I, or some kind passer-by, undid him. But on the Mountain of Lyons, in the circumstances under which we came to a standstill, it was different. On the summit the mist was so dense that we couldn’t see a car’s length before us, while the road surface was frozen over, a dreadful helplessness being communicated as we skidded this way and that and with a precipice, we knew, on either side. The slightest application of the brakes, one sensed, would be fatal, yet there came a moment when I had to press the foot brake and with the consequences we foresaw. The car slid gracefully round, facing whence we had come, and came to a standstill on the very edge of the precipice, and with Slocombe, tied up in his sack, on that edge and, of course, unable to budge! So there we sat, long and icily, with our rum in the darkness, and with death below us, until two cyclists, happening by, pulled us back with infinite precaution on to the centre of the road; and so down to the not inaptly-named village of Tarara.
Lester Lawrence, of the "Morning Post" and the quiet, hesitating manner, is in many ways the most able of the English correspondents in Paris and one of the most popular. Formerly of Reuter's, in whose service he was once sabred by a Prussian in Berlin, Lawrence is one of the few English correspondents to wear the Legion of Honour which he won for war writing. When the French began distributing ribbons to the Anglo-American Press, the British Government instructed its Ambassador that their bestowal upon English journalists was not to be encouraged; but several Americans have them, indeed, "writing for the ribbon" became a phrase though, possibly, a loose one. Still, in years gone by, there were one or two coincidences of rabidly pro-French dispatches being succeeded by the elevation of their authors to the coveted rank of chevalier, the material value of which decoration, social considerations aside, seems to be twofold: it extracts additional politeness from Parisians and enables the decorated one to obtain special consideration from the authorities when things flare up o' nights, as they have been known to do, in Paris. Unfortunately, on my one clash with Authority, following a boxing match with a taxi driver in the Champs Elysées, not being so honoured, I had to appear before a very mixed tribunal, and here and now will salute the Paris Bar for possessing an advocate such as Maître Levy. Maître Levy appeared weighed down with war medals and his defence was illuminating. Completely ignoring the case on hand, he launched into an inspired panegyric of the defendant as the man
who had just taken Father Victory round America and judgment was practically instantaneous.

The annual election to the Presidency of the Anglo-American Press Association is sometimes a fight for the ribbon, since the holder of that office, be he an American, is invariably decorated if he hasn't won the honour already. Various attempts have been made to dissolve this association, hyphenating the Old and the New Worlds journalistically, but it is doubtful if such manœuvring is wise policy, union being decidedly strength in the matter of obtaining privileges and in securing as guests of the association at its weekly luncheons the most important public characters of the hour. The fact of Britons and Americans sitting side by side is otherwise good to look upon and, anyway, they do not have to think, write or talk alike, and don't. Once a year the twain have a great all-night celebration known as the annual dinner, for which a big Montmartre establishment is retained from dusk to dawn and into which everyone in Paris tries to push a way, so rich is the entertainment provided gratis by all the latest "stars" and so pretty are the English girls from the "Folies" and the "Casino". Many thrilling love affairs, and even a pukka marriage, have been known to result from these annual bringings of the young people together. Ambassadors and statesmen are among those present at the dinners, but it is an understood thing that no "copy" may be made out of events of that night and morning. Once this unwritten law was broken, through a misunderstanding, and with the result that Washington is said to have asked next
day of its representative in Paris just what this headline signified:

**U.S. AMBASSADOR KISSES BALLET GIRLS.**

The drawing power of these yearly rejoicings is even such as to urge prominent literary figures, on occasion, to try and buy their way in by offering autographed copies of their works in return for an invitation—as illustrated by the appearance in my office one morning of the vast Hendrik Van Loon carrying a copy of his "Story of Mankind."

"I have just purchased this poor work of mine at Brentano's for sixty francs," he bowed, "and would offer it to you in return for a ticket for your annual dinner, which ticket, I understand, costs sixty-five francs. An adjustment of five francs being indicated, I beg of you to find same enclosed within my book."

Later the same day Hendrik returned with a copy of his "Story of the Bible," similarly autographed and with similar bow, speech and offered adjustment, this time in quest of a ticket for his publisher Mr. L. who, I am afraid, however, scarcely turned out quite such a social success at the subsequent feast as his friend Hendrik. At a neighboring table, among other distinguished ones, sat "Black Jack" Pershing, and Mr. L. apparently had the most profound difficulty in believing that such a great man could have found his way into the company of journalists. Mr. L., in fact, resolutely refused to believe in the presence of the former American C.-in-C., so much so that finally someone offered to take the doubting one across, to settle
the matter. Whereupon "Black Jack," beginning by looking black at the very nature of the interruption, became, after passing rapidly through various shades, positively stutteringly jet upon Mr. L. commencing to smear on the transcending and terrific honour he, Mr. L., was experiencing at that moment in standing before, etc.

There sometimes is a pause in the news, out of Paris, following these annual dinners, an unaccountable lull reminiscent of one which once occurred in Petrograd during the war. Five correspondents were then holding the fort on the Neva and they jointly decided that supposing they all went and had a little hunting holiday over the frontier in Finland? Which was duly done, and not a solitary line emanating from Petrograd, in the result, for five whole days, the London Press, mystified, ultimately came out with big headlines proclaiming:

SINISTER MYSTERY OF PETROGRAD.

"Bigger news," as one of the quintette afterwards observed, "than ever we could have sent them in the five days."

It was at an Anglo-American Press luncheon that President Deschanel made his last appearance before definitely losing his reason, and joining the hapless band of French statesmen, in mental homes, which shows no signs of dwindling. Almost the next day the President had begun walking aimlessly about the boulevards unattended, after which events marched with tragic rapidity. The First Magistrate would insist on walking on the water in the Bois de Boulogne, saying that it had been done
before, while tree-tops held a magnetic attraction
for him. Up he would climb through the branches
as high as he could get and sit there for hours until
his daughter arrived below and shouted up that she
held state documents urgently requiring his signa-
ture. Which was the only way the unfortunate
President could be safely brought down to earth
again. As to the train episode, when the President
was found on the line in his pyjamas, there is little
doubt that, stupefied by sedatives and oppressed by
the heavy atmosphere of the night, he climbed out
of the window, since a big brass bar ran right
across this, half way up, making it physically im-
possible for anyone to have fallen out by accident.

One who belongs to the 'Gang' in all save calling
is Jo Davidson, sculptor and bad person to meet if
you are wanting to keep quiet—as when your pro-
prietor is in town, a circumstance always clearly
writ on a correspondent's features as he threads
his way hither and thither, eyes down, and avoiding
contact, lest conviviality ensue. Jovial and black-
bearded Jo made famous busts of all the war
leaders and from subsequent memorial work has
now advanced to the situation of sculptor-to-the-
Four-Hundred-on-tour-in-Europe, dreamy, lovely,
profiles and "fulls" of débètantes and brides lining
his studio in the Avenue du Maine. Another on
the fringe, and a very remarkable personage, is
Colonel Charles Sweeny, restless soldier of fortune
but with a fortune of his own. Tall, muscular,
aquiline of feature and downright in manner,
Sweeny is one of the best-known characters in
Paris. Hailing from Washington in the Far West,
where his grandfather was one of the first settlers, S. spent his youth before the war organizing revolutions in South America. In 1914 he was the first American to join the Foreign Legion and went right through the campaign in the trenches in France, being seriously wounded three times and finally, heavily decorated, leading the American liaison battalion, next the British, at the Amiens break-through of August 8, 1918. The armistice came as a great blow to Sweeney, who lives for wars and therefore escapes all the time, but, in the years of “peace” that have supervened since, he has done his best to get into any trouble that has been going —calling on Kemal at Angora, trying, in vain, to establish a connection with the Red Army, wandering through the war-stricken Caucasus and the Syrian desert. At the first sign of a conflagration Sweeney is there and though his two abiding sentiments are love of France (he brought the American aviators out to Morocco to fight Abd-el-Krim) and antagonism to the British Empire (in part because of a family hanging tragedy in Ireland long ago) he is not particular as to the colour of the flag he is under, so long as there is fighting.

In between one adventure or campaign and the next, and his are genuine experiences, you may see S. strolling placidly along the boulevard, books on wars, past, present and future, under his arms, or studying the latest Bourse and Exchange figures in the little jazz bank of the Rue Daunou.

Martin Donohoe, famous as war correspondent and globe-trotter and doyen of active correspondents, is almost the last survivor of a famous old
corner table in the Café Napolitain. The new
meeting-places being rather more gilded: Harry's
New York Bar, opposite Ciro's, and chez Frank at
the Ritz. Donohoe has long possessed special
sources of information in Portugal and Bulgaria,
in which countries very few revolutions are allowed
to develop without his presence on the spot.
Though still quite young, another Paris veteran is
George Adam, surely one of the finest Paris corre-
spondents "The Times" can ever have had, and
now of the "New York Sun". Adam once had a
memorable funeral dinner; functions, I should
imagine, peculiar to Paris where correspondents
come and go, or play musical chairs, with some
frequency. The sad event followed on the San
Remo Conference when A. was unfortunate enough
to rouse the ire of his proprietor by accepting a
favour from Mr. Lloyd George. From the first
day telegraphic connection with London had been
practically non-existent and on the second or third
day correspondents were unable to get their mes-
sages through at all. It was then that the ever-
wily Welsh Wizard, despite the fact that his quarrel
with Northcliffe had reached its peak, innocently
invited A. to put his messages on the specially
leased Foreign Office wire, which A. proceeded to
do and why, indeed, not? The Lord of Printing
House Square, however, when the story came to his
ears, saw scarlet at the very notion of his being
put under the shadow of an obligation to "L. G."
and so we had that funeral dinner, upstairs at the
Café de Paris, with a dozen pall bearers sitting
round and as lively a "corpse" as ever escaped from
an Irish wake; much comfort being derived, I recall, from the opening words of one post-prandial orator: "Even Rome was sacked!"

Some Paris correspondents find time to be authors, notably William Bird of the Consolidated Press, whose book on the wines of the country has become a classic and who should really charge a consultation fee for cellar advice; Harry Greenwall of the "Daily Express", leading Parisian exponent of his school; Basil Woon, who wrote the best volume on Sarah Bernhardt that has appeared since her death, in three weeks of all night sessions; A. M. Murray, who made Coué articulate in book form; and Sisley Huddleston, most prolific of local penmen. Possessing the keenest political perception and able to write at any length, great or small, on literally any subject from James Joyce, whom he "discovered" journalistically, to the Motor Show at the Salon, the massive, genial and big-hearted Sisley, an inflated Bard of Avon in appearance, must nowadays correspond, in some form or another, for half the publications of England and North America; in fact I hope I am not being too indiscreet in saying that his phenomenal flair for free-lance work enabled him, within a very few years, to increase monthly returns from two hundred francs to the vicinity of—well, a hundred times that amount, or more. From former rough quarters beside the Odéon, Sisley has migrated to a sumptuous studio-apartment on the summit of Montparnasse to which diplomats and politicians, publishers and literary men deem it a privilege to be bidden to a soirée. Huddleston once wrote a
book in fourteen days on Poincaré, for that states-
man to fall utterly and unexpectedly into oblivion
on the fifteenth morning. Yet up came Sisley,
smiling and planning another volume, when other
authors would have been studying the poisons list.
On being appointed "Times" correspondent,
Huddleston had occasion to put Lord Northcliffe
rather severely in his place. The post had been
offered him in between a cleek and a mashie shot
at Fontainebleau and some days later H. was
invited to accompany N. down to Aix-les-Bains.

On the journey N. was peevish and critical.
"I'm afraid I don't like your clothes at all,
Huddleston," he observed at one stage, referring
to H.'s wide black sombrero and flowing tie,
double-breasted black reefer and "Foreign Office"
trousers, "I don't like them at all. When you are
next in London you must go to my tailor's."

"I regret, my lord," returned Huddleston, rising
in medium dudgeon, "but I am not in the habit
of permitting my personal appearance to form the
subject of comment. As my appearance does not
please you, I propose therefore leaving the train at
the next station."

Which he duly did.

A character of equal force and originality is
Henry Wales of the "Chicago Tribune", known
far and wide across Europe as "Hank."

Besides having put Chicago on the map in the
Chancelleries of Europe, "Hank" holds one great
world's record: he has attended every conference,
everywhere, since Versailles, there being great
jubilation when he beat Mr. Lloyd George's record
in this regard. The two had run neck and neck for years until events of late 1922 or, rather, of early '23, when the hapless Bonar Law journeyed to Paris for his one and only conference as Premier. It was then that "Hank" took the lead over "L. G." and to-day he is as far ahead of his fellows, as regards attendances at conferences, as are a Hobbs or a Ruth in their respective spheres of sport. A concomitant record is also the property of "Hank", namely that of being the world's greatest questioner of Prime, Foreign and lesser Ministers. . . . he must have asked by now a good three thousand questions and have received at least seventeen adequate replies. "Hank's" method of questioning is unique. His large head tilted to one side above a small physique, he first seeks to hypnotise his victim for a few seconds, then, with a toss of the head as much as to say "come on, don't be silly, you may as well speak the truth for a change," shoots out of the corner of his mouth something in this vein:

"Say, is it true Damascus has fallen?"

. . . On which occasions, "Hank" will look very puzzled and very serious indeed, for it is, as he says, all very confusing.

Edwin James, of the "New York Times," and a possible future editor of that national newspaper, believes in doing business in mirrored halls. Not long ago he acquired a vast dressmaking establishment with a frontage of twelve windows overlooking the Rue de la Paix and converted it into an office and point d'appui for tourists who now
throng the place all day, much to the relief of neighbouring colleagues. Little “Jimmy” of the husky voice and big cigar, is great on “think stuff” in the political line, and has been known to correct General Dawes, Lord Bradbury, Monsieur Poincaré and Sir Robert Horne, in the matter of German capacity to pay. With him, is P. J. Philip, late of Scotland, but whose accent now hovers somewhere off the Newfoundland Banks, a pillar of the profession, making it all look so easy; and then there is that bright young Roland Atkinson, in the first flight of political journalists for the “Sunday Times,” “Westminster,” etc., and who has also demonstrated the elasticity of English journalistic training by writing, equally well, for both sides of the ocean.

Good fellows all, and more besides. Only one, in my time, was otherwise—used to send back reports on the private life of his chief—and his was the shortest of shrifts... sped on his way, unhonoured and unsung.

The average age of a Paris correspondent may be thirty to forty-five, and most are married men, there being still sufficient women about, apparently, prepared to take partners who can never get home to dinner till nine or later, who, from having to watch and chronicle the doings of others all day long, are often distraits in the home, and who may be shot off to Bucharest or Casablanca at a moment’s notice. Hours in Paris are very bad, it being virtually impossible to keep a dinner engagement, or indeed, to enjoy a normal evening’s distraction at all, so late does one finish—a factor
which undoubtedly leads to a measure of bar patronizing which would not otherwise occur: there being, between nine and midnight, practically no place where one can dine, if one except Maxim’s, a Chinese restaurant off the Boulevard St. Michel and known as the “Chink Joint,” Monteverdi’s, off the Grands Boulevards, and the Dingo, in Montparnasse. The rest are closing or have no food left worth consuming.

Not that life is sombre—far from it—yet the Paris correspondent’s path is not all strewn with rose-leaves. For one thing, he has to develop almost Ulysses-like qualities of self-discipline and character, and with very often no one but himself to do the binding. At the height of the day, for example, it is difficult to stroll more than fifty yards from one’s office door without sensing potential adventure, native or tourist, in the near vicinity, and with very few material difficulties in the way, while the stage is eternally set for exaggerated quaffing, against which one is only armed by experience. Since, apart from touring friends incessantly seeking to lead one astray, certain elements of Parisian life make freely for the pursuit of vain delights. Paris, for all her convivial cafés and myriad sauntering females, her never-ending colour and animation and unstandardized play of the scene, can be a very lonely city, much lonelier than either London or New York. Living in Paris and visiting there, are two very different things. Passing through, one stays at an hotel, one sees the sights, one looks up old friends, one revels in restaurant voyages of discovery, one dives into the unre-
stricted liberty of day and night. Excellent. But one can't go on indefinitely staying at an hotel, seeing the sights, looking up old friends, revelling in restaurant voyages of discovery, and diving into the unrestricted liberty of day and night. One yearns to try and map out some sort of a base, to embark upon some sort of life with the word "enduring" in it, in a word, one longs for a home. And therein enters the dilemma of the foreign resident. Several things may make life in Paris trying at the present time, but a chronic inability to get agreeably settled must be the root trouble. Cohorts of foreign residents are located in hotel rooms, against returning to which (so lonely and monotonous do they become in the course of years) they fight till the last café light goes out.

A second drawback concerns what one may term the "stand-offishness" of French people of a grading which would be accessible elsewhere. The French home is the most jealously guarded in the world, with doors firmly bolted on the foreigner, unless he be of high degree or likely to be useful, so that, in the absence of clubs other than gambling centres, the bottom more or less falls out of social life save for intercourse between the Anglo-American community itself. Again, there is the difficulty an individual of ordinary means experiences in indulging any sport, such as golf. There are five links round Paris, and they are all chock-full. You may play by the day but this costs, all in, in the region of a hundred francs. Or take the Paris theatre. Most Paris theatres were built a century ago, they are never ventilated, and you usually develop a
headache towards the second act. The price of seats is extortionate, and one has to go through a maddening amount of fuss to reach them. Nothing, I should imagine, so quickly pulls on the foreign resident in Paris as the theatre—sitting suffocating while husbands are betrayed by lovers in pyjamas. Despite fine acting, themes are for the most part either adulterous twaddle, operettas of the past, or crude and dull revue entertainments based on a maximum exposure of the female body. Nor can one well omit from this tale of woe the legitimate enough classification of Paris as the noisiest city in the world. The noise of the ill-regulated traffic, of thundering motor 'buses, grinding taxi-cabs, all "tooting" in a different high-pitched key, the din of sirens and open exhausts, of tram-car bell-ringing, and horses' hoofs, makes it no longer possible to sit on the boulevard and enjoy a quiet chat. You have to shout, and without a doubt much of Parisian ill-humour and nerviness is due to the incessant uproar around.

Yet another factor in this litany of "grouch" has to do with the contemporaneous attitude of the Parisian towards the foreigner, and more especially towards English and Americans (I do not refer to the provincial Frenchman who is almost as different from the Parisian as is the Bavarian from the Prussian). This is one of camouflaged enmity. One lives in an insistent atmosphere of hostility, as if the good burghers were saying: "we only tolerate you here because of your money," an attitude for which the Press is in no small measure responsible, and whose varying manifestation usually escape
birds of passage, esconced in hotels de luxe and patronizing haunts specially organized for them.

Paris, in short, may be lovely, and free as the air. It can also, unless one picks one's path with an infinity of care, be depressing, demoralizing, joyless . . . even the synthetic roystering of Montmartre coming to grate, in the end, like the oft-repeated tune or a hurdy-gurdy.

It is one thing temporarily entering the joy-whirl, quite another thing having to live in that same joy-whirl. Paris de passage, and Paris to live in, form a tale of two very different cities and only the strong, and maybe some not strong enough to be weak, survive.
CHAPTER XI
FRANCE IS TAUGHT THIS—

WHEN Raymond Poincaré was beaten in the elections of May, 1924, great was foreign surprise, his return to power having been considered a moral certainty. Paris was just as much taken aback, the whole of France, in fact.

Why?
Chiefly because the French Press—one must generalize for the moment—utterly failed to interpret the real mind and feeling of the country, having "doped" it for so long. The word was: "A walkover for the existing Administration;" with Liberal France the poorest second.

It is also possible, just now, that the French Press is not presenting a true reading of the real state of mind of the French people, as a whole, vis-a-vis their former war friends, since, very decidedly, the country has again been powerfully "doped" on this issue. Not that we shall tarry with international problems here; the game being far too fluid for that, and what is written one month being out of date the next. But an excursion into French Presland may give a more static yield, may even be not without value, so dismayed have I seen certain good Britons at the very thought that anyone should develop such an aversion to them
as the Paris Press more than suggests the French people have done.

"After all," say the good-hearted English, "we like these people. And we like their country. And we helped them out in the war and never rubbed it in. And we'd gladly forgive them all their debts, if we could. Why, then, should they hate us like this?"

Well, they don't hate you. But they have got things mixed up through absorbing misinformation from their newspapers; they labour under one or more regrettable racial characteristics, and—they have not forgotten the past. It would be quite idle to proceed with this chapter without accenting that. Were I to set off along the cliffs to-morrow, from Deal to Penzance, seeking to rouse hatred against France among fisher and country folk, on the way, by resurrecting the spectre of "Boney," I should not make a solitary convert; more serious, I should probably miss a lot of good country ale and cider for my pains. In France, and the fact must be accepted, it is otherwise. The Somme has not entirely erased Waterloo; you are still les Anglais, with the faintest hiss, and the victors in centuries of warring. Nor do I deduce this merely from residence in Paris, having, in the past year, lingered in every corner of France. It is for the traveller, personally, to neutralize this initial, slumbering, and often subconscious animosity, and with most French people, outside of Paris, happily it is not difficult to do so; but the sentiment exists to start with, deep down, and if proof of it be needed one has but to instance the cordiality with which these people turn to you the moment they
learn you are Irish, or even Scotch. After which, we may wander down the years to actuality——

The French Press3, since the armistice, has instructed the people of France broadly as follows in regard to that United Kingdom known only across the Channel as “Angleterre” :—

(i) That les Anglais fought indifferently in the war: “didn’t try” half of the time, and withheld reserves the other half.

(ii) That Mr. Lloyd George is the greatest enemy France has had in modern times and that he sought to encompass France’s downfall both at the Peace Conference and later.

(iii) That England sank the German fleet, to suit British policy, and that she roped in German colonies ten or twelve times the size of France.

(iv) That England ruined the franc.

(v) That her statesmen are mostly pro-German.

(vi) That she is largely responsible for French colonial trouble.

(vii) That she is relatively rich and prosperous, as evidenced by her tourists, and is only acting a part.

(viii) That she is hard, and has not been sympathetic enough towards France’s suffering.

(ix) That she wrecked the French Security Pact.

(x) That she has worked to alienate the United States from France.

(xi) That the nature of Mr. Baldwin’s debt settlement with America, coupled with the value of sterling and England’s general “ perfidy,” as set forth above, render John Bull’s demand for the return of a single centime from France, disgusting.
How much of this is true? It is for the indicted ones to say. I only know that times without number, in Brittany, in Gascogne, in Dauphiné, in Provence, in Burgundy, in Touraine, the traveller is beset by questions on these heads and emanating from all classes: peasant, artisan, "little bourgeois," bureaucratic, professional, leisured, titled. Often have I sat in cottages and cafés trying to get things in proper perspective for these people, no easy task with so distorted a canvas in the field, yet hopeful, always, because of French intelligence and the note of interrogation, implying doubt, that would reveal itself during their process of thought.

"The newspapers, then, do not tell us the truth?"

As for England's troubles: her dole, her unemployment, her "Reds," her American debt, her falling export trade, her coal dilemma, her shipping crisis, her abnormal cost of living, her taxation, her Baldwin—of these, and kindred things, the French, in the mass, know little or nothing, if one excepts a vague, involved consciousness of the unemployment tragedy. Otherwise the British war bill might be non-extant, and any way, it would be unintelligible, in the absence of French newspaper good will, so long as the pound sterling is worth four times its pre-war and war-time value, in francs, and so long as les Anglais can stage high jinks in resorts all over the country. That an Englishman may be fleetingly rich in France one week and desperately hard-up in his own country the next, has never been even touched upon though it is at the very core of the whole business. I have lately estimated that residence in England is sixty
per cent dearer than in France, for people drawing English money in both cases, and that, allowing for the exchange and all other relevant matters, life for the average British family must be from fifteen to twenty per cent dearer than corresponding life for the average French family. That, or anything akin to it, is not appreciated across the Channel. And simply because the French Press is not fulfilling its mission, or, it might be fairer to say, because only a limited section of it is so doing. A powerful and influential section has for years concentrated upon England as the cause of all French woes while, strangely and unaccountably, at the same time, either refraining from all mention of the United States or doing lip-service to that stern land. This same Press that will print almost anything against England seems to be afraid to affront, almost to criticize, America. Why? Memories of Lafayette? Of Pershing? Of Wilson? The link of republicanism? Love for the Middle West? Demandez-moi une autre. But the fact remains. Americans may be laughed at; but always behind the arras. Americans may be called "bloodsuckers" and "badly brought-up ones"—but always sotto voce. Only for England is there loud speaking . . .

The differentiation is even carried on to sacred ground . . . the length of war memorials.

Why, for example, should it be that the French have planned the construction of a giant, artistic lighthouse at the mouth of the Gironde as a monument to the American Expeditionary Force, at a cost of eleven million francs (over the collection of which, it is true, some difficulty is now being experi-
enced) while making no arrangements at all similarly to honour the British dead, who outnumber the American dead in France by twelve to one, if we except the existence of a plaque in Notre Dame, unveiled in 1924 by the Prince of Wales?

One cannot help thinking that had six hundred thousand poilus fallen in Surrey and Sussex and Kent in the defence of London, something would have been done ere this to honour them.

In some measure, the lamentable existing situation cannot be traced elsewhere than to the door of Lord Northcliffe, that brave and battling bearer of such a load of mischief. For years Lord N.'s papers, not satisfied with being more French than the French, condemned and abused the slightest movement on John Bull's part to protect his own hen-roost, and with this distressing sequel: that the French, accepting as hall-marked and as something which was only just as it should be, this incorrect and sloppy show of dog-like English devotion, became instantaneously convinced, on its cessation, that England had deserted France. Only once since has France trusted and respected, even liked, a British leader—Bonar Law. "Ramsay" was worshipped in the limited Herriot world; as for Mr. Baldwin, the French might give more rein to pleasant musings were they not permanently furious with the debt simpleton (as they think) of Washington, for what he did there.

The most rabidly Anglophobe pen in France is that of Stephane Lausanne, editor of the "Matin." His particular journalistic characteristic, crudely set down, consists in licking the boots of Uncle
Sam, whenever he can get in a lick, and in spitting the residue at John Bull. He even reminds one forcibly of Max's quondam saying of an eminent critic, that "he was clinging on to the Brontës' skirts and that if he wasn't careful they'd come off." Lausanne clings tightly to the pants of Jonathan, with what possibilities of an undistinguished dénouement, time must be arbiter.

Nor does it seem to matter what Jonathan does; even his ban on wine, surgical operation on France and more or less of a reflection on her whole Being as a race, having been swiftly relegated to the limbo of forgotten things after a speil of moderately embittered japing.

Mussolini, on the other hand, has a different way of doing things when struck at by the United States. As is probably known, the Restricted Immigration Law now in operation across the Atlantic was a terrific blow at Italy, accustomed to exporting in the region of four hundred thousand young men and women annually to the United States. Very particularly it was a blow for Mussolini, who couldn't find anything to do with this surplus national youth except hand them out black shirts, and once the Duce told the American Ambassador in Rome exactly what he thought about things. It was at an evening reception and the U. S. Envoy was naturally enough seeking to be agreeable with the principal guest.

"What wonders you are accomplishing, Direttore," and so forth.

"Well, if you think that way about my rule, it might be a good thing if you got your government to alter its new immigration law!" retorted
Mussolini, turning on his heel; shortly after which rebuff, the Ambassador quitted Rome.

The "Matin" has a huge circulation, percolating through to the most outlying districts, which is important in that if France possesses several good provincial newspapers, it is usually what Paris says that counts, and it is the so-called "Grande Presse," the "Matin," the "Journal," the "Petit Journal," the "Petit Parisien," and the "Echo de Paris," which has almost all of the saying. As an antidote to Lausanne, the first named is lucky to possess an admirable political reporter in Jules Sauerwein, one who is able to switch discreetly, and remain in confidence, as one Government succeeds another. Henri de Jouvenel can also be straightforward and concise. Marcel Ray in the "Petit Journal" is quite fair and to the point—perhaps the best in this category now that Philippe Millet and Robert de Jouvenel are gone; Chassaigne in the "Journal" too one-sided, while from Pertinax's pen, in the "Echo de Paris," there gushes a perpetual fount of jingo bias, frequently well-informed though, and sometimes containing rare pearls in the way of news. The two national organs, the "Temps" and the "Débats" are "evenings," the former stolid and circumspect, the latter often bitterly disposed towards the foreigner. Of the other "evenings," the "Liberté" is rabidly Anglophobe, less so and more restrained, the "Intransigeant" and "Paris-Midi." "Paris-Soir," belonging to the Left, is, automatically, more generous.

Follows the "Presse d'Opinion"—some dozen morning sheets extending from the fascist "Action
Française” to the Communist “Humanité,” and Anarchist “Libertaire.” Of this category the “Œuvre,” “Quotidien,” and “Ere Nouvelle” are of the Left and therefore, as indicated before, inclined to be generous, the “Œuvre” being possibly the fairest publication in Paris, though a strictly party organ. The “Quotidien” worships at the shrine of Herriot and the “Ere Nouvelle” at that of Caillaux. Both are sound if the latter can be hostile enough at times. But for real fireworks directed against les étrangers one turns to such sheets as Daudet’s “Action Française,” Buré’s “Eclair,” Hervé’s “Victoire” and to half a dozen more obscure organs. The “Gaulois” is Nationalist and correctly severe upon former war helpers; the “Figaro,” with Lucien Romier writing, similarly orientated. One looks in vain for a friendly word in these quarters, much of the time. The “Humanité,” which gets more “scoops” nowadays through Communists appropriating official documents and stealing letters, than all the rest of the Paris Press put together, is more concerned with showing up the international capitalist than any one country.

Paris newspapers belong mainly to political, industrial and banking groups which may account for much, the subsidy being quite common and recognized. Another factor which cannot be lost sight of, in this cursory estimate, is the underpayment of French journalists and their consequent vulnerability if anyone comes along and offers them a subsidy. Once, at a conference, I was staggered to hear from a leading Paris colleague that his salary was nine hundred francs a month! Some
time later I had occasion to employ a man who had
the faculty of making such things as coal and oil
"stories" interesting, i.e. when these were in the
foreground politically, I would send for him . . .
only to be advised one day that my collaborator
was "a well-known oil man."
Not that I would
insinuate that the personal subsidy is other than
an exception; nevertheless, in so far as it exists,
it works itself into the general mosaic of mis-
representation, or, better perhaps of over-statement.
French political writers have to be bright and
gossipy, have ever to keep on stimulating their
readers to new thoughts and fresh horizons and
over-statement is all too often the result.
In the sphere of general news the French Press
is quite good; in its "features" and special articles,
as interesting as any in Europe, while further
honour falls to it for its cleanliness. No divorce
news is published nor any of the filth with which
millions of English people regale themselves at
week-ends. The Dennistoun case was printed,
and aroused great merriment, principally because
French newspapers continue to portray English
people as sexual hypocrites, the men in tweed
caps and loud checks and the women long-necked,
lanky and flat-footed. The French newspaper
conception of the English has not changed since de
Maupassant's "Miss Harriet", mainly because
such French as visit England are fundamentally
unable to export themselves mentally at the same
time. But this kind of thing has all been said before.
That section of the Paris Press which habitually
misleads, derives splendid backing from two
quarters: from the cartoonists, whose lightning pencillings can wound as deftly as they can "dope"; and from those hundred and one boulevard "joy-sheets," avidly read and usually depicting, on their covers, a midinette in a whirlwind with a cat or a pom in the front row of the stalls. Such publications plumb the depths of libel, insult, and lying in regard to former allies, in drawing as in type, and unhappily are read in every corner of the country.

The provinces, snowed under by the Paris Grande Presse as they may be, possess three fine publications in the "Dépêche de Toulouse," the "Phare de la Loire" (Nantes) and the "Nouvelliste" (Lyons), all journals of the Left—Liberal France being the one political entity anxious to give the foreigner a "square deal." The Bordeaux "Petit Gironde," a first-rate newspaper, follows the "Big Five" up in Paris; as also does Loucheur's "Journal du Nord," and, in lesser degree, the "Petit Marseillais" and the "Est Républicain" of Nancy.

As a corrective to the present state of affairs, two incidental suggestions might be made; that the "Big Five" send over a batch of their best investigating writers—they have the men, Henri Beraud, de Korab, Edouard Helsey, Georges London, and they have the money too—to dredge the whole situation in the United Kingdom, with special reference to the arch-criticisms I have enumerated earlier on in this chapter; and that, conversely, leading Englishmen, not necessarily politicians but possessing a colloquial knowledge of French, should speak facts periodically to French listeners-in, by arrangement.
CHAPTER XII

OUR TRAINED SEAL

The Trained Seal, or politician-of-international-repute-turned-newspaper-writer-on-contract, first came into prominence during the Peace Conference in response to frenzied wirelessing for "stunts" and "stunters" from the U.S. "newspaper ship" bearing down on France with five hundred proprietors, editors, managers, feature-writers, correspondents, reporters and office boys, all oiling their Coronas and sharpening their pencils for the field day of their sweet young lives.

Gee, Boys, but what a yarn!

The Allied and Victorious Press may have served great purpose in the war and have meant to follow up with equal service in the peace but—and this with few exceptions—by the attitude in which it approached the indescribably complex and delicate peacemaking of Paris, governed as it appeared to be primarily by an irresponsible determination to make the most journalistic capital out of the proceedings in the scoring of uninterrupted "beats," "scoops," "stunts," and "sensations;" in its wanton setting of statesman against statesman under the guise of developing the "personal factor" and, sometimes, even of state against state to sustain a flagging public interest; by the rein it
chose to give to flame-fanning and to propaganda, to imaginings, even to falsification and mis-representation; by the way it winked at betrayal of confidence and encouraged backstairs intrigue, wrecked situations by premature publicity and played up to proprietary vanities, exaggerated when calm was the essential and ignored currents the world would have been the wiser for knowing, furthered interested office policies and fostered personal and national bias, in its excision of tact, diplomacy and reticence from the vocabulary . . . all for a "story" . . . the Allied and Victorious Press must scarcely be far behind the actual fashioners of the Treaty in the matter of responsibility for the wreckage of to-day, and this, much as the newspapers may, on the other hand, have felicitously influenced, directed and stayed the hands of the signatories of Versailles.

However. Into this Bedlam was born the Trained Seal, willing obediently to go through hoops and balance cones and bark and snap each week at the crack of the correspondent's whip, in return for a high honorarium. Seals, for instance, of that epoch of which a Woodward might well have been proud were Tardieu and Painlevé, much as to-day the centre of the ring is occupied by Poincaré and Kerriot (it being an understood thing in France that no one holding office may perform). Trained Seals are treated humanely and, on the whole, intelligently by chief correspondents. They may be paid anything from £20 to £100 an article and are usually given their subjects comfortably in advance. Nor does the whip crack too frequently,
provided the Seal continues bright and "snappy"—only when he gets dull or "technical" (usually this is when he is really saying something) does he feel the flick of it. Conversely, when a Seal has "registered," extra fish will be thrown to him in the form of an invitation to meet Colonel House, Pearl White or Dempsey, or a request that he should address the English and American correspondents at their weekly luncheon. Not many Seals decline thus to circulate socially although I was to catch one who not only wouldn't but couldn't—

It was in the sultry summer of 1922 and the exalted functionary referred to in a preceding chapter as the "Human Hurricane" had been visiting us some little time. One morning he swooped into the office:

"Brain functioning? Well, who's-the-liveliesthing-in-pants-we-can-get-this-side-to-write-for-the-paper?"

"Joseph Caillaux."

The "Hurricane," momentarily ceasing to blow, glanced up. Then: "Where were you last night? Zelli's again? Cut this fooling out! I'm serious."

I explained that I wasn't fooling at all, that half from intuition, half from sensing the political drift, I believed Caillaux was coming back, and added my whys and wherefores, and for several minutes my interlocutor listened intently, a most exceptional circumstance, but his journalistic genius had been stimulated. Then he said: "I believe you're right. Try and land him," and dashed off to the races... leaving me, in the calm that followed
his exit, perhaps just the least bit nervous at what I had done. . . .

After all, a certain dignity had to be maintained even in the Corps of Trained Seals. And here was I championing an execrated exile who had many more years of banishment to run.

"Caillaux!" you heard it hissed, "grafters in office! Saved from exposure by his wife committing a murder! Friend of Germany! Leader of the defeatists during the war! Caillaux is bad—all bad!"

However, I was committed. There was naught to do now save follow through and so, two summer mornings later found me at the door of Joseph Caillaux's house in the Place de la République, Mamers. Everything was open—doors and windows—but there seemed nobody about save several life-size nude damozels of note, with Psyche to the fore, so presently I tapped on a door—and entered Caillaux's study.

The exile received me politely but brusquely. The temperamental flaw that had so damaged his career in the past, an imperious intolerance because no one's brain worked quite as rapidly and keenly as his did, was still there, and I noticed too that his features had become even more highly coloured and that his enunciation, in unison, had moved still further up the scale. His desk lay littered with manuscript in his thin, shaky scrawl, while propped up before him as if to radiate inspiration, was an eighteenth-century etching of a woman broadcasting banknotes from a chariot.

"That was the first time French statesmen
brought ruin to their country by printing paper money," explained Caillaux; "a friend sent it to me the other day."

Quickly we settled the business side—he was to write for six months on the subject of French finances at £20 an article—then I asked the exile a favour, namely, that he should narrate the batterings of fortune that had brought him to his then plight; and as this very unusual man has been so much in the foreground latterly, his own story told to me that day from the depths may not be without interest.

"The Caillaux family," he began in fluent English, "is of humble working origin. In the seventeenth century we were builders. Then, with the Revolution, we entered the bourgeoisie, my great-grandfather—there he is above your head—becoming a lawyer. Also my other great-grandfather over there. We've been lawyers ever since, except my father, who was an engineer. I travelled, learning languages, when young, and was in Ireland for some months when Parnell was at the height of his fame. Then I entered the Ministry of France, remaining there ten years. In 1898 I was elected Deputy for Mâmemers, beating the Duc de la Roche-focauld of this neighbourhood, and the following year Waldeck Rousseau made me his Finance Minister. I continued in this office for three years and again held the post a like period under Clemenceau from 1906 to 1909. In this period I introduced my income tax proposals—a year before Lloyd George introduced his—and from that moment dates the opposition against me which became
frenzied just before the war and continued so during it. In 1911 I became Prime Minister after a third term as Finance Minister and was, at the head of the Government all through the Agadir crisis and until Poincaré got me overthrown early in 1912 on the ground that I had gone behind the backs of my colleagues in negotiating with Kiderlen Waechter, the German Foreign Minister. Ambassador Cambon has testified that I did nothing of the kind. The reason I was overthrown was because I advocated a policy of rapprochement with Germany and this ran diametrically counter to the policy of Poincaré and company. I stood, as I stand now, for European conciliation. And I believed, as I believe now, that France’s interests are best served by Continental understandings as distinct from the entente with England, which only serves to isolate France. I avoided war with Germany over Agadir—that was my crime as Prime Minister. In 1913 I was for the fourth time Finance Minister after upsetting the Barthou Ministry. President Poincaré should have called me to the head of the Government, but didn’t, partly because I intended prosecuting my so-called revolutionary budget inaugurating an income tax based on the rich paying, partly because of my views on the preservation of European peace. Then” (and Caillaux dropped his voice so that I could scarcely hear him above the playing of a piano in the next room), “then came the Calmette affair and—there, it was over with me!”

A moment before, a handsome, fair-haired woman had appeared in the garden, and had caused me,
before Monsieur Caillaux, to think of the Calmette affair.

"During the war," concluded Monsieur Caillaux, "I never concealed my hostility to the conflict nor my desire to see it shortened once it had begun, that Europe might survive. I was a partisan of peace by conciliation, from early on, like the Pope and President Wilson, but always on the understanding that Alsace and Lorraine should come back to the French family. But I prefer to write that part for you . . . if you will permit me."

I nodded. Then, for half an hour while he whom the Germans are reputed to have called "Unser Mann" wrote—that which is appended later on—went back in memory over the more salient drama he had conjured up, back to the shooting of Gaston Calmette, to the trial of the woman trimming roses outside in the garden, to Joseph Caillaux's own tremendous fight as a prisoner before his peers. How exclusively, utterly French, the tale! Divorce, passion, stolen love letters, political ambition and jealousies, secret reports, the slander and gossip of Paris salons.

Let me see—oh, yes, it started about Christmas-time, 1913, when Caillaux had once more taken the financial helm. From the day of his return to office there started in the fashionable "Figa" a campaign of unheard-of violence against him, culminating one March day in the publication of a love letter written by Caillaux to his present wife but when she was the wife of Léo Claretie, a railway victim of later years. It was signed "Ton Jo" and in a moment the power of ridicule began to do
its fell work through France. Something had to be done, and at once, since Calmette had hinted that he had heavier guns to bring into action than the mere publishing of stolen love letters. At her trial Madame Caillaux outlined the crisis in her home that fateful March day: "I saw that my husband intended killing Calmette, and rather than that he should ruin his career I went and shot him myself. My own honour was at stake if he continued to publish my private letters."

"Not a bit of it," argued the other side. "The reason Madame Caillaux murdered Calmette, and with her husband's knowledge, was because the Caillaux knew that Calmette possessed a report from Judge Fabre implicating Joseph Caillaux in the Rochette scandal. As a matter of fact, the day before he was killed Calmette promised President Poincaré he would never publish this report and actually handed it over to the President, who in turn forwarded it to the Foreign Office, where it still lies, so that the crime was quite unnecessary."

And so, in memory, back to that packed and suffocating Paris court room at the end of July, 1914, little dreaming that within a week I should be skidaddling before Uhlans in Belgium.

His wife acquitted, himself of still unblemished character, officially, Joseph Caillaux might in those dark opening days have come out as a thorough-going, war-whooping patriot, as did his Liberal opposite number, Mr. Lloyd George, across the Channel, and have won his way back to power. But there is something in the make-up of Joseph
Caillaux, call it perversity, call it what you will, which prohibited him following the herd. He dared to pursue, in war time, that policy of European reconciliation that he had advocated from Agadir onward. "Shorten the conflict!" was now his battle cry, and within a month he found himself given the alternative of being tried for coming back to Paris without leave from his post as field cashier, or of going on a trivial mission to South America. He chose the latter, and few who remember the murder of Jaurès will deny that the one-time Premier and leader of the democratic party in France exhibited wisdom in so making himself scarce. In his future war wanderings and dealings with men, everywhere he went, to Buenos Ayres or Rome, to Switzerland or back to Paris, he seems to have been a source of attraction to defeatists and to people in nebulous touch with the enemy. In South America he hobnobbed with the young and charming Italian Count Minotto (since married to a Swift of Chicago) and was surprised when one day Minotto brought him a message from the German Ambassador, Count Luxburg, offering him, Caillaux, a safe conduct back across the submarine-ridden seas to Europe (Luxburg actually sent a cable requesting that Caillaux should be treated well if captured). In Italy Monsieur Caillaux met, all too frequently, such adventurers in the pay of the German-subsidized Khedive as Cavallini. In Paris, Caillaux knew Bolo Pasha, Duval and Lenoir (all shot for intelligence with the enemy), but never was anything traced to him as to the trio named.
Caillaux himself confesses that at this time, when the Bonnet Rouge scandal was at its height, his plan was to overthrow the existing Government and General Staff and to take the political helm himself and give command of the army to General Sarrail. A swift peace, but not one of victory, would have resulted. Joseph Caillaux holds that such a drawn war would have meant an infinitely less chaotic Europe than emerged with victory going to one side; but one sees scant ground for believing that the Germans, implanted everywhere far into Allied territory as they were in 1916, would ever have accepted a draw—i.e. withdrawn into their own country, or played the game had they accepted such an ending.

At all events Clemenceau, on becoming Premier at the close of 1917, went right after Joseph Caillaux and within a month the latter was in a common cell in the Santé Prison, next a murderer, and with the gravest of charges hanging over his head—that of having prosecuted “intelligence with the enemy.” In his book “Mes Prisons” Caillaux tells the full story of his arrest, imprisonment and trial. He insists that his arrest was a move to decapitate the Left, and that Clemenceau, backed by Poincaré, acted solely from political motives, namely to get a dangerous opponent out of the way. In effect, in a safe in Florence, deposited there by Madame Caillaux, in addition to two million francs in bonds and much jewellery, was found a pamphlet entitled “The Responsible Ones” visiting war guilt on Poincaré and others, and the allegation was that Caillaux intended circulating this throughout
France the moment the Allied armies met with a decisive check. That and the Luxburg telegram and the tendency of enemy agents and defeatists to hang around Caillaux (he had to pay the mistress of one some money on one occasion) were the main points which Captain Bouchardon sought to develop into the maximum charge against the former Premier.

So I reconstructed the past while Madame Caillaux trimmed roses without and Monsieur Caillaux wrote within. Here is what he wrote:

"When I made my début in political life a veteran whose name is a household word (Clementceau) said to me: 'Mark this, my young friend. In our country the one way to get rid of an opponent is to make charges against him.'"

"In 1917 two policies were opposed one to the other in France, just as formerly were opposed the policies of Robespierre and Danton. On the one hand a policy of aggressive patriotism which saw no pacific solution, on the other a policy of armed negotiation. The first was backed by all those who either from conviction or because of responsibilities or from less noble motives refused to listen to any negotiation; the second was envisaged, if not supported, by such as were anxious for France and for Europe, by those who saw the immense political, economic and financial dangers that a prolongation of hostilities would imply. I appeared to be, in the eyes of the masses, the leader of this second party. The fact that as Premier, in 1911, I had avoided war with Germany over Agadir, the fact that during the three following years in
concert with Jaurès, but without being completely in accord with him, I had redoubled my efforts to warn people of the catastrophe ahead—these facts designated me as leader of this second school of thought. Yet once war had been declared I remained silent except for rare speeches, outside the Chamber, in my constituency. None the less I was 'catalogued.' And it is quite true that, particularly fearful for the European economic system, and foreseeing the colossal difficulties an indefinite conflict would engender, I interested myself in such solutions as would permit the framework of the old Continent to remain. But I repeated on several occasions—and the fact was testified to by one of my opponents—that I saw no peace possible without Alsace-Lorraine coming back to France. In addition, I took care not to oppose the policy of aggressive patriotism, though I should have been fully within my rights in doing so.

"I awaited events which in great upheavals are the masters of men and things; I awaited an evolution in popular opinion. I little thought that my moderation, dictated by my love for France, would be imputed to crime. Called to power by Monsieur Poincaré to prosecute a nationalist policy, with that daring and absence of scruple which are in his temperament, Monsieur Clemenceau decided in his own words to 'make a big coup' by arresting me. So I was thrown into a prison where I spent nine months as a common criminal and one year as a political prisoner, being later taken to a nursing home. Meanwhile, all the stories invented with a
view to my being condemned, collapsed one by one. My prosecutors had to admit any absolute integrity. The most minute inquiries only showed that far from my patrimony having been increased it had diminished during my political life. So, at least there was no question of money, no base motive!

"The so-called Justices prosecuting the inquiry against me, furthermore, and though quivering with political passion, had to admit that I had had no connection of any kind with the enemy, that if certain adventurers hovered around me I had not compromised myself in the slightest degree. Simple imprudences—and what imprudences—charged against me! None the less I was brought before the High Court of Justice, the Senate, which in France is the grand political tribunal. The prosecuting attorney, leaving on one side all the miserable calumnies which had been circulated about me, proceeded to maintain the monstrous thesis—monstrous in a republic of parliamentary privilege—that a public man had not the right in time of war to prosecute a policy other than the policy favoured by the Government of the day. He concluded by asking for a 'political condemnation.' Those were his own words. The court refused to condemn me. By a colossal majority, 213 votes against 28, it declined to accept the viewpoint of the prosecuting attorney. I was acquitted. But, I was guilty of being innocent. And for that reason I had to be punished.

"The arbitrary act of Messieurs Poincaré and Clemenceau in arresting me had to be justified. At all hazards I had to be excluded from political
life and from the Government of the country. They succeeded in doing this by putting before the tribunal, in my absence and without calling upon me to defend myself, a question which had never been broached before. I was condemned, despite the protestations of ninety-one republican Senators, on the pretext that certain conversations which I was alleged to have held might have conveyed information to the enemy. Even so, they had to specify that there was no intention on my part to betray my country in any way whatsoever. Thus, by violating the principles of our Penal Code, which stipulates that no citizen shall be condemned without having been given the opportunity of defending himself, which further lays down that unless there is intention to betray there is neither crime nor misdemeanour, they managed to forbid me access to Paris and to many big towns of France for a period of five years and to deprive me of my political rights for ten years.

"I will leave to others the task of judging a decree of which I will only say that it raises between me and public life one of those frail barriers which, history is witness, never withstand the march of events. I will limit myself to one point: in the light of events and in the presence of the chaotic state of the world, may not those people have been right who sought to shorten the abominable conflict by curbing the spirit of hate, by encouraging mutual understanding among the peoples and by maintaining the body corporate of Europe?"

As Monsieur Caillaux handed me this document the luncheon bell tinkled, I was presented to other
members of the household—t’a la Femme Fatale, a handsome blonde, and to a young blonde companion, and so to merry chatter about Prohibition in America, and about my host’s life in exile.

"It is too funny, my husband’s exile," explained Madame Caillaux. "They gave him a list of towns which he may not visit. It doesn’t seem to be worked out on any system. The only big towns he may visit are Toulouse and Strasbourg."

"That pleases you immensely, Henriette," broke in Caillaux. "Here I am trussed up, while you may go round France on adventure!"

I learned that the former Premier might not visit the Riviera (he might meet international characters there), nor of course Paris. He visited the capital once by permission for a week, but was recognized everywhere, and as every French citizen, man or woman, during Caillaux’s exile, had the right to have the former Premier arrested on sight if they saw him in a forbidden town, Monsieur Caillaux never again went to Paris until he returned there early in 1925 under the Herriot amnesty. He told me that he felt he was always under observation, but that the police never came near him.

"It is all so stupid," he went on. "I may telephone to Paris all day long, and do—that is to say, the voice of Caillaux is daily heard in the capital—and yet I may not go there in the flesh! And imagine their allowing me to visit and spread my terrible doctrine in such places as newly won Strasbourg and radical Toulouse! But I can’t even motor through Tours or Angers or a hundred other places. Whenever I go motoring I have to study
the road carefully lest I pass over forbidden ground. Supposing, for example, I had a breakdown in a forbidden town like Le Mans or Tours! Imagine Poincaré’s fears for a coup d’état!"

Joseph Caillaux turned out a tricky Seal to manage. Put the paper hoop ever so close, he declined to go through it, insisting upon sticking to that which he was an authority upon, finance. And in the sequel came in due course lamentations from over the ocean:

"Caillaux’s stuff," ran a cable, "really getting too technical. Syndicate earnings practically nil." (he was merely formulating what he later sought to put into practice) and with two months of his contract still to go, I was obliged to communicate the hard word to Mamers.

"That hardly surprises me on the part of the Americans," he wrote in acknowledgment, "that they will not listen to anybody else speaking about money."

Caillaux’s correspondence, hand-scrawled on deep blue paper, revealed the man, imperious and impatient, a true bureaucratic martinet. If his cheques were not at Mamers by the first post every Tuesday morning, a letter followed as night upon day requiring a full explanation from Mister the Correspondent, and the immediate remittance of the sum in question, failing which . . .

If a line came to be unsatisfactorily translated in one of his articles, or as much as a comma replaced by a colon, up came a registered missive almost bursting open from the indignation expressed
within. Yet one could not do otherwise than admire the writer for his courage and perseverance, qualities which were royally to restore him from a depth touched by few public men, save a Parnell or a Dilke, in our time. Tremendous restraint and patience were imperative attributes, and not easy ones for this man to acquire, while the state of his lungs and heart were such as to necessitate half the year being spent at Arcachon and Royat. He won because he had faith, and, on his return to power, knew how not to say one word about those who, by all the tokens, had grievously wronged him. For Joseph Caillaux, apart from his undisputed financial genius, is Big, while a wide erudition and a profound historical sense, breadth of vision and catholicism of mind, combine to make him perhaps the least insular-minded of contemporary French statesmen. Where Raymond Poincaré rarely saw much further than the end of the ruler with which he margined off the petty expenses of French officials in the Ruhr, Caillaux (who failed because he is no longer physically fit) sees the nineteen thirties and forties and fifties, yes, even the nineteen sixties and particularly 1963.

In that year, we are asked to believe that the last gold bars for the war of 1914 will be zigzagging between London and Berlin and Paris and New York. Well, one doubts if Caillaux believes that. Relentless social and industrial change, revolutions, even wars, and undreamt of happenings besides, more likely stud his horizon. upheavals calculated to modify, transform, annihilate any debt settlements we may come to in these days.
CHAPTER XIII

A MURDERESS EXPLAINS HERSELF

CHARLOTTE CORDEY: I have nothing to say except that I have succeeded.
GERMAINE BERTON: Monsieur Daudet, I regret most painfully having killed Plateau in your place.

LA BERTON, tall, thin, and drawn of feature, yet more than attractive by reason of her blue-black bobbed hair, wide grey eyes and arresting pallor, sat opposite me in the dingy anarchist "dive" to which we had repaired behind the Place de la République. She was, in fact, enemy of society or no, engaged just then in the thoroughly feminine business of "tinkering herself up" with rouge and lipstick. She wore a flowing black tie over a wide, innocent-looking Quaker collar which, in turn, surmounted an equally demure black dress, and she had recently been acquitted of murder.

"I must have another two thousand francs," she was saying, "I am going to have a gosse!"
"Al' my felicitations, Mademoiselle! But——"
"But nothing."
"Well, that's scarcely how we do business in journalism, Mademoiselle. A fixed price is a fixed price."

La Berton's eyes flamed up. Her hand shot out to a vanity bag on the table:
"Do you think I care that! for your money—capitalist dirt we anarchists call it. In our lives we don’t consider money. But now it is no longer for me. It is for another being that I wish it."

"But didn’t you—er—know about this when we came to our arrangement last week?" The question slipped out before I could check it; because angering this formidable dame au browning, and in one of her own haunts, was hardly a healthy thing to do.

By way of answer, la Berton rose, trembling.

"It is what I say, or I go."

"All right then, come and sit down again and let’s talk it over. But mind, if I give you this extra money, I want your story to-night before we leave this place. You can write it later as you will, if you insist that the bourgeois journalist might distort it."

So down we sat again, I calling for the apéritif while Germaine lit a cigarette, stretched back, twirled with tapering fingers an elongated ivory holder in her lips, and beheld the ceiling. She wasn’t beautiful, like heroines ought to be, but there was certainly something compelling, almost captivating, about her, that something—eagerness, spirit, a piercing intelligence linked to striking appearance—which in turn mollified the mother of the man she murdered and made a convert to anarchy of her wardress in St. Lazare. Yes, Germaine had appeal and of a singular kind, a complete garçonne. . . .

What explained her? Bothe, to-day! I wished to know of yesterday, of the birth of anarchy in a
tiny French tot, of the germ itself and its development through adolescence into the age of flapperhood—for she was hardly more than that in years to-day—to make of this girl opposite me, and when most of her kind were still gushing over cinema heroes, an arch-hater of organized society and murderess, one regretful of nothing, denying God and laughing at death. I wanted her earliest sins and omissions. And this is what she told me:

"I was born on June 7th, 1902, in the Paris suburb of Puteaux, coming of old royalist stock in the Vendée. My maternal grandfather, though the son of Vendée peasants, was a fanatical royalist, and it is related how he opposed the republican régime in his own way by hiding for hours behind some bush by the roadside, waiting for the gendarmes. Then he would pepper the legs of their horses with bird shot and vanish like a shadow into the heather and the ferns."

Her paternal grandfather was also royalist and Catholic, piously bestowing the firstfruits of his harvests on the parish priest and keeping as an almost sacred relic a white silk scarf which had belonged to Cadoudal, the famous chieftain of the Vendée rising against the Revolution.

"My mother," proceeded Germaine, "alone of the next generation remained a victim of our ancestral atavism. My father, dead now, was a Communist and a Freemason. He was of intractable character, too proud to bow before any authority. Restraint of any kind, in barracks or factory, sent him home with clenched fists, muttering imprecations between his teeth. Starving for
independence, he had opened a small mechanical workshop in Puteaux shortly before I was born."

Germaine remembered that from babyhood she was "mischievous and very wilful." She delighted in teasing her parents, and the great-aunt who reared her, and possibly spoiled her, by yielding to her every whim. "When at dawn," she narrated, "the poor woman would take me into her own bed because I was shrieking in mine, I would contemplate her with curiosity, bending over her, and would pinch her eyelids with my little fingers till the tired old woman's eyes were open again." But the enchantment of her first years was a cemetery where her father sometimes carved inscriptions on the stones.

"I loved this great garden, so clean, full of flowers and birds, with its deep avenues and white marble crosses glistening in the sunlight. This was my Bois de Boulogne. How I used to love to dance with merriment with my little bucket and wooden spade! Still, one thing always worried me—being so small. I wanted to grow up—no longer to depend on big people—to work my will without being slapped. As many as ten times a day I would measure myself against the kitchen dresser; at four I would no longer answer to "Mamaine," my pet name, but stared contemptuously till they called me Germaine."

In her fourth winter her mother, a school teacher, taught the child her alphabet. Next came the schoolroom, in connection with which Germaine had this to say: "How, even at six, seven and eight, I used to rebel inwardly if they found a
fault in my work! As a little girl, too, I avoided girls at play to be with the boys. I used to fight with them, and even bite, if I did not get the upper hand. I was a complete tomboy. When I took up my dolls I would comb and comb at their hair with such vehemence that soon they were all bald. But I preferred to be put in a shed by our house and to take old locks apart and put them together again. This diversion led to spankings for dirtying my pinafores."

Her two preferred companions were her dog, Kiki, and her father. The latter, from her earliest years, imbued her with his rebellious spirit. "While still a little girl," she told me, "impregnated by my father's burning words, I hated those whom I hate to-day. I knew the school pages of the French Revolution by heart. I often went off to sleep regretting I had not heard Mirabeau launch his famous reply to the Marquis de Dreux-Brézé, envoy of Louis XVI: 'Tell your master we are here by the will of the people and will only leave by the force of bayonets.' I would throw back the bedclothes and battle inwardly against the aristocrats. These solitary reveries eventually found an outlet in my organizing a tableau vivant in the school courtyard: "The Death of Louis XVI"—admission one pebble. There were four actors—Louis, a priest, the Executioner and the Haranguer of the People, with four or five "extras" waiting in the tumbril and as many more mobilized as guards. I reversed my black blouse, beat an imaginary drum and read a proclamation in the name of the Republic, while the executioner
sharpened a dead branch with which the deposed King was to be decapitated. One day our tableau got so realistic that the younger members of our audience, frightened, shrieked for their mothers. So the head mistress stopped our performance. A curious trait in my character as a little schoolgirl—related, I suppose, to some of my subsequent behaviour—was my desire to explore the lowest slums and waste ground of the neighbourhood, beholding wide-eyed the worst and foulest of human nature, till my parents found me and took me home. And how I remember, on my way to or from market with my father, sharing his detestation of the dragoons galloping on the plains of Rueil; it was he who, with his barrack tales, inculcated my first hatred of militarism."

Just before the outbreak of the war the Bertons moved south to Touraine, the father's native province. Germaine was twelve then and entered on a period of mental restlessness. She wanted to know all sorts of forbidden things. "For me it was a feverish awakening—intense, sometimes brutal, but sweet withal like a dawn." Her first formative reading resulted from her breaking open a trunk full of books up in the attic. Charlotte Corday, the convent-bred daughter of decayed nobility and living with an aunt in rural Normandy, had filled her solitude with Voltaire and the Abbé Raynal, and with Plutarch's "Lives." Germaine's psychic puberty was to be more varyingly nourished. "Hidden away in some corner, I furtively read the 'Confessions' of Rousseau; de Musset's verses; nearly all of Balzac; the 'Red Lily' of
Anatole France; 'Germinal,' 'Fruitfulness,' 'The Earth' and other volumes of Zola; Kant, Stendhal, Flammarion and some of my father's books on Freemasonry. My vocabulary being insufficient, I kept a dictionary at my side. One afternoon as I was perusing a gallant adventure of Francis I, told by Zevaco, my mother discovered me, and I received a violent smacking. About this time also, I loved to visit my father's engineering workshop, where he employed a staff of ten making spare aviation parts, mobilization having now been ordered. The workmen taught me the intricate side of dynamos and motors. Soon I would be covered with oil and grease and deafened by the noise of a score of engine tests. Often I was able to detect trouble which the others had been unable to trace, and on such occasions I would lecture the amazed staff."

The family, temporarily prosperous, lived in one of the best quarters of Tours. Madame Berton sought and found congenial company among the higher bourgeoisie. The father, the girl and Kiki devoted their leisure to fishing in the Loire or to attending bicycle races. Then Germaine was put in the local high school for girls, where her chief interests were centred round clandestine correspondence with the boys of the neighbouring Lycée, and tantalization of the teachers.

"Once I brought the fury of the class down on myself by collecting all the gold and silver rings and earrings of my girl friends and plunging them in a mercury bath. I had my face well scratched and much hair pulled out, but not before I had damaged
some of my assailants . . . and the ructions which ensued when three of us were caught smoking eucalyptus cigarettes in the streets! The whole city heard of it. My mother particularly wanted me to apologize to the wife of Colonel de Beaufort, under whose nose I had blown smoke. But I refused to humiliate myself before a person whose airs and graces had disgusted me."

Then came her first love affair.

"I was thirteen—he twenty-three. He was killed in the opening months of the war. I decided to drown myself. For a fortnight I played truant and hid myself, meditating in the crypt of the Basilica St. Martin, the only place where my father wouldn’t think of looking for me. Then one day, unable to endure more, I walked along the Loire towards Vouvray. Towards evening, as dusk descended, I let myself down into the swirling brown water. But someone saw me and raised an alarm. Passengers jumped from a passing tramcar, and a soldier pulled me out. Threats and blows at home could not drag from me the real reason for my act. I have always refused to submit to restraint or control. A little later I was permitted to enter the local art school. What memories of those gay student days in lovely Touraine! I studied modelling, architecture, geometry, and anatomy. With two other girls I was permitted to join a class in dissection. The students gave us an enthusiastic welcome. Nevertheless we had to conform to the customary initiation of eating beans out of a human skull.

"I played football with the young men, but
my pet joy was to go out in an electric canoe with a boy chum named Jacques. I was making rapid progress with my drawing, won several prizes, and was preparing to present myself at the Beaux Arts in Paris, when fatal misfortune overtook me. My father had formed a bad habit of doing business over drinks in a café, setting up an internal trouble which was to take him off. One lovely day in August the end came and I understood I would now have to battle alone. My mother took me to Chinon, where, suffocating, I taught drawing in a school. I could not endure it, and after a violent scene with her, left for Paris, where I got a situation as librarian in the centre of the city."

Germaine was about seventeen when she thus impetuously took the reins in her own hands and plunged into the mental, social and spiritual turmoil of post-war Paris. The library, however, did not detain her long: "Falling among old friends from Touraine," she continued, "I began studying with them more ardently than ever. Social questions especially interested me. I wanted to know the inside of each political party. I read enormously, and a bizarre assortment my favourites were: Leopold Kampf, Hans Ryner, Bolti, Barbusse; François Villon, Rabelais, Voltaire, Bourget, Loti, Alphonse Daudet, Anatole France, Gyp, Colette and Willy."

However, a fresh milestone was soon to signal itself in this wild young life. Having read all she could absorb, Germaine decided to go back to Touraine and become an overt rebel. She got a job painting signs on goods waggons, and dressed
in a smock and breeches went gaily along the railway lines, carrying her paint pot and brush, inscribing over and over again:

“K X W (normal) 1,200—Hommes 32—Chevaux 8.”

“The railway workers liked me and bombarded me with questions of a political and syndicalist nature. Inwardly I laughed at the strange method I had adopted in order to act after my ideas. Syndicalism was reviving after the tragic strikes of 1920. This was just what I was waiting for.”

Even at this early stage she had contracted a savage personal animosity to Léon Daudet, which she explained thus: “While studying art in Tours I had made my first acquaintance with ‘L’Action Française.’ Next door to the art school was a hall where all the political meetings were held. L’île the others, the Camelots du Roi would come there. My boy friend Jacques and I would scale a wall and slip in among the royalists. How we used to grind our teeth in rebellion and disgust at what we heard! I began to know the mentality of the ruffians of ‘L’Action Française.’ And I began to hate fiercely Léon Daudet.”

Back in Tours again, she soon lost her railway painting job and scandalized the retired officers and business men of the district by becoming secretary of the Syndicalist Revolutionary Committee. “In the local Communist paper I published weekly articles which would have meant my arrest in Paris, but which were permitted in Touraine. I also tried my hand at verse. I was
so absorbed, I lived in such an intense fever that frequently I forgot to eat. In June, 1921, blinded by Marxism, I joined the Communist party. It required the Congresses of Lille and Moscow to open my eyes."

What she thought she then discovered was a systematic subordination of the syndicalist social revolution to political machinations. First she cried over such duplicity. Then, with characteristic decisiveness, she swung to the extreme of all extremes, founded an Anarchist group at Tours and went back to Paris. There, in November, 1921, she struck a police official who refused to return her her identity papers, accidentally dropped in a street affray, and was sentenced to three months in St. Lazare. Released in February, 1922, she hurried to Tours for a mass meeting demanding an amnesty for the mutinous sailors of the Black Sea fleet; then back to Paris, and again into the hands of the police, this time for being in the company of a burglar band and for carrying a dagger, the twin offences bringing her seventeen further days incarceration.

"Gradually," she told me, "I was slipping towards individualism. I was on the point of breaking with my comrades, when I was wounded at a meeting in the suburbs. Caught between two bodies of police, we were crying out 'Poincaré assassin!' 'Vive Cottin!' 'Vive Marty!' 'War upon war!' when the gendarmes charged. I had just hit a policeman on the ground with a knotted belt when he got up enraged and struck me over the head with his sword. My comrades, maddened
by the torrent of my blood, captured the police station by assault, broke everything and burned the Tricolor. Mounted troops were necessary to restore order. My wound healed rapidly. They put four stitches in, but I pulled them out almost at once."

For a little while in October, 1922, Germaine worked as a telephone operator in a business office. But she soon lost the job. She was living in what she called a "moral crisis," brought on by the proposed occupation of the Ruhr. The "stormy springtide" of her life was approaching its culmination. She had wrought herself up into a positive frenzy of feeling against Léon Daudet. To her the royalist leader had become the incarnation of everything hateful and obnoxious, and her resentment was increased by her revolt against militarism.

"After having done everything to wreck syndicalism and after having opposed the liberation of the Black Sea sailors, Monsieur Léon Daudet clamoured for an armed expedition into the Ruhr, deliberately accepting all the risks of war and of sanguinary clashes with Germany. What was passing in the head of this hateful man? Wasn't this the propitious moment to wreck the syndicalists and communists? Poincaré, influenced, they say, by secret letters, had yielded to the master black-mailer of 'L'Action Française.' We were to leave our hearths to participate in an armed occupation. War! I worked myself into a fury towards the ignoble scoundrel who daily exalted militarism. In 1914, as a child, I saw the 66th Infantry leave with flowers on their bayonets. Afterwards I saw
soldiers on leave, muddy, flea-ridden, lousy, borne down with fatigue, sleeping on the ground, crowded on the benches of the Place de l’Hôtel de Ville at Tours, while a few yards away officers, brilliant in their uniforms, sipped champagne in the Café de l’Univers with women. In the hospitals I saw gas victims spitting away their lives—blind men opening dead eyes in vain. In the streets I wept before the wounded and mutilated rolling along in little chairs. But what I saw always, at every place, was the truculence of the regular officers. The pavements belonged to them. Even old men and little children had to make way for these professionals of war. When one has seen that one must be very indifferent not to revolt, or else very cowardly. Well, I revolted. I thought of our million and a half dead. I recalled the sufferings of all; how that dear word ‘Patrie,’ losing its meaning of fraternity and love, had come to incarnate hatred and corruption. In my profound anguish of mind I conceived the idea of striking at one of the persons responsible, the bitterest enemy of the working classes and also of the Republic, the royalist adventurer, Léon Daudet.”

But it wasn’t so easy a job since, unlike Marat, Alphonse Daudet’s son did not receive young ladies while seated in his bath. Even as Charlotte, thrice in vain did Germaine knock at the royalist leader’s door, after which, on being cheated again in a church where Daudet should certainly have been commemorating the anniversary of Louis XVI’s death, La Berton had a brainstorm and, as is known, poured lead instead into the general
secretary of the Camelots du Roi, Marius Plateau, who had unsuspectingly received her in his office, the sixth and last bullet being directed at her own heart:

"Collapsing, I also heard Plateau fall. Several people rushed into the office, and I remember them saying: 'What, she did that? The dirty little wretch! But she's killed herself also.' However, the bullet had lodged in my ribs, just missing the heart. Within a week, on a stretcher, I was taken from the hospital to St. Lazare. As the cold black vaults engulfed me—I who had twice before been under them—I would have preferred death to that living tomb. But suicide was impossible—I was too closely watched. Also my lawyer and friend, Maître Henri Torres, reminded me how, living, I could provoke the indictment of the royalists. And I wanted one day to have the terrible joy of telling Monsieur Léon Daudet in public what I thought of him. So I determined to live."

Before her wound was wholly healed Germaine gave the prison Governor his choice of locking her in solitary confinement or having to deal with a "rebels." She got her wish, a cell where "at least I was alone with the rats," and for ten months remained locked in a stone room, seven yards square. On its walls she drew pictures. "I drew those I loved: Balzac, Charles Wagner and later by my bedside, poor little Philippe Daudet. The Governor came one evening on a pretext of testing the oil in my lamp—really to see the drawings. He was much amused. Facing each other on one
wall were Poincaré and Millerand, each pointing at the other as responsible. There was a military review at Longchamps in grotesque Chinese black and white; also a skit on the prison—the wardresses as owls surrounded by long chains of fleas in their natural colour. Near the door was a portrait of a parvenu, proud and haughty, beside him that of a man still to arrive, humble and bent. The Governor praised me. I have hardly recovered from it yet!"

... By this time we had long finished dinner and as my presence in the café was beginning to arouse something more than mere curiosity, I suggested a move, and it was strolling along the crowded Boulevard du Temple and, later, in a rather more bourgeois haunt, that Germaine put the finishing touches to her tale—and not the least extraordinary. I mentioned, earlier on, the wardress of St. Lazare prison. This was Sister Claudia, of whom Germaine spoke as "a gentle, simple soul, and pretty, whose kindliness I could not repulse as I did all the other nuns. We talked much together, for hours and hours, Sister Claudia and I, of life in all its implications and—yes, 'twas I, Germaine Berton, who in the end converted to Nihilism and Anarchy the woman who had taken religion! Sister Claudia, by arrangement with me, was to quit the prison one morning shortly before my trial and on my behalf link up with my anarchist friends. But alas the comrades who were to have met her were away from Paris. The poor little sister, adrift in the big hostile city and only casually received by some substitutes, took refuge with her brother-in-
law; and he, fearing a scandal, persuaded her to go back to St. Lazare. To-day this great soul agonizes in the depths of a provincial convent. But there are no barred doors or convent walls, however massive, through which a ray of the spirit of the century may not enter. I will yet tear the chains of false duty from this young woman. Yet!"

And Germaine really did flare up. I think, in fact, she rather liked Sister Claudia, one of those freak forms of attachment common to women's prisons, and very common, as Germaine herself impressed upon me, at St. Lazare.

Finally we came to the riddle of Philippe Daudet.

"Tell me the truth about that, Mademoiselle, because whatever else you may do, you do not seem to go in much for lying."

Unfortunately, in this, I was asking too much. It would have meant, according to my companion, violating the Libertaire code of honour and secrecy. All that Germaine would do was to hint that she had got to know in prison that young Philippe, neurasthenic, wayward and abnormal, had fallen in love "by proxy" with her. Which may very well be true, though assuredly only Paris could have provided such an insane tangle. Germaine relates: "On the eve of the verdict I calmed myself by kissing the photograph of dear little Philippe which I carried on me. 'To-morrow,' I said to it, 'is the verdict, little Philippe. It will be one month since you died to protect me against your father; dear martyr, fallen so young!' They had wanted to take this photograph from me, but
I cried so much that they gave it back to me. Caressing the blade of my hidden knife with one hand, I kissed the photograph now, knowing that the next day I might have to join him.”

The verdict, however, was acquittal, after this famous outburst from the dock: “At the time of the occupation of the Ruhr, Léon Daudet, who fought the war in the trenches of his office in Paris in the Rue de Rome, and who was wounded at the front in an automobile accident as he was fleeing towards Orléans during the German offensive on Paris—this adventurer Daudet, by provoking an agitation in the interior, counted on being able to bring off his famous coup against the Republic, taking advantage of civil war. I saw the danger of this manoeuvre and it was to put an end to his criminal career that I determined to slay him and to prevent the realization of Fascismo in France.”

And after her counsel's equally quoted peroration: “Germaine Berton, you have been defended by the most eminent procession of poets, thinkers and sociologists. To close an account opened with the murder of Jaurès, there must be a peace. I do not glorify you. But in order that blood shall cease to flow, an acquittal must be put in the scale to counter-balance the acquittal of Villain (the Royalist slayer of Jaurès).”

Yet if Germaine failed to give Léon Daudet his quietus, none the less that buccanneer with a pen is in low enough water to-day. Son of the celebrated Alphonse, Léon, fat and round, swarthly and fifty, has for years led the Orléanist cause, the remaining embers of which he is now effectively
engaged in smothering by mixing the Legitimist movement up with Fascismo. This quaint figure also finds time to edit and fulminate daily in the "Action Française", to remain in the forefront politically, and to write exceptionally brilliant if somewhat nauseating novels touching "forbidden" topics, into which works the author injects his rare pathological knowledge as a former doctor. Beaten in the elections of 1924, Daudet, who used to sit for a Paris constituency, recently tried hard to get elected to the Senate for Anjou and it is a tribute to his amazing vitality and brain power that he got nearly all the Catholics of that province voting for him... even after "Suzanne" and the "Astre Noir." His political opponents once assembled in brochure form the more extreme extracts from Daudet's novels and distributed the choice mixture free to Tout Paris, to academicians, cardinals, editors, soldiers, judges, actors... to everybody who "counted," however little. We correspondents were also favoured with copies, and sultry reading they provided!

Daudet has for the moment suffered relative eclipse, after being permitted for two decades to remain a political force chiefly by reason of the fear he instilled into public men of all parties either by shouting inconvenient things involving them, or threatening to do so. For example, Briand. It is well known, and just an amusing subject for anecdote, that while a young lawyer of twenty four at Nantes, Aristide had a brush with the law as the result of a, perhaps, too gallant pressing of an open air adventure. Yet this lapse is, to this day,
reprinted in Daudet's paper in the crudest language. Still, people continued to stand for this firebrand, if only for his father, for his literary genius, and, in the case of Royalists, for the cause he has made his life's own. In 1923, however, came the change-over of the Orleanists into Fascisti—bands of pimply young men parading the streets by night and cracking pedestrians on the head with loaded canes—and the Parisians cried: *Assez!* But it was Daudet's behaviour following the death of his son which really brought him low. This revealed an unbalanced mind, and one liable to monstrous obsessions.

The son, Philippe, was an overgrown lad of fifteen, known at his lycée as 'la Tante' because of his effeminate tendencies. The boy was, however, extremely intelligent, being something of a poet and of a precocity which took the form of frequent flights to naval ports. The father's traducers insist that Léon, by his overbearing conduct in the family circle, made life a hell upon earth for the overstrung, eccentric son. These people even insist, furthermore, that Daudet senior bullied Philippe into promising to shoot one or more anarchist leaders supposed to be plotting against the father's life, and that it was while acquiring first-hand knowledge of these anarchist's lives and haunts, that the boy was won over to that creed and, destroying the list of names with which his father had provided him, swore to shoot Poincaré or Millerand, or even his own parent instead. Philippe was found shot dead in a taxicab, apparently when starting out to kill somebody, parent or
anarchist, and the probability is that the child, driven to distraction by the conflicting currents surging up within him, decided to kill himself as the best way out. The position of blood stains on the seat in front of him showed conclusively that it had been a case of suicide, but Léon Daudet would not hear of that, and presently accused the Chiefs at the Sûreté (equivalent to the "Big Four" at Scotland Yard) of complicity in the murder of his son. For a whole year the father sustained the most brilliant newspaper onslaught on the alleged murderers, considering that he had hardly a square inch of solid ground to stand upon; then, when the affair had gone forward to the juge d'instruction, he went calmly off to his native Provence and wrote another splendid novel based on his own personal loss. The Sûreté people were, of course, all able to clear themselves, though it is quite certain that something lies behind Philippe's death which has never been revealed, Director Lannes, Poincaré's brother-in-law, and one of the men accused by Daudet, having stated openly to the latter that one day the truth would be known and with discomfiting results for the royalist leader.

And so for the moment Léon Daudet has quitted the "spotlight;" though should Communism ever seriously fear its head in France, we may well see this choleric Provençal in the saddle once more, seeking to ride roughshod over it. But for the moment he has fairly and squarely removed any miniscule chance Monseigneur the Duke of Orleans may ever have had of reigning as Philip of France.
As for Germaine Berton, undermined by tuberculosis, but fairly embarked upon her Summer after
the somewhat hectic Springtime set forth above, she has not ceased to shine as an individualist.
She lectures and writes the extremist of the extreme, and after a riot at one of her meetings at Bordeaux,
was sentenced to several months' imprisonment for having acquired another Browning. Some
time later she took poison in—of all places—a Paris church, but recovered. Since then, silence.
And absolutely nothing about that gosse! Except
the following rather cryptic communication, sent
me by the very exalted one from Marseilles, some
weeks after I had concluded business with her;

"If we anarchists, perhaps more so than
others, consider the matter of maternity seri-
ously, that is because we recognize it involves
assiduous care and a patient education. A child
is so delicate that a woman Libertaire does not
accept motherhood unless she feels she possesses
the necessary physical and moral qualities.
She refuses to throw a human being into society,
born in poverty bordering on misery, and who
would have to struggle against material medio-
crity. Otherwise the child would one day cry
out 'Why was I born?' direct and terrible
reproach to her who bore it. That is why, rather
than hear that, women anarchists know how to
renounce their desire for motherhood. Pro-
creation, in our mind, should be thoughtful and
subordinated to the amount of happiness one is
certain of being able to give one's child."
CHAPTER XIV

1. THE WELL-DESIRED ONE

ONE afternoon, returning to find the office atmosphere somewhat affected by an aroma of stale scent and cosmetics, I inquired to whom we owed the honour.

"Landru's bird . . . nearly suffocated us in here . . . had to put her in your room . . . sorry, thought you weren't coming back," indicated an assistant, with nausea.

Now Henri Désiré Landru had many ornithological specimens, an aviary of two hundred and eighty-three, to be exact, according to his notebook, but Fernande Ségré was of very special category, having been the only one to live any period with the Sire de Gambais, and, in the parlance of the day, get away with it. Indeed she was sole beneficiary under the armistice which Landru declared, coincident with the arrival of the peacemakers in Paris, in the private little war he had waged on women ever since August, 1914, and which he regretfully found it necessary to bring to a close now that vanishing women would assuredly be missed in the returning orderliness of peace time, and that gendarmes were trooping back from the colours, all keenness, to their former jobs.
For, of course, Henri Désiré was first and foremost a war criminal, profiting to the hilt by the chaos of that conflict; which is one of the reasons we shall never see his like again. There were others.

"He was so good, so gentle for me!" Mademoiselle Ségret would sigh in the course of her sordid self-revelation, "and at the same time a lover altogether passionate."

"The greatest gentleman in the assize court," proclaimed Lucien Guity at Versailles, and so said many others—C. B. Cochran, Mistinguette, Sir William Orpen, Van Dongen and other celebrities whom I had the privilege of piloting to that feast of human mystery and character to which all Paris begged to be taken... twenty-three days of it, and a new murder every second day. Faced by a judge and prosecuting counsel who gesticulated and shouted and worked themselves up into a fury at the slightest provocation, flanked by witnesses who shook their fists, umbrellas and muffls at him, lorgnetted by the chic world from the well of the court for nearly a whole month, Landru never for a moment lost the most urbane caim or committed the minutest error in deportment. Rarely, if ever, can a prisoner have attained such heights of dignity as he; sometimes one felt he was almost "influencing" those present towards an examination of conscience, and chiefly as to why they were meddling in his private affairs.

"Come, Landru," would urge the judge, "this is really too much! Here we have before us the entire wardrobe of this unfortunate woman. We
have her false teeth and hair, and every single trinket or cherished little possession a woman would cling to. And, chief of all, we have her identity papers. All recovered through following up entries in your notebook. And you tell us this woman is still alive? Well, where is she, Landru? Speak!"

"Monsieur le Président,"—the prisoner slowly inclines his head and strokes his beard—"I have already said you shall not pierce the sacred wall of my private life!"

How many times we heard of that "mur sacré"!

"He has a wonderful skull," says Orpen, "I shall never forget it," and forthwith sketches a little masterpiece which, in passing, had an amusing history. A year or two later John McCormack saw it hanging in my office and made a bid which demanded some consideration.

"Bring it round with you to tea," said John, "and I'll give you a cheque."

Which was duly done; only, for McCormack to have to express his keen regret that he was now unable to go through with the deal.

"It's like this," he explained, "I told Mrs. McCormack about it and when she heard it was Landru she said she wouldn't have him in the house."

"But it's an Orpen!"

"All the same—"

"At that rate, then, you couldn't buy a César Borgia by Leonardo either, if such a thing existed?"

"P'r'aps not."
Yet there was precious little repellent about Henri Désiré Landru. His might have been the face of a hundred and one petit bourgeois booking-clerks, peering up at you, and he was dying, with at most six months to live, when the guillotine fell. Perhaps that explained something of his imperturbable aloofness, though his lawyer, Maître "Moro," now in the Cabinet, once said that he believed his client had honestly split up into two personalities, and that the one, deeming itself innocent, had supplanted the guilty individuality. Lawyers, lawyers! And to think that it was this same "Moro" who, in his professional business of trying to hoodwink the jury, had flabbergasted us after seven hours of oratory with this peroration on the final day of the trial:

"Gentlemen, I believe my client is a monster. But not that he murdered these women. His was an unmentionable trade (Landru strokes his beard) and to-day these poor souls who trusted him—time will bear me out—are strewn along the littorals of North Africa and South America, sent thither to a life of shame by the man behind me!" (Landru looks slightly surprised).

"And what of the boy Cochet? Is he there too?" inquires the judge.

But it was unnecessary. One had only to look at the exhibits in court, the teeth and wigs and other feminine "props" of these faded concierges, women of forty and fifty, to wonder what maison—even in Northern Africa—would have taken them in. The contention was, for human likelihood, about
on a par with the reply of Landru himself when invited to explain the disappearance of the youth Cochet:

"He joined the Belgian army at the outbreak of war. For aught I know he may be the Unknown Soldier!"

A terrible saying, maybe, but charged with what stupendous contempt for the examining mind opposed to him, for the whole community, for that matter, which had reared him on high as a national institution of Gallic nimbleness and repartee. And very particularly, one suspects, for that court room at Versailles where sat the morbid and the fair, like sardines, only steeped in ether, munching, sipping champagne, joking, disengaging their apparel the better to breathe during that penultimate scene when, for ninety minutes, a condemned man awaiting sentence while his judges supped next door, sat in marble immobility beneath a dozen blinding arc lamps as camera and film men hopped about him.

Once only that uncanny day had it looked for a fleeting moment as if something might be known.

"I am dreadfully worried, Maître," said Landru, sending for his counsel in an entr’acte, "I must tell you something. I have remorse!"

"But, Landru, proceed!"

"Maître, it is this. I have remorse for all my infidelities to my wife!"

Was he joking? Was he mad? No one knows. Not a living soul knows, or now will ever know this incomprehensible man’s secret; beyond some close students, perhaps, entertaining the strong
belief that he started killing for gain, was compelled to go on killing because his companions got to know something of their predecessors’ fate, and finished his killing rather beginning to like it. How else to explain the killing of a girl of eighteen which brought in two francs, and the only courtroom tears to his eyes?

The day before the end two of his sons tried to ferret out their father’s secret at the instance of a certain newspaper.

“Father,” they said, “you do not wish to be buried in a common plot. The Blank offers us many thousand francs for your story, and with this money we will secure for you an honourable grave.”

To which the Well-Desired One merely replied with an observation of some historical connection.

Declining rum, a priest or a cigarette next dawn, I andru was engaged in a final stroking of his beard when a visiting magistrate thought to fill in an awkward gap in the last toilette:

“Have you nothing to say to us, Landru?”

“Gentlemen,” said the Sire de Gambais, bowing, “how could I detain you on a cold morning like this with my stupid affairs?” . . . and some minutes later one saw “him”—just the oval of a white shirt in the grey February mist, being rushed forward at an acute angle up against the bascule to the rattling of sabres and to cries of “chapeaux!”

### 2. SIKI FETES HIMSELF

Siki had just slain Carpentier and he was covered in diamonds.

Only one or two ordinary mortals were present
when he entered the bar and demanded to be served.

"Sorry, can't be done," said the bartender, the serving of coloured men in an establishment patronized by white Americans being ruled out.

Siki glowered. He was exalted from excessive libations and clearly had been put up to what he was doing, as a racial challenge.

"I'm a French citizen," he shouted, well within his rights, and his hand descending on a glass cheese-cover, "and I demand to be served... ah, the pig!" (shaking his fist at a portrait of Dempsey behind the bar) "I'll kill you too! Why can't we Frenchmen be served? We're as good as you Americans!" And the Senegalese glanced round enraged and regrasped the cheese-cover as if to crown the bartender with it, while his free hand, a cluster of diamonds, shot itchingly up and down the bar rail.

"So you won't serve me?" bellowed the black, "then perhaps you'll serve someone else!" And out he bounded to return immediately with that which Paris terms a "blonde baby," complete with Alsatian wolfhound.

"This lady is French. Serve her then!"

The bartender, a little Scot, hesitated for a second—for Siki had again got hold of the cheese-cover and was leaning right over the bar—then, tightening his lips, Jock said "No."

It was a tense moment, with violence imminent. We put down our glasses ready for anything, when—smash, smash, smash, came the sound of glasses
breaking in succession in the far corner of the bar room; and a French family, which we had scarcely noticed, rose in indignation and marched out.

"It is scandalous," said Monsieur, passing us, "that this Frenchman cannot be served! I will report it."

"But he's drunk," we said.

"Do what you damn well please," said Jock.

As for Siki, a magical change occurred. From contorted rage, his features first simmered down to blank amazement at the interruption, then, as the utterly unexpected display of white sympathy gradually penetrated his coon's skull, he slowly began to beam for joy.

"Merci! merci!" he stammered.

And plucking, on the impulse, a white bundle from the arms of Madame as she passed, stalked out, fondling and cooing to it, and entirely oblivious of the existence of his other baby who, entangled in her wolfhound, could only hobble out after her champion, calling: "Siki! Siki! attends moi, chéri!"

3. THE SHOOTING AT MAXIM'S

There was no mystery about this double shooting; it occurred in the full view of all who happened to be in the Rue Royale establishment one midnight, and sober enough to see. The mystery only crept in later for international reasons, to grow in density until, in the end, people came to speak of the affair but with bated breath. As for writing about it, the censor saw to that,
WHILE WILSON WORKED

For it was armistice time when the tragedy occurred, that raving spell when Allied and Associated officers and men swept down upon Paris at last to live again, and love, without let or hindrance, or circumspection. Maxim’s, in particular these times, was nightly packed and mad. American officers on leave, or A.W.O.L., made it their drinking headquarters and the din between ten and two would be such as, on more than one occasion, to disturb Mr. Wilson working round the corner in the Crillon. A terrific din of shouting and of singing of champagne corks popping and plates clattering, of “Madelon de la Victoire” and “Over There,” of shrill feminine chatter and stabbing shrieks of joy, of ructions over bills, and of ejections. Men got not so much drunk as dazed; too dazed, many, to note the periodical departure of their women across the dance floor and up a few steps. When the women returned, their eyes shone anew, their brains leapt ahead, they could not keep still the fraction of a second, and their affection was unbridled.

At Maxim’s, after you come through the swing doors from the street, there is a narrow strip of restaurant leading down to the main salle—a kind of corridor, with tables along either wall and facing one another. Dining or supping in which corridor, and sunk back on a plush settee, you are scarcely more than a yard or two from the people opposite; a well-favoured situation for striking up gallant acquaintance with the unknown, and that was just what a drunken American officer was engaged in trying to do on the night with which we are concerned.
Only . . . the woman opposite, who had so stimulated his fuddled brain, did not happen to be alone. Awkward, the more so in that, darn it, her escort was not even a comrade of the A.E.F. . . . things could have been arranged had he been so . . . but, of all things at Maxim’s, at this time, darn it, if the guy wasn’t a Frenchman, and an officer at that!

The fuddled American thought it over as best he was able for quite a long time, a minute or so. Then, guffawing, recommenced his staring. He followed the woman’s eyes everywhere, thus drawing them towards him (as can so easily be done), whereat he would guffaw again. What did it matter, after all! The Frog wouldn’t mind, not he! Why, she was only a cocotte—well known in the place too, according to the waiter. He would go over and pal up to the Frog, yes, that was the thing to do—and get the Frog’s girl that way. He went.

The French officer was cool, and very white; nor did the American officer know at all what was passing in the former’s brain; because the two each dealt so very differently by cocottes. The American officer never dreamed that this approach of his, this ogling of the Frenchman’s girl, had roused the officer of France as much as had the cocotte been that gallant’s wife; for that is the way of many Frenchmen, with cocottes.

Still, how could a fellow know that . . . and a foreigner, and drunk?

The American officer drew up a chair. And sought to parler vous; though not with much success. The cocotte turned her back upon him and the Frenchman, quivering, stared. But kept
calm. That was the thing to do—keep calm. Then the other would go away again in a minute. ...

But the other didn’t. Instead, his hand went forward with gesture gross even for that time and place; and it was zero hour.

Out shot the table; crash went its glistening burden, and the Frenchman was on his feet, hand on hip—

“Do that again and I kill you!”

The American officer did it again.

The French officer killed him.

A second American officer shot the officer of France.

4. A TOUR OF TITANS

A Sunday afternoon of late July. The Parc des Princes velodrome cannot hold another mortal being. The whole gamut is there, chic and little bourgeois and artisan, packed high in tiered tiers around the track and with youth predominating; an oval, restless sea of excited Parisians, jostling, gesticulating, cat-calling, swilling down bock out of bottles, arguing, proclaiming, debating the latest rumours of the race while a band plays “Belote” over and over and over again.

For the climax is at hand of the greatest sporting event in France, of the fiercest surviving manpower trial in the world—the Tour de France awheel. Aeroplane racing has never materialized; automobile racing has dwindled and dwindled since the days of Edge and Gabriel and Jenatzy; it is left to the good old cycle of our fathers to capture the French imagination and provide this scene.
Since the men who will presently pedal round, goggled and swathed in inner tubes, some collapsing like Dorando, others grinning, all, covered in mud or dust from head to foot, have been through unimaginable things in ordinary people’s eyes.

To drive a car two hundred and fifty miles in a day is no mean feat of endurance. To drive this mileage every day for a week, over hill and dale, must be a thing few drivers would care to volunteer for. Yet these men have cycled that distance almost daily for a month and through every kind of weather, rain, snow, suffocating heat, and over every kind of road!

Paris—Dieppe—Havre—Cherbourg—Brest—Bordeaux—Biarritz—the Pyrenees—Perpignan—Marseilles—Nice—the Alps—Lake Geneva—Strasbourg—Metz—Dunkirk—Paris, four thousand miles of incessant bump on wheels which look cruelly thin and frames that break asunder if you tumble. Up the Tourmalet, twice Snowden’s height, they ride at an average of fifteen miles an hour, powerful cars scarce able to keep up with them so steep the gradient, and down from the Col de la Croix Haute in the Alps they career at well over “forty,” whirling round hairpin after hairpin and leaving the motor-cars miles behind. Tropical thunderstorms may break upon them, terrific heat leave them gasping, or icy cold necessitate their wrapping themselves up in newspapers, but the aces pedal on—Bottechia, Pélissier, Frantz, Aymo, Alavoine, Bellenger, Buisse, Christophe. As famous names, those, during July in France, as Briand or Painlevé or Caillaux! All the country-
side turning out to cheer on the gaily coloured, serpentine column as it whirls by and all France saturating itself in newspaper details next day. How Pélissier gave up. How Frantz punctured and lost the étape.

Each stage the heroic little column of fifty or sixty embarks upon in the dead of night, to dismount but twice in the twelve succeeding hours; for sandwiches and soup (or iced coffee according to the climate) munched and swallowed in under a minute, and for new inner tubes snatched from attendants of each make of cycle. Then on again, muscles taut, features set... a superhuman effort in every way if one thinks of the seconds heroically collected and then of the whole minutes lost over a puncture while comrades disappear on the horizon. Since to lose the column is often to lose the day, so intricate is the riding and the nursing of "stars," the pacing and the pedalling, ahead at psychological or pre-arranged moments of the race. Riding in teams of four or five, and each team representing a well-known make, strategy and tactics are all laid down before the Titans leave Paris; thus some aspirant to future fame is given "stâble" orders to ride like mad over the Pyrenees in order to tire out such and such an opposition "star," though the effort bring absolute collapse to its protagonist. Nor are there any signs of fake about the Tour de France—too many lynx-eyed umpires are ever close at hand in Renaults and Delages for that—although on the eve of extra hard occasions the column may agree to keep together and go easy.
Though not on this last stage of all, brutal pavé stretch from Dunkirk down to the Parc des Princes; each one wants to be the ace this final day.

As the minutes drag out, and report brings the leaders nearer and nearer, women and girls who are everywhere, colour at the thought of seeing in the flesh the giants whose prowess they have followed so ardently for weeks; and the band continues to play "Belote."

Suddenly a distant cheer silences the multitude; he is coming, the winner! He is Bottechia, surely, the little Italian who has led for a hundred and sixty hours of pedalling—ever since they left Paris! Yes, yes . . .

Bottechia gagne!

A cyclist in yellow jersey, and doubled over his handle-bars, enters the velodrome. To ringing cheers, even though he be an Italian, he pedals grimly round, pulls up, staggers, is hung with garlands, frantically kissed, and offered a cup of champagne.

The winner has lost three stone but won enough upon which to retire to his village in the Abruzzi.

5. THE BODY-SNATCHING OF ANATOLE

"Poor Buddah," observed Georges Clemenceau, surveying a miniature shrine to that worthy at Chicago, "he said he was only mortal, but they insisted he was a god."

"Poor Anatole France," one may well echo, "he said he was a Communist, but they buried him a Nationalist."

"La Culte des Morts" in the fair land of France
is famous. France lives in her dead more vitally by far than any other race—hence the feasibility of Poincaré's two years of cemetery speeches; hence the death days without number commemorating the conflict, Stygian self-saturation kindled anew each twilight beneath the Arc de Triomphe. The thing runs the whole gamut, from the six months of jet-black mourning donned by Breton peasants for cousins-by-marriage to the Champs Elysées apotheosis of a Sarah Bernhardt. It is well, if morbid, this cult. It can also be ridiculous.

Take poor Anatole, his final years, and then the funeral they gave him—

France, at seventy, is consumed with indignation at Germany's opening vandalism; a revulsion fills him, too, for the swashbuckling German Gott. He says so. He even volunteers for the army and sits about in the office of a Gustave Hervé planning new articles to spur on the poilus. A phase. There succeeds a second and equally well-defined one.

With the Russian revolution, Anatole France is first attracted by, later won over to Soviet rule. There was never any denying of the fact possible. Each Labour Day, openly, the sage of La Béchellerie shook hands with Moscow across the front page of the communist "Humanité;" the foremost of living French writers' sympathies were perfectly well known throughout his native land, which proceeded to draw a veil across them. Nor was serious suggestion made that the Master might be in other than his quite sane senses. How could
there be, indeed, question of that, with him publishing new volumes such as “La Vie en Fleur”? And continuing to entrance an intimate coterie at the Villa Säid, with his play upon the comedy?

He dies; wishing to be buried in a corner of the little churchyard of St. Cyr by the Joire. A simple last request, so much in keeping with the dead immortal’s rough liking for the soil and for its people; and with his benign contempt for the Big City and its shams. He even begs of Richepin, not long before the end, that none shall be allowed to speak above his open grave. But Anatole was forgetting one thing: “La Culte des Morts.” And the things that can be done when a giant who has strayed lies silenced for the ages.

Paris claimed his body.

Fumblingly, her academics and her statesmen, in rendering homage, broke it gently to the public: Anatole had not been quite his right self these concluding years. In his dotage, poor old fellow . . . else how ever could he have concluded this pact with the devil, gone out of his way to support Lenin with the unique prestige of his genius? Why yes, let us say it outright! He was gaga!

Never mind if he retained astonishing lucidity to an end serene beyond words, almost talking from the tomb as a relative by the bedside, Francois Cruky, later told me; that his brain, examined by experts all through one night, almost made those savants kneel in awe; that he was writing for publication up to within three weeks of dissolution. He was gaga.

A widow of modest estate alone stood in the way
of national rehabilitation, and she could easily be won over by these wise men who knew the truth. She was.

Up to go the trappings of a great State Funeral along the Parisian way, while Anatole sped northwards, for ever, in a motor hearse, from his beloved Touraine.

In an October fog the obsequies next day lasted five hours.

In that time everything must have happened which the Master would most have shrunk from and abhorred, from the Chief of State's eulogy on a packed boulevard to the theatrical halt by the Unknown Soldier, and final committal in a fashionable cemetery shaken by motor 'buses.
CHAPTER XV

THE INKY WAY

FOREIGN EDITOR'S TELEGRAM: Proceed immediately Deauville interview Dolly Sisters their reported joint engagement same man.

DE BLOWITZ: Regret unable accede request promised for Madame de Canrobert's reception after which have diary to do.

It is no reflection on the august dead to say that if we cannot be compared to them neither can they be compared to us. Even as late as the early years of this century the delectable motto of a me.e handful of English and American correspondents located in Paris continued to be "Festina Lente," with no telephone calls from London and few, if any, cables from across the Atlantic to worry them, their work in the main just a leisurely compiling of the day's events in "letter" form for subsequent posting. And their little cubby-holes or alleged "offices" unviolated by a stranger's tread from week's end to week's end, reposeful navens o'erlooking calm and peaceful boulevards. O, tempora! O, mutantur! as Mrs. Caligula Bullwinkle was once heard to sigh in a highbrow hiatus...

In this year of grace the Paris correspondent, as the centre of the continental news system, has to watch events in at least half a dozen adjacent coun-
tries besides France and be prepared to go to any point in any one of them at a moment’s notice. Upon which occasions the rush to the seat of action of such a resident correspondent, temporarily turned “special”, is as lively and exacting a performance as any trade or profession can put forward.

Let us suppose that a famous Italian has been murdered while holidaying on Lake Como. The news is flashed to Paris just after 3 p.m.

Lake Como! Lake Como! Money! Money! Passport! Trains! Trains! But money first, money! How much is there in the petty cash? A thousand francs—that’s nothing, nothing, you want ten thousand—at least. And the banks are all of course closed. And all the other fellows will be wanting their own cash. Ah—a thought, a noble thought—the “jazz bank” just around the corner in the Rue Daunou. Open always, including Sundays, and never been known to fail a correspondent in distress...provided the distress be not of his own making. Will they march? Of course they do, and off you career next after time-tables. Just one thing mattering. You must send a story off that night from the scene of the assassination and hang all your engagements...even if you be dining with somebody else’s mannequin. And it is now 3.20 p.m. And Lake Como is in Italy. There’s only one thing for it—an aeroplane to the Swiss frontier, thence on in the Bâle-Milan rapide as far as Lugano. Before four you have left Le Bourget “as is” and without even the proverbial toothbrush, and at 7 p.m. are taking the first dinner service in a
Federal wagon-restaurant, jolting and swaying towards the St. Gothard.

At Lugano it is late and quite dark; also everyone is excited and suspicious. But you are met, by arrangement, by a powerful car and dash off the remaining few miles to your destination on Como. Though not before making quite sure that your lines of communication with Paris are secured, as fixed up by your assistant by telephone. The vital point of all, this, that you shall be able to telephone your “stuff” unimpeded through to Paris at the appointed hour from Lugano, Switzerland, since it is perfectly certain that the strictest censorship will be functioning across the border in Italy—apart from the unholy crush of correspondents there, up from Milan . . . yes, the line to Paris is yours for ten minutes after midnight, for which you tip heavily, to make doubly sure, and dash off.

The actual collection of the story on the spot is almost a bagatelle—a hurried talk with a hotel proprietor, a waiter, a peasant or two, a cabman, a fellow correspondent, even a policeman (everyone being steeped in the tragedy), and the swift assimilation of “atmosphere” the while—and you are heading once more through the night back to Lugano and the end of that telephone line to Paris whence—presto!—your words are relayed like lightning on to London or New York, and, be sure of it, even if they read disconnectedly or staccato (though often the best stories are thus feverishly dictated over the long-distance telephone) to them the place of honour in the paper next morning, emanating, as they do, “from our special correspondent” on the spot.
The above, while purely fictional, is no exaggeration at all of one side of a contemporary Paris correspondent's job, a side demanding no small measure of intelligence and foresight, resource and savoir faire, quite apart from writing ability in the surmounting of obstacle upon obstacle and with that demon TIME ever grinning down . . .

As an instance of one's radius of action, my territory as Paris correspondent included Holland, Belgium, the Ruhr and the Rhineland, Switzerland, Italy, Spain and Portugal—to say nothing of the almost separate "preserve" of the Riviera, events along which made call upon call on the Paris office, a notable example being the never-to-be-forgotten Cannes Conference of January, 1922.

Conferences may come and conferences may go, but Cannes will surely linger for ever, not only by reason of its "jazz" surroundings but because it is possible we were closer to a sane allied settlement then than we have ever been since. Under the benign Riviera sun France and England almost became merged in sincere agreement and without the legacy of the four following years that is making the operation of a rapprochement so painful for both parties to-day. Nor had that pillar of German common sense and moderation, Rathenau, pressed on . . . in fact, in fact . . .

Well, France just had to have her Poincaré "as a child has the measles," as Briand had put it to us, foreseeing events, but a week or two before in London. On that occasion I was despatched across the channel especially to badger the French Premier, who had just returned from the Disarmament Con-
ference, on the riotously funny submarine-launched bogey the Paris Press had raised in protest against certain decisions that had been taken at Washington. The childishness of great newspapers and their moving spirits is at times unbelievable. In Paris my table lay littered with cables from New York instructing me to see this, that and the other person on the monstrous act of treachery France was planning, and it was in vain that I sought to press home that the whole business was nonsense from beginning to end—just half a display of bad temper and half a reminder of what France could do, did she choose—and that not a single additional submarine was likely to be laid down at Brest, L’Orient, Toulon, or St. Nazaire. No! They didn’t believe me. I was to go to London and extract a categorical denial of the reports from Briand himself.

The proceedings with Aristide, one of the most sensible men of his time, were brief and (rightly) explosive. It was upstairs in his suite at the Carlton, and the dinner waiter was already engaged in twirling champagne bottles in one corner.

Aristide: I will construct what submarines I like!

F.T.: Then you are going to build some additional ones?

Aristide: Is it possible that Americans can be so idiotic?

Loucheur: It is evident.

Aristide (sitting down to table): I have had a hard day. I am hungry. And thirsty. I do not often lose my temper. But (rising), if you do not...

It was that same night that Cannes was chosen for the venue of the Conference, and mainly on account of a jocular remark dropped by a colleague.

"Where's the Conference going to be held, Monsieur le Président?" asked someone.

"In France."

"Why not at Beaulieu?" chimes in another. "Lovely weather and a good golf links near by to keep Monsieur Lloyd George in humour."

"Tiens, but that is an idea!" says Briand. "Very important to keep him in good humour. And the golf does it, yes?"

"There's a much better links at Cannes," throws in a third of the group.

"Ah, how beautiful it is, Cannes! I adore Cannes!" enthuses Aristide. "Yes, we shall see about Cannes."

And Cannes it was—much to the horror of people, on both sides of the Channel, who seemed to think, and doubtless still do, that statesmen must needs work in calvinistic surroundings in order to secure results. Whereas, on the contrary, the sun, the air, the beauty of Cannes, putting all in good health and humour, and automatically removing "gr-uches" and angularities such as flourish in musty Government halls, contributed in no small measure, one feels sure, to the rapidity with which a pact agreement was being reached, after only four days' work, and must have gone far towards ushering in a reasonable reparations attitude vis-à-vis the unofficial German delegates present, had things ever been per-
mitted to progress as far. Beside which considerations, after all, what did other trifles matter, such as the importuning of my Lord Curzon by pretty ladies in the hotel lounge, or the choice of a gambling club as the scene of the week’s deliberations, or if a Prime Minister received correspondents to the strains of “C’est Mon Homme,” or even that blessed game of golf?

That fateful game which made the French finally mad with their representative, and gave just that popular push to his pen that President Millerand was waiting for, showed what silly things nations, like men, can sometimes be. I played behind that match—or tried to—and this is the dreadful story of how three allied Prime Ministers chose to “walk round after a little white ball” while Europe was foundering——

There is a generous, not to say heady, wine of the country at Cannes called Rosé Bellet and this, during lunch on the verandah of the Mandelieu Club House, was circulated with some freedom, considering the sun, among a joyous party that included Mr. Lloyd George, Monsieur Briand, Signor Bonomi, Mr. Bonar Law, Lord Curzon, Sir Edward Grigg and Lord Riddell, and ladies. Not that anything other than high spirits prevailed at the close of the meal when “L. G.” hilariously proposed: “Let’s teach Briand and Bonomi golf. Come on, we’ll have a sixsome—Briand, Bonar, and I against Bonomi’ Grigg, and Riddell. Did you ever play, Curzon?”

Curzon (strutting forward hand to his back): “When I was young, I . . . .”

“Listen to him!” interrupts “L. G.,” hiding his
words like a naughty schoolboy, "Come on, gentlemen!"

The "game" endured five holes. From the first Briand refused any coaching from "L. G." and holding his driver with his hands the wrong way over, proceeded to smash his ball a good hundred yards and well into the air. Later, on the French Premier being put in a bunker, "L.G." laughed: "That's all right. He's quite used to getting out of difficulties." Meanwhile Bonomi, playing in a morning coat and silk hat, had caused some consternation by driving a ball off the first green, with his putter, and back in the direction of the tee . . . "for which," as Bonar Law reflected, trotting back, "Italy will have to make reparation." And so it continued, a feast of harmless fun and barter. Such as, for instance, when Lord Riddell (who had charge of correspondents) played a great shot up the fairway.

"Tiens," mused Briand, "but he launches the ball like he launches news in the Press!"

But Paris was shocked, appalled at their man indulging such an hour's care-free fooling. The detested Lloyd George had always had Briand in his pocket. That they knew. But now the Welshman was making a jackass of Aristide into the bargain. And that had to stop.

So did we come to enter on the reign of Raymond Poincaré that brought such a harvest of good and gain to France! For Cannes I should never blame Lloyd George. For Genoa, maybe. But the Cannes break-up had made him reckless; he thought he could beat Poincaré. Actually, he should have
cancelled Genoa, foreseeing what a Russian bear
garden it was certain to become.

Two further memories of Cannes and we shall pass
on: Mussolini playing boule and Winston Churchill
painting. Both were nobodies at that time though
within a few months the former was to march on
Rome. At Cannes, however, Benito was just a
newspaper correspondent like any of us and in the
evenings, having assimilated the doings of the Con-
ferees and written his dispatch, would repair to the
Casino to put on a few francs, looking black as
thunder all the time and being quite unapproachable
even then. Winston, who has the invaluable and
saving gift of being able to withdraw unto himself in
adversity and pursue other things than politics,
spent the days of the Conference calmly painting a
model up at the Mt. Fleuri Hotel or else, when the
sun shone, a picturesque corner of the local harbour.

There follows a disconcerting enough personal
transition after a conference, passed in the lap of
luxury, such as Cannes or Genoa, or indeed after any
assignment "on the road" when one may live free
and nobly at the paper's expense. However, to be
suddenly cast back into the dim recesses of a rez-de-
chaussée on the Left Bank, after lording it for two
weeks at the Carlton, Cannes, and signing everything
in sight with an airy nonchalance, is just one of
those lightning changes of the trade which in the
aggregate tend to make of the present day foreign
correspondent a creature of strange joys and sor-
rows, moods and impulses, caprices and complexes,
way of thinking and habit of life. In my own case
I added to the discomfort by making the ghastly
error of signing an agreement whereby I was unable
to charge up any expenditure incurred “within the
metropolitan area of Paris,” a most infernal clause,
seeing that dozens of people I never desired to meet
would arrive with letters of introduction and expect
to be taken out and shown the town, and not always,
by any means, at their expense.

It was not, in fact, until many moons had waned
that a wise man, hearing tell of my woe, passed by
and said:

“You bright baby! Ever studied the map of
P...is? Thought not! Know where the metro-
politan area ends? Why, just outside the
Bois!”

Ever after which enlightenment, my entertaining,
if and when, was invariably done just outside the
metropolitan area . . . to wit, at the Château de
Madrid.

. . . The most difficult capital in Europe to get
news out of must be Rome; thrice unfortunate
circumstance in that no other city continues to pro-
vide such memorable occasions of colour and inspi-
ration. Bad communications, oriental slackness and
postal venality rather than the periodical edicts of
the ex-journalist Dictator who gave us that phrase
without price: “The world is sick of liberty,” are
responsible for this.

Having suffered long and frequently in the past,
despite the calling into service of aeroplanes and
wireless in addition to the ordinary telegraph, for the
coronation of Pius the Eleventh I thought I had, at
last, solved things. As, once in St. Peter’s for that
unholy jam, all notion of leaving the precincts and
re-entering before the end of the six hours a day, I retained half a dozen small boys, collected by the hotel, and whose mission it was to keep running to and fro between St. Peter's and the Post Office bearing sections of my story, as written during the progress of events. In this way, when the basilica had emptied, towards 2 p.m., my description had all been written and dispatched, for publication in next morning's paper, one's mind being doubly at ease in regard to its "getting in," in that the difference in time made it then but 9 a.m. in New York. Serenely, I returned to the Excelsior to relax after the big effort. Only, forthwith, to be rudely re-tethered to earth—

"You look all hot and bothered," greeted a rival from the lounge steps, "what have you been up to?"

"Well, I suppose I've been to the show, like everybody else." Then, the faintest suspicion dawning: "You've been there too, haven't you?"

"Not I!"

"Well, what about your story?"

"Holy smoke, T., mais vous obtenez ma chèvre! My story went off yesterday!"

Which is, of course, the thing to do in Rome. Why worry to see what you are describing? Every coronation is the same—just like its forerunner. All you've got to do is just to look up the file for the last ceremony and re-write it leisurely, bringing it up to date by altering "Benedict" to "Pius," etc. And then cable your masterpiece off the night before when the lines are all clear and you are certain of getting it through. Should you be really keen, you
may even send bulletins or "fresheners" the following morning on the strength of gossip tripping from the lips of people just returned from the ceremony, such as: "Holiness looked pale," or "Cardinal O'Connell coughed all morning," thus injecting local colour into your narrative which will undoubtedly lead the paper next day as a "vivid pen picture from St. Peter's."

Only, the curse of it was I had never thought of it, had "banked" on all those small boys instead! And what these did with their sections I know not; I only know that at eight that night my dispatch had not yet left Rome!

It is quite a simple thing, in this regard, for someone, standing to gain professionally by the failure of a rival to get his message through, to get priority for his own dispatch by "greasing the palm" of the head telegraphist; even possible for him (should he be a thoroughly low fellow) to induce that functionary to hold up the rival's message for several hours. . . .

As for the pleasant survival of correspondents writing advance descriptions of events they haven't witnessed, the principal culprits are some of the big news agencies, though others also indulge the fraud. No blame whatever attaches to the correspondent who is simply acting on instructions. Professionally the practice is condemned if only for the fact that it jeopardises the existence of descriptive writers since, no matter how brilliant a narrative may be, if it be an hour late in arriving at one's office it is useless: the arid "eye-witness" account "vamped up" beforehand from the fleas and forwarded by an
agency is already set up in type. Often, in this way, all the public ever reads or hears of picturesque and thrilling events picturesquely and thrillingly portrayed by men versed in that kind of work but whose messages have chanced to arrive late through no fault of theirs, is the afore-mentioned arid and fraudulent account; though one takes leave to wonder if the public would not be perfectly well satisfied to read the real thing even if it did appear twenty-four hours late.

Each Press has its own special sins of omission and commission, affecting in varying degree and intensity the inhabitants of this planet, and up till now the newspapers have “got away with it” by crying: “Don’t dare touch us! We represent the public!” whenever others have gone upon the war-path; but one doubts if it will ever be so. The Freedom of the Press can be abused like few other freedoms and there have not been wanting signs recently in more than one capital, that Governments, and others, are not so terrified or taken in by the hoary old slogan as they used to be, and that the day may not be far off, for one thing, when the actual writers of proven untrue statements calculated to do hurt to the State and to Society, will find themselves under lock and key and for exemplary periods.

Mussolini has, of course, gone to the other extreme by bludgeoning all his newspaper opponents out of existence. On the other hand, few will deny that the Duce—who, rhythmically, is rumoured to love a Duchess—has put new life into Italy even to impregnating the beggars of the Rialto with a sense of their personal dignity. Trains, telephones, public
hygiène—a score of those things which divide the go-ahead state from its drowsing neighbour—have improved out of all knowledge under Benito and with the fair and square immediate result that Como and the Lido and Rapallo have risen to the category of European resorts of fashion.

Does the end justify the means? Rarely can the question have been posed so vigorously as in Musso-
lini’s case. At all events, that the Duce has at-
tained greatness verging on immortality is evidenced by the fact of civil war being fairly certain to ensue in his country if (a) he is assassinated, (b) he falls from power and is arrested as an alleged accessory in the Mateotti murder, (c) he dies in the moderately near future of the disease he is reputed to have, and one of the Aventine Group is summoned to the Quirinal to form a Government.

. . . Elsewhere I tell of other outings along the
inky way—with Clemenceau and Ludendorff, North-
cliffe and the Pope, Kati Schratt and Caillaux. While on my way to visit the last-named in the Sarthe a well-remembered experience befell. I had been describing circles on the Orléans and État systems trying to reach Mamers and eventually
found myself landed for several hours in the good town of Rennes where, bored and tired, I took a café chair by the Vilaine. What on earth was there to do for the next few hours? I thought and thought—and suddenly thought of a little tale by de Maupassant called “La Petite Roque,” a terrible little tale the point of which, however, for me, was that its author had “lived it” when stranded for the afternoon, as a newspaper correspondent even as I,
in the town of Clermont. A funeral had passed his café, Guy had joined up with the mourners and, from the one nearest him, had listened to the awful fate of the little Roque as they progressed towards the cemetery.

"Garçon!" I called, "what is there to do or see in Rennes?"

"Monsieur has the cinema, the concert, the——"

"I mean out of the ordinary—something odd, interesting."

"Ah—Monsieur would like the ladies?"

"Not at all. Haven't you got something special—that isn't to be found anywhere else—even a factory will do!"

The waiter reflected briefly, then smiled: "There is the prison, Monsieur."

"What prison?"

"But, parbleu, the women's prison! All the murderesses and makers of angels of France there—seven hundred of them."

"How far is it?"

He directed me, but shaking his head.

"You'll never get in, Monsieur. . . . merci, Monsieur."

At the gates I presented a blue New York reporter's police card, stamped "good through the lines," at the same time intimating in stumbling and heavily accented French that I was a U.S. prison inspector making a tour of inspection of European prisons; and took a seat in the lodge as if the matter of my admittance was a foregone conclusion, quite in the Yankee style. It was. Presently a chief wardress arrived, bowing and scraping with my old police
card, and . . . if Monsieur would kindly follow her, he could begin his inspection straightaway—

It was a "nervy" afternoon. Not only might I be found out any minute, but I had to remember I knew no French, else they might start asking me questions about American prisons, and if any of the wardresses or convicts knew English . . . still, why worry until things happened? I took out a notebook and made entries as we passed from room to room, nodding and smiling by way of reply to the few observations of my cicerone. All the women make sheets or sails, for which they get paid at a rate which may bring them in a franc or two a day, of which only twenty centimes may they spend in the canteen on chocolate and biscuits. The balance accumulating through, say, a sentence of twenty years, may mean a dot of several thousand francs when a convict re-enters the world without. Dressed in quakerish garb, most of them were a pretty fearsome collection of the squat and ugly of the soil, but here and there were good looks, even prettiness. I watched them taking their half-hour's afternoon exercise in the prison yard, walking round and round in silence in single file, and later saw them having their evening foot-bath, seated in long rows and ankle-deep in a kind of trough. And I visited the dispensary—oh, happy touch—in the hands of an ex-poisoness! And the interest their masculine visitor in ordinary clothes evoked—some had not seen such a sight in two decades—was altogether embarrassing. Seven hundred women, scores and scores still quite young sundered, cut off from Nature! What grim relics prisons were, to be sure!
But it was upstairs, in murderesses’ row and the spy department, that interest mounted. The first-named ladies, about sixty in number, had as their social leader Madaine Bessarabo who put her husband in a trunk in Montmartre, then got bored with him, and dumped him at the Gare de l’Est labelled “Nancy.” “If they work and behave well,” I gathered, “some may soon go into the laundry. That’s their chief recompense. They can see the surrounding country from the laundry. Otherwise they can only see the sky.”

‘That tent of blue that is the sky . . . ’

But the war-spies interested one most. Ten still remained and they had a corner to themselves, sewing in a circle. What spying had each one done? I longed to ask, though “intelligence and commerce with the enemy” would have probably been the dull official reply.

And so I left them, the seven hundred, the few sewing silently on, the many staring open-mouthed . . . starved.

Sometimes out-of-Paris peregrinations took on a roseate hue, as the hunt for Miss McCormick, wine-tasting in Champagne, the Grande Semaine at Deauville, and motoring over the Pyrenees, hunting up a new holiday ground.

Miss M., heiress, decided, it may be recalled, to marry a Swiss riding-master, but no one knew when or where the deed had been, or was to be perpetrated. All the young lady desired, of course, was just to be left alone with her purely private affairs, but alackaday! she had become “news,” was no longer simply Miss McCormick, and she had to be
trailed across Europe from town to town and city to city. Being wholly in sympathy with the missing Miss (considering newspaper intrusion on such occasions permanently intolerable) I did not know what on earth I was going to ask her, if I found her, beyond “Are you married?” but instructions remained instructions and the paper had smelled blood, so I continued for a delightful ten days through Switzerland and Tyrol, happy indeed to be ultimately recalled without tasting the riding-master’s whip.

The wine-tasting, or shall we say, quaffing, had as its scene the country round Rheims; the Marquis de Polignac’s idea being that a little propaganda might be done in favour of champagne in dry America. And badly enough it was needed. In the Pommery establishment only twenty employees were corking bottles as against two hundred before the war, and a walk through the cellar or underground city of bottles—seventeen kilometres of streets and avenues called after the capitals of the world and overlooked by the Germans as a billeting area when they swept forward—served to accent with a jolt the inconceivable folly of those who prefer to drink grape juice to this glorious juice of the grape. It rather startled, also, to learn that the best wine before us brought precisely seventeen francs to the firm of Pommery, though back in Paris one would be blithely asked a hundred francs for it the same evening.

On returning to that city, however, a pleasant surprise awaited us in the nature of a case of champagne at each of our offices—and discreetly graded
in brand according to our position in those offices—yet I fear anything we may have written in return and in the fullness of our hearts altered not the situation one iota.

As for Deauville, one must not be serious.

The other day I read a piece headed “The Soul of Deauville.” Souls have to be discovered nowadays for all kinds of places, but I should dearly like to track down this one, though probably its ultimate hiding place could not be lightly set down in public print. Still, as Deauville says: “if you don’t like us, who’s detaining you?” No, one, except the blessed paper. Deauville being one of those places where something has got to happen every August, and if you can’t make it happen again and again why, you’re no journalist. Yet in essence Deauville is little else but a beach of advertisement where congregate those whose business in life it is to be in the limelight. The landscape is triste, the swimming absurd, and the general fittings those of a musical comedy. True there is Ciro’s, ever welcome, and a plethora of beauteous damosels getting brown, ever thrilling, and as a hot-house presentation of freak humanity the racecourse is hard to beat, but the whole place reeks of artificiality, loudness, and pretence. Each year the same human vegetation watching itself go by, only with different coloured faces and clothes, each August the same bewildering winnings by the Greek baccarat syndicate, the same jewel losses, the same peacock parade of flamboyant near-males and of women excitingly poised between the sexes. Yet the truth of it is—Deauville doesn’t really represent anything at all save moneyed
vacuity and professional advertisement. A cleverly "boosted" snare, built up on the exchange, which is dying the death, as a European resort of elegance (than which there can be few things more stimulating), it so richly deserves.

More and more those who can, are seeking pastures new; which reminds me of the Pyrenees—

"If you think so little of Deauville," once came a cable, "find a substitute."

Well, that was easily done—the Pyrenees by motor—although our time-table was almost shattered at the start through the antics of one of the party. This was Jascha Heifetz, the violinist, who insisted at five in the morning in going on playing piece after piece in the "Quiet Father" off the Paris Markets, regardless of our puff puff over at the D'Orsay station, and with Sargent's conception of the loveliest woman in America huddled in closed-eyed rapture beside him.

"Ah, but he is wonderful, marvellous, your friend"—the manager held his arms aloft—"tell him I will give him twenty francs a night and tips, to play in my house."

Concert engagements in China making this very reasonable offer impossible of acceptance, we at last got the virtuoso on the way, the party joining the Sud Express in varying forms of exhilaration and evening dress, much to the surprise and indignation of serious French rentiers and business men who, however, were able as always, to attain repose of mind by announcing: "they are mad, those people there," and sinking back behind their morning newspapers.
Railway journeys are all much of a muchness. Coffee in the restaurant car—morning papers—sunshine—yawns—ticket collector—snores—Touraine—magazines—cigarettes—more sleep—lunch—general conversation—more châteaux—dice—Mah Jong—wit—Bordeaux—evening papers—aches—pine forests—apéritifs—Biarritz. Here, at midnight, the quaint old custom of shaking dice was resumed across the broad quilt of a bed, the principals jamming away their notes on the entry of each hotel servant, agape at the sight of five newly arrived guests gathered round an empty bed.

"They probably think we're engaged in family prayer," suggested someone, but the supposition lacked support later on, when, collecting an armful of hundred franc notes winnings, the only lady of the party dashed out of the room to collide with the chambermaid, the valet, the chasseur, and a few more of the staff, eyes and ears glued to the door.

"I never felt so confused in all my life," the fugitive afterwards declared, "where do you think they thought I got all that money from?"

We simply daren't tell her ...

Next morning, having failed to persuade the French authorities to allow us to go for a swim—they insisting the water was too cold—a large Hotchkiss cabriolet was acquired, plus a gem of a chauffeur, Horace, and we slid off through Basquetland at seven-pence a kilometre. It was Sunday, and left and right the natives in their tam-o’-shanter “berets” were playing pelota, admire Basquettes looking on, dark, slim, pretty girls, garbed in their best.

First stop Arnaga, Rostand’s hill-home, where
“l’Aiglon,” “Cyrano” and “Lointaine” were writ, and just sold to a South American ménage for £12,000. At St. Jean Pied de Port, beneath towering Spain, we dined and wined strongly of Châteauneuf of the Pope on the terrace, overlooking a millrace, of an hotel of the little luxury.

Here a slight contretemps hinged on the wholly unexpected meeting of one of our party with a lady he had previously told, in Paris two days beforehand, he was bound for Sweden. Geographical considerations apparently made explanations difficult, the two being seen at sundown in animated conversation on the eleventh century walls.

Over a mountain through wind and rain and night to Mauleon where we slept and bathed and breakfasted off excellent coffee to the milk and eggs to the ham for the equivalent to £1 (the whole party). The entire hotel staff was at a fair when we arrived, and they found us in bed on their return, and rejoiced. The distractions at Mauleon, we noted, included “passing troupes.” Each little Basque town advertises its distractions: another boasting “retreats to torches,” and a third “shooting to the pigeons.”

More cruel weather on the road to Pau where, arrived cold and miserable, we made the unhappy decision to remain overnight. Nothing was open at Pau—“it’s Monday”—we were cryptically informed, and we were glad indeed to head for Lourdes next morning, kept warm by liqueur chocolates. For we were now getting up into the mountains.

Lourdes is a pity. It seemed as if something quite sacred had been made a going concern.
the grotto one of our number was short-changed seven francs fifty by an attendant selling mugs in which to drink the rock water. Six cripple trains were due that week from four different countries. We noted the crutches and articles cast away by cured cases and now suspended in scores around the lovely statue of the Madonna, and we saw girls kneeling in ecstasy, their arms outstretched and a-tremble from holding them so.

We lunched at the Hotel of Christ and Portugal, so named to retain the clientele of two separate houses merged in one, and then we listened to the tale and saw the panorama of little Sister Bernadette, who heard voices seventy years ago—replica of Joan of Arc—and is the origin of Lourdes. Sister Bernadette, who died at thirty-five, a nun, and is buried at Nevers, has already been made a very happy one, first stage on the road to canonization, which takes half a century. On that occasion, fifteen years ago, her body was exhumed and exposed for three days at Lourdes when, they say, she was as the day she died, although she had been in the tomb thirty years. They repeated this process of exhumation and exposure when Bernadette was beatified in 1925, and will do so finally, once more, upon the supreme reward of canonization. We left Lourdes gladly.

Up, up amid scenery of wild grandeur, one member of the party now becoming a source of growing anxiety to the rest. We had fairly hit the mountains and he was clearly falling a victim to mountain sickness. This takes the form of a green silence and tendency to lean away from the precipice. An
organized arrangement by which we referred to mountains as "hills" and complained of the levelness of the landscape, failed to alleviate the situation, our patient becoming more and more interesting pathologically as the afternoon wore on. The ascents were apparently not so bad. But the descents! Regret was expressed that there were two sides to a mountain, and that the Pyrenees were mountainous, an observation which drew from the sufferer the bitter retort that he would not have come on the tour had he known so.

Various efforts were made to improve the patient's morale. One threw snow at him. Another talked dice talk. A third suggested an apéritif. I read snatches from our library, "Imperial Purple," featuring Heliogabulus. What had this pretty temple boy done, as Emperor, that our author could not set down—he who had set down so many things? We set to wondering. But we continued to go up—and down. We even lost our way and did two extra mountains before happening on a small girl ahead of us.

"Don't be afraid, little one," said a gentle voice. "Will you show us—"

That was enough. Doubtless with visions of kidnappers looming up, with a low moan the little girl headed for Spain. And we continued to go up and down—not finding our bearings again till the hamlet of Bigorra, where my attention was directed by our wit to "your relatives by the wayside"—ruffianly-looking folk, who, however, turned out gems of hospitality to hungry and thirsty one. Five minutes foraging and we had converged upon the car
with (a) a sturdy wine of the country, (b) the best Roquefort ever we ate, (c) a circular loaf of delicious warm bread the size of an armchair seat.

"Ah, you are Americans!" said the head villager, and proceeded to address us in Spanish as we marched away. There were twenty young men in that village in 1914. They showed us now the cock of Gaul crowing on a white stone slab bearing fifteen names.

Farewell to these courteous, simple folk—so different from surface-polite Parisians—and we bore down on Luchon, next door to Andorra, which is coming into the League of Nations with its five thousand peasantry on mules. Preceding us down valleywards galloped for miles and miles a pony. This is quite a habit with the beasts of the Pyrenees. We had previously chased in like manner pigs, goats, cows and the little girl towards Spain.

On the morrow we found Languedoc and the sun, but lost the most picturesque of our party, who had to leave in a train called "the Little Quickness" for Toulouse en route for Paris and, presumably, the lady of Pied de Port.

An extraordinary meeting of the budget, called over sausages and chocolate at the wayside station of Tarascon, showed the inclusive cost of the Pyrenees crossing to have been £16 a head.

Then, lastly, a glorious evening, a run of a hundred miles to Carcassonne, through Foix, its château silhouetted, past the shell of Simon de Montfort's stronghold, whence he would debouch to assail the countryside; past an astonishing cascade which runs for thirty-two seconds, then stops for thirty-
six, then runs again for thirty-two, never changing; on, on to Carcassonne, through Quillan, where they gave us local absinthe which had the curious effect of making partakers, one and all, swing back brilliantly to their childhood; on to Carcassonne, a whole turreted city on a hill built in successive layers by Roman, by Visigoth, by Saracen and by Saint Louis—up to a turreted Visigoth hotel, with hot and cold water in every room, and into a baronial hall where was served the finest food and the finest wine in the finest manner and finest situation in all France.

Another Paris tentacle of growing importance reaches out to Geneva and the League of Nations, that lonely and ill-treated orphan of the slaughter which had nevertheless much better submit to periodical cuffings now at the hands of a Poincaré, now from a Mussolini, now from an Austen Chamberlain, than risk extinction by premature self assertion as it very nearly erred into doing over the notorious Corfu bombardment.

Yet the scoffing the League collected for its wise display of passivity on that occasion! For days, or rather nights, afterwards we tripped it to the Song of the Council fashioned thusways, and after an infamous air of the period:

"Yes, we'll have no decisions,
We'll have no decisions to-day—
Our League of Nations
Exists on foundations
Of dodging, debates and delay.
So with Europe disolving
We sit resolving
That, yes, we'll have no decisions,
We'll have no decisions to-day!"
the while Geneva, haven of so many reformers from Calvin to Sir Eric Drummond, via Jean-Jacques and de Staël, teemed with agents-provocateurs and well-intentioned cranks set upon goading the Council and Assembly on to a fatal imprudence, as any open challenge at that time of Cæsar Resartus would have amounted to. When the Italian delegation at Geneva commenced canvassing for a local memorial service for General Tellini and his fellow victims of the Albanian ambush, a minority movement even asserted itself within the League, materially justified, poetically superb, to organize, at Geneva, a counter-memorial service for the fifteen League of Nations orphan charges—Armenian refugees—killed by the guns of the Italian fleet when it shelled Corfu as a sanction for Tellini’s murder. Which kind of “urge to truth and justice” may be magnificent but not politics, and happily the Noes had it, though at what a cost to League prestige! In transatlantic eyes, particularly, the whole collection at Geneva appeared as fish of the poorest quality, yet it is hard to allow the United States complete absence of arrière pensée in such a matter; for Washington the League was, and still is, an infernal nuisance best extinguished by any means available . . . a species of disowned love-child stalking about and bringing into disrepute eminently respectable progenitors who have long sought to forget and live down a surprise rush of human nature. Hence much of the sneering and scoffing, and Uncle Sam’s withering scorn because his puny offspring failed to stand by the Covenant, submitted to being counted out, etc. Yet this Wilsonian conception of an all-puissant
tribunal sitting beneath a brotherhood-of-man coat of arms inscribed Fiat Justitia should the heavens fall; this American vision of a twentieth century replica of Delphic authority, mighty and right, dispensing wisdom and charity, healing wounds and hindering war... what other thing is it than a sorely crippled youngster seeking to keep toddling along with one leg amputated (U.S. absence) and the other showing distinct signs of gangrene through England’s disability or disinclination to decide whether she belongs primarily to Europe or to that new world apparently forming across the seas, by a process of natural selection, and whose most recent manifestation has been the triumphant voyage of the American fleet in Australasian waters? Why should our grievously hampered little one, aged six or seven, presume to dictate to the great of this earth (themselves so undecided) when time is all on its side and Mont Blanc opposite for inspiration; when to many indeed it must seem to be rather in the shape of a Lourdes miracle that the child, far from kicking or being expected to, is alive at all?

Successful incubator work which must in great measure be due to the disinterestedness, tact, helpfulness, efficiency and sound sense of the Geneva organization towards all who pass its way. You feel these people keep plodding away not to justify their salaries in an extremely dear and drab city, nor yet because they imagine, crank-like, that they hold the panacea for all worldly ills, but simply because they believe quietly and unostentatiously in what they are doing and in the permanence of their work, though few of them may ever live to see it fittingly
recognized. To instance a case, there is one member of the Secretariat, a woman of self-earned title who, I was told, had been warned that Geneva air would kill her in double quick time, yet who refuses to budge lest her department, which has to do with the saving of other women, might suffer; a like spirit seeming to pervade the organization as a whole.

In no sphere, perhaps, is the League’s efficiency better demonstrated than in its dealings with the Press, as all those who have had to endure the crazy chaos of international conferences will readily enough agree. Cohorts of correspondents of all nationalities and politics, and of both sexes, are wont to descend upon Geneva each September, when the dissemination of news emanating from multitudinous sources, and its subsequent dispatch for you by wireless, proceeds with American smoothness. A correspondent may take a motor boat across the lake towards 6 p.m., collect at the Secretariat the summaries for that day of whatever he happens to be interested in and, recrossing to Press headquarters at the Hotel Victoria, mount to his room, sit down before his typewriter and, finishing each folio, press a bell for a chasseur who sees that it goes right on to the wireless in an adjacent room. In this way it is quite possible to be typing one section of a cable in Geneva with its immediate forerunner arrived in Paris and the section before that already “fetched up” in London or New York.

For the reason that everything comes along later, deftly summarized, save on big occasions such as a speech by a Briand or a Chamberlain, when they go
to collect "atmosphere," correspondents do not bestow too much of their time on the actual sessions of the Assembly, although these are admirably interpreted. Some delegate from Formosa or Chili will murder the tongue of Racine rapidly for half an hour, making the French delegates squirm in agony in their seats, whereupon, without a moment's delay, up will get an interpreter and recite—not read from notes—in English what has been said. One or two of the younger interpreters have even learned to orate with gesture when translating speeches and usually they improve considerably upon the original. These mind-readers even go further. Once, after a long and tiring session, a Chairman remarked that "it might be advisable, etc., if clauses 2, 3, and 4 were left to a subsequent date, when the commission could give the time demanded"... whereupon our interpreter popped up and said: "The Chairman says that if we don't adjourn now we'll all be late for lunch." But perhaps the most remarkable interpreter of all is an English woman who recites hour after hour without a solitary note and in a whining monotone, the most intricate addresses on every subject under the sun from the rise in Austrian crowns to the suppression of indecent literature. There exists at Geneva a special bureau for the wholesale reception and perusal of the latter, a vast tonnage of crated filth pouring in on the department annually. Oh, and the bureau is in charge of an English lady who has a most charming assistant...

 Mostly, correspondents, instead of listening to speeches and debates, prefer to "lobby" in the corri-
dors and salons adjoining the Assembly Hall, button-holing delegates to a babel without precedent, angling and jockeying to get at the core of a situation or to obtain advance details of some project on the carpet. Sources of information naturally abound with hundreds of delegates, representing scores of countries all congregated within a square mile or so and many of them anxious, by publicity, to score off this personage or that state, and during an assembly like that which dealt with the famous Herriot-Macdonald Pact it is a regular mix-up; but most correspondents have a tame informer whom they either pay or whose country they “boost” in return for inside news. Usually the Balkans are good for a tame informer or two, or the Baltic territories or the South American republics, but it is scarcely wise to waste time cultivating orientals—I once was awfully nice to a Mr. Tang of China over quite a period, only to draw a complete blank at the end. On the other hand, certain delegates are listed by correspondents for particular “stories.” Thus, anyone wishing to know about harems goes at once to the portly Rumanian Mdlle. Vacaresco, who knows more about the social life of seraglios than Haroun-el-Raschid, Abd-el-Krim and the Sheikh combined, while should you require a throbbing appeal to the heart of mankind with reference to some new iniquity of this peace, in the absence of an American senator, one heads straight for Dr. Nansen who assuredly derives from the great Arctic wastes his great big emotions, re-embodied in speeches as long as a Polar trail. Not that Nansen isn’t a great and well-meaning gentleman of Europe;
he is, yet his ardour for this, to him, glorious experiment in human affairs might lightly plunge the League he loves so into war upon war, did that organization heed our Sir Galahad of the Snows. In a different mould, Viscount Cecil, heart and soul with Geneva as he may be, can never be a League success such as those admirable Frenchmen, Paul-Boncour and de Jouvenel, and the equally admirable Belgian, Paul Hymans. Cecil is too much of a Savonarola, too much of an emotional zealot bearing a fiery cross for a "parliament of persuasion and house of compromise" such as the League, crystallizing, is become in our time. Another cardinal drawback to Cecil, with all his brilliance and self-sacrifice, is that with his presence, you have, for the first time probably at any European council table an Englishman infinitely more at the mercy of his feelings than the Latins and Slavs confronting him. Cecil is also apt to be too omnipresent, thereby intensifying the feeling (due to an English majority on the Secretariat and six British votes in the Assembly) that the League is "being run by England."

England might do worse than give close attention to this matter of annual representation at Geneva, seeking to develop a set type for the job—such a man as Sir Edward Grigg, for example, the thing to remember being that apostles are not wanted but go-ahead men of liberal minds interested in Europe as a whole and in the possibilities of the League in particular. Sir Robert Horne, happily located between the parties, is another statesman eminently suitable, while one could do worse than send J. H. Thomas.
Necessarily, each September a brilliant social side surges at Geneva—for the remainder of the year destined to be so calm and peaceful, with golf and tennis, boating and fishing, dancing and bridge, and excursions into the mountains, the main distractions of an austere city, the open air life of which, however, makes for blooming health among members of the Secretariat, one girl member of which once offered to row me round Lake Geneva, giving me a day’s start, for five hundred Swiss francs.

In September things are otherwise in the city of Calvin; indeed one of the drawbacks to clear-thinking during Assembly month must be the round of parties given night after night by delegates from three-quarters of the earth, meeting once in the year, and most of them hailing from places beside which Geneva appears as a second Paris. Now it is Siam, now Chile, now some Maharajah (‘Ranji,’ ably supported by C. B. Fry, was a great host) giving a banquet or a ball, or both, in sumptuous salons overlooking the twinkling lake. And gay and glittering enough functions they are, by the very human variety of those present aside from their fine feathers. Nor are the fair unrepresented by any means; in addition to the presence of wives, daughters and others dear in a different way, the delegates can always rely on line and looks and carriage, not to mention brains, among the Secretariat ladies, a hundred and fifty in number and mostly French or English girls . . . what, verily, would Geneva be without them!

And so finally, in the small hours, to the Kursaal where congregate the fair and the frail over terribly
dear champagne, and where eyes flash across the dance floor, and the world, from the Porte St. Denis to Peru.

A final Paris tentacle extends to the Hague and the little used but much abused World Court there which meets in Carnegie's costly palace once or twice a year to transact business scarcely important enough to detain a Liverpool Chamber of Commerce tribunal—this Court, which according to Wilson was to be meting out unappealable decisions governing the fate of nations. I attended one of its sessions in the company of the World Court's fiercest breathing enemy, Senator Hiram Johnson of California, who sought so hard to obtain a nomination on the republican ticket at the last Presidential election. I had met the Senator some days previously in Paris on the occasion of a dinner offered by him at the Ritz to the principal American correspondents, and when, to our surprise, the fire-eating orator of the Far West affected a lamb-like I-only-want-to-learn humility for four solid hours during which his isolationist policy came to be condemned, much to his surprise, by nearly all those present. Not that this made the slightest inroad on him; his world looked out from the Golden Gate when he sat down to dinner and it continued to do so when he rose. The Senator, making a particular set at me, once asked, I recollect: "And if we were invaded by the Japanese, would the British send army corps to defend California? Then why should we send men over here?" Actually, one suspected the main cause of the Senator's coming to Europe was not to learn, nor even to listen, but merely to enable him to
say that he’d been there when he got home again; tactics which undoubtedly led him up to his particular black beast, the World Court, as the first solid Jonathan is likely to touch on feeling for earth once more.

The case the Senator heard only affected shipping in the Kiel Canal, but it was the first time that ever France and Germany had agreed to abide by the judgment of an international body and as such, the proceedings probably sent Hiram back a more fervid opponent than ever of the Court, if only because of the fact that an American citizen, Judge Bassett Moore, was actually seated up on the bench beside a Jap. In fact, halfway through, the Senator slipped away and out into the really delightful Dutch Gardens surrounding the building. He had "been there."
CHAPTER XVI

DIEHARDS OF THE SUN

The road leading Parisian correspondents criss-cross over western Europe has, I fear, been pursued an inordinate length, yet to quit it without branching off to the Riviera would be unsound, so important a news tentacle stretches thither from Paris for quite a quarter of the year; since things are apt to happen on the Côte d’Azur, that purring, sensuous, fleur d’oranger courtesan who deigns each autumn to rise from the siesta and, Rokeby-Venus-like, to pull herself together in view of the arrival of company.

I know the Riviera is “not what it was.” The slow but relentless rise of a flood none of us can stem and, in lesser degree, the supremacy of the I’ll-boost-you-if-you’ll-give-me-your-advertisement school of current journalism have altered things. The Riviera has grown popular and plebeian, and the Riviera

(a) disbursing vast sums in advertising itself has come to believe that
(b) if they say it in the advertisement columns it is so and that therefore
(c) no need to spend extra money being what you say you are.

A local let-it-slide languor resulting and leading
in turn to a systematic bolstering-up of defects. The Côte d'Azur is perfect—do you hear—without blemish and do you infer the contrary you do so from an unworthy motive, yes, you must certainly be in the pay of a German spa or Swiss winter-sport centre!

To retain the Riviera’s considerable advertising, certain journals are studded during the season with “puff” paragraphs and special articles whose writers know full well that only couleur-de-rose material will be printed. The net result of the conspiracy being that in the absence of all genuine criticism this lovely coast has perforce drooped and begun to stagnate much as the stage would do if every dramatic critic praised every play that was ever produced.

Uninstructed in the real things that matter, the lengths to which the local authorities go in their efforts to remedy affairs would be comical if they were not so pathetic. When it pours for days on end the local papers may not mention the fact, concentrating, for weather gossip, on storms off the Brittany coast. When the temperature falls and falls, sturdy young men and maidens are mobilized each noon to rush in and out of the icy Mediterranean, prior to being photographed blue and shivering on the beach “for the propaganda of our beautiful country.” And as for old Carnival and his played-out, humorless, organized revelry, he is flayed into being each February as if he were the attraction of a glorious coast.

Yes, a glorious coast, even if . . . even if . . . but a truce, since there are signs that the long
hypnotized ones are awakening. Let us instead into the sun with those who are the Riviera, who year in and year out unite quand même to kindle afresh the spirit of the place, a new White Company, and one which, incidentally, supplies quite a lot of news.

Who, to begin with, is the most typical, the most apt-to-be-missed Riviera-ite? Fifty names are before me, yet rapidly they dwindle to three—the Duke of Connaught, his Grace of Westminster, and Suzanne Lenglen ... and Lenglen, as usual, wins.

The Riviera without Suzanne is just not thinkable. She was born there. She was bred there. Painstakingly, with the court divided up into eighty little squares, into any one of which she had to place the ball at her father’s shouted word of command, she learnt her tennis there. And to-day “our gracious champion” belongs to the Côte d’Azur as its rarest and surest attraction, she of the thrilling figure pour le sport who can beat all comers of her sex with the easy grace, leaping and pirouetting, of a prima ballerina. A Lenglen afternoon at the Carlton courts at Cannes is a thing to remember, though the lady will scratch and disappoint, part of the press agent system, doubtless, with which she is surrounded and which dictates that should Suzanne ever experience as much as a hard fight of it, when partnered, it is always her partner who has not played up to form—never she.

“Surely she is subsidized,” you hear, “by the hotel and casino people?” Perish the thought! Lenglen lives in a villa in Nice with her parents, right facing where she learnt her tennis, and one room of which is given over entirely to the hundred
and fifty trophies she has won; and if Suzanne is ravishingly gownéd of an evening, and never misses a gala through the season, do not imagine, on that account, that her expense allowance on the courts round Europe attains professional proportions: rather that Jean Patou has made of her a supermannequin, for his house, in all save hours and salary, and that Anglo-American hostesses almost jostle one another to have her at their parties, this gay and sprightly champion of the big grey eyes and bird-like features, most of whose other vertical hours are consecrated so feverishly to the dance-floor.

The Duke of Connaught is probably the finest justification of royal stock to tread the stage for a long time. At seventy-six, the Duke is the handsomest and best dressed devotee of the Riviera, and as active, physically and mentally, as any man a generation younger. Gliding out in his Rolls from the lovely shades of Les Bruyères on Cap Ferrat where he lives from November to May, H.R.H. is everywhere, at every social function or gala of importance along the seventy miles from St. Raphael to Garavan, representing, as he does, royalty in this part of the world. Kings and princes there may be but the Duc is the uncrowned king by acclamation. Cannes and Monte Carlo he seems to favour most, and seldom does a day pass that he is not seen lunching, dining or supping at one or other of the famous establishments of these two centres, though as head of the vast local British colony he also has steady duties to perform, taking up much of his young old age. Partial to opera and to the Russian dancing staged up in
Monaco palace, probably watching tennis tournaments and warming to those gala nights at the Ambassadors at Cannes, afford the Duke his maximum pleasure.

His Grace of Westminster lives on his yacht "Flying Cloud" in Monaco harbour, when he is not tearing round France at the wheel of his car, now bound for his boar-shooting place at Mimizan near Bordeaux, now on a lightning visit to Paris or London, now for more forest sport in Brittany. A vital, nervous force, always living at ninety miles an hour whether on the tennis courts at La Festa, to which game he has latterly become enslaved, or in the Sporting Club where he, almost alone with a young American newspaper owner named Pulitzer, continues to sustain the stakes of old, or aboard his yacht, bound for Naples or Gibraltar with a joyous impromptu party; listening-in, en route, to the Midnight Follies. For "Bend Or" loves the fair land of France—is its last English grand seigneur—loves the air, the wine, the laisser vivre, and he quaffs to the full of what she has to offer to his liking. For the festive night life, Monte Carlo is his choice, and you seldom see him elsewhere along the littoral, nor yet mixing over much with others of his country's nobility—a kind of millionaire bohemianism he seems to prefer, a spur-of-the-moment soul. The French love him. Un vrai lord!

Three other Diehards I may cluster together, since their origins and lives are much the same—the ex-Caliph, the ex-Khedive and the ex-Sultan, living at Nice, Monte Carlo and San Remo respectively. The first I have written of elsewhere. He now has
a comfortable allowance, thanks to the generosity of two Indian potentates, and is very happy indeed—much more so than ever he was as an emasculated Commander of the Faithful under Kemal. His hobby is painting up in the hill-towns of Provence, Gattières, La Gaude, etc., and where wonderful white wine flows. The former enemy Khedive is apparently entirely re-instated socially with the British element, while no one ever sees or hears of the old Sultan. For all three, Mecca at sundown lies straight out over Corsica.

A young oriental Diehard of a different hue is le petit ex-Shah who refused to go home, either in the light or the dark, to rule his people. Fairly caught up in the occidental whirl of Deauville, Paris and Nice, Aix, Biarritz and Vichy (his chief concern is keeping thin, for he once blew out like a balloon), the ex-Shah is very petit and very popular, and dances divinely and gambles extensively and travels with a suite of five and a great big Royal Standard of white with a golden Persian lamb embossed upon it, and which is religiously swung cut of the window wherever he goes. However, he was a naughty little mannikin not to have gone home occasionally, even if there was a highly human reason in the shape of a charming young French actress who simply wouldn’t hear of Teheran. Slap!

Lady de Bathe lives in a villa, with hanging gardens, lodged in a cleft of the rock jutting out towards Monaco Bay. Life being not exactly a financial walk-over for her. she is interested in a local Hair-dressing establishment, and she wrote every word of her discreet memoirs in her own bold
handwriting—not a bad feat at . . . but, there, for one of her time she is marvellous in looks, voice and carriage, and though she once told me not to say anything about it . . . hush . . . she dances like a twenty-year-old almost every afternoon at the Café de Paris or the Carlton. But she knows, too, how to rest—before the Opera where she queens it assiduously, or some of the bigger parties. To all the natives she is ‘Madame avec le chien blanc,’ and she is the godmother of the Royal Monaco Orchestra, which sometimes serenades her in quaint melody. Monte Carlo she adores. “The most beautiful spot in the world and the most perfect air.” A perfectly happy evening for her who stormed London in the seventies—not serene or “old-agey” but an evening with a “kick”—almost every evening.

Two kings belong to our company. There might have been three, but Alfonso’s fussy Government or grandees barred his Spanish Majesty visiting Cannes for the polo after the manner in which he came to be exploited at Deauville. The two majesties who remain are Gustav of Sweden and Manoel of Portugal. The former, tall and lanky “Monsieur G.,” stays at Nice for a month each season, the hotel le favours being rather vulgarly decorated with an enormous plaque of the royal features in the entrance hall . . . one can imagine the oaths and menaces which would have emanated from an Edward the Seventh if he had come across such a transgression affecting him! King Gustav plays tennis the livelong day and every day.

“Monsieur G. is falling off” once was heard to
ruminate young Earl Balfour, observing his elongated parallel on the Cannes courts, "getting too old, I suppose!"

Manoel is bitten with tennis too, circulating more, though, with his fair Hohenzollern Queen, a couple who started with an unexplained separation three days after their wedding and have since lived happily ever after, a most welcome reversal which might be more widely copied. Manoel favours the Grand, at Cannes, and is said to take practically no interest in the periodical risings of Lisbon. His exile, in fact, has been a complete success.

The Dyang Muda of Sarawak has a flat overlooking the Promenade des Anglais at Nice. It is richly and eerily decorated in the mode of Borneo and here Mrs. Brooke entertains interesting people such as Harry de Windt and Lord Alfred Douglas. She is interesting and interesting-looking herself, and a source of eternal wonder to the Niçois who cannot conceive why she is not semi-barbaric in appearance and behaviour. Lord Alfred, in passing, votes for Bormes on the little, or "French" Riviera, and he is distinctly devout these days, having become a Catholic with a very long 'a' indeed. Some time ago he argued miracles with me until it became a miracle that violence was not perpetrated on one side or the other, by the arguers.

A small literary settlement exists at Cannes and vicinity, of which the leading lights are W.J. Locke, E. Phillips Oppenheim, and Valentine Williams, lucky gentlemen all who are as certain of an annual acceptance and big net sale (Oppenheim of two or three acceptances) as authors well can be. The
first-named is reputed to develop almost Balzacian black-coffee industry o’ nights, trying to work out plots and situations, which do not come easily to him; whereas number two, on his balcony overlooking Cagnes golf links, dictates airily for six hours a day, sometimes tackling two tales simultaneously. As for number three, he was latterly conspicuous (apart from the production of another “best seller”) for inviting the readers of the “Daily Mail” en masse out to French Morocco, for their holidays, on the very eve of hostilities breaking out there between the French and Abd-el-Krim, an altogether cruel form of vengeance of which I scarcely thought Valentine could have been capable.

Literature is elsewhere along the coast represented by three other notabilities in Maurice Maeterlinck and Frank Harris at Nice and Blasco Ibañez at Mentone. Maeterlinck lives with his bees and flowers and young wife in almost complete seclusion, never seeming to have got over the rebuff he received in the United States in 1921, when he was foolish enough not only to try and lecture phonetically in English, not knowing a word of what he was saying, but to tour a country in which Georgette Leblanc had been settled, and sympathized with, for years. At seventy, Frank Harris—“the best talker in London,” according to Max—looks about forty-five and lives up Cimiez Hill with a charming Fay Compton-like Irish wife who sings under the name of Nellie O’Hara. Just as much at war with the universe as he has ever been, and sighing to get back into the thick of things, as in the great eighties and nineties of Wilde
and . . . Harris, Frank is engaged on a Rousseau-
esque autobiography, only much more so.

Requiring asbestos bindings, these volumes have
to be privately printed and then smuggled into
the Anglo-Saxon world—pursuant to the author’s
culminating tenet: if the nude be permitted in
painting and sculpture, why not in literature?
The entire cargo of Book II, 3,000 copies, was
seized by the New York authorities, subsequently
(according to F. H.) to be peddled by the City
Police Force, after the best manner of “boot-
leg” liquor. The quondam dazzling journalistic
light of Victorian days was very annoyed indeed
about this.

Blasco Ibáñez, in keeping with one of his tem-
perament, lives in the warmest square kilometre
of the Riviera, the only place where bananas
grow. The irascible Spaniard who sought to tilt
King Alfonso over with his pen, and failed, super-
intends the filming of his novels over at Nice, when
he is not engaged upon a new one in his long, narrow
den, prominent in which are busts of Zola and
Hugo, with a picture of Pearl White incongruously
between and inscribed “to the greatest writer in the
world.” A big bronzé of the Four Horsemen and a
Wingless Victory stand on either side of the
novelist as he works or talks—volubly and in
highly unmusical French. He always carries a
revolver and no one is allowed inside his massive,
golden-initialled gate until thoroughly investigated
—such fear being the penalty of arousing royalists.
Here sheltered at Mentone, Ibáñez has done all
his work for fifteen years, in which time he has
never gambled or, indeed, ventured much farther afield than the point of Cap Martin; a sedentary, unmixed Spaniard who, the last time I saw him, was stamping furiously up and down his study waving a telegram announcing his wife’s death in Spain the previous night, and hurling imprecations at Alfonso and Primo for the ban they had put upon him and which had prevented his being at the bedside at the last. All Ibañez’s property in Spain has been confiscated, and his books burnt publicly in the chief cities of the Peninsula, and he has been held up to obloquy as a traitor, but what hurt Blasco most was when Herriot, as Premier, instructed that, proven friend as he might be of France, the Spaniard could no longer carry on a campaign against a friendly monarch from the soil of the Republic. For bringing which about, the Spanish Ambassador in Paris received the highest order it was in Alfonso’s power to bestow, Herriot’s prohibition effectively stopping Ibañez from propagandizing Spain afresh from six aeroplanes which were to have been based on Algiers. For hours in his study Ibañez held forth to me on the mediaeval tyranny his countrymen were labouring under, but I fear I came away each time unconvinced, or rather, convinced that Ibañez had what I believe is nowadays termed an “Alfonso complex,” and that he over-stated the degree of development the mass of Spaniards have attained, outside of Catalonia.

Isadora Duncan, pioneeress of classical dancing and fashioner of a life which has led her on to the peaks and into the valleys, has built herself a
DIEHARDS OF THE SUN

Temple of Terpsichore at the Californie end of Nice where she proposes to seek solace from the culminating shock of her career—the closing down by the Soviet of her proletarian dance school in Moscow.

"And to think," she reflected not long ago when I was seeking to obtain her memoirs, or rather the right to publish hundreds of supposed love-letters she had received in her time from famous men, "to think that to me Lenin is as great as Christ, and Moscow the cradle of the new world just as was Bethlehem of the old. Had I lived two thousand years ago I should have gone to Bethlehem as the only place to practise that complete freedom which is the essence of my life and art. I would open up schools all over the world to teach children to seek joyful freedom in rhythmic self-expression, that they might, in turn, teach their parents, but no one is interested in this transcending idea. And I have no more money to go on alone—I who all my life have just had to press a button as it were, for it to descend upon me in a shower! Ah, the base-ness of man! My school has been closed in Moscow—why? Because of tales spread by young Soviet journalists that I was speaking against the Soviets here in France—tales spread by young men with mistresses in the ballet who feared competition from my little Red dancers! The other day Ibañez gave a luncheon for me to meet several of the rich people on the Riviera, with a view to funds being collected for my work. To begin with it was all "la grande artiste" with the guests gushing over me, but as soon as Mrs. Ernesta Stern, the banker's
wife, who had promised to help, asked me about the Soviets and I replied what I thought about them, an immediate coldness descended on the table, and I got not a sou. Yet what is the use of being alive unless one tells the truth? As for the Press, you have martyred me. My recent journey in America was one long martyrdom. Reporters would form a circle round me in each fresh town and sit bored while I told them about my life’s work, and then ask me vile questions about my private life and invent replies. One morning a headline ran: ‘DUNCAN REMOVES DRESS, WAVES IT ABOVE HEAD, SYMBOL JOY SOVIET RULE.’ ’Twould be the same, I am afraid, with my memoirs. You would try to make it a chronicle of a female Casanova, violating all sacred things, whereas mine would be a tale of beautiful things—commencing with the present and working backwards to my birth, as Japanese authors do. Dramatic, too. I have killed three people in my life—not by physical acts—but by putting the Irish Curse on them and willing them to die. I can do this always if I wish to and once brought death to someone who had ill-used me, within three weeks . . .

“I also have wonderful letters from Gordon Craig on art and the theatre, others lovelier, if possible, from Duse . . . and D’Annunzio wrote a whole series to me which are more like poems. And there are others from Ernst Haeckel who said my art would be of value to evolution.”

The deal was not done—Miss Duncan wanted £5,000, win, draw or lose, for her correspondence—and I recollect one word being uppermost in my
mind as I left her, a strange figure reclining in a
green kimono, and with her flaming hair and
extreme pallor shown up against a black pillow—
"Adrift."

I do not know if Isadora put a jinx on me
for deserting her, but I do know that the most
incredibly ill-starred motor-car journey north-
wards followed next day, with, among other
things, two broken back axles crossing the Alps
to Grenoble.

My last meeting with his Highness the Aga Khan
was all but fatal. I had called upon him at the
Hotel Atlantic, Nice, and entering his suite unan-
nounced found him pouring with perspiration and
swinging Indian clubs, one of which missed my
head by inches on the downward swing. His
Highness has three main diversions—keeping fit,
racing, and baccarat, and two occupations, looking
after his family and his seven million Moslem sub-
jects, of whom he is Pope and who subscribe a
variant of Peter’s Pence towards his upkeep. The
Aga is a great gala night figure and extremely
popular. He and his wife, a charming Italian
whom he met at Monte Carlo, have a villa up
Cimiez way, but H. H. also keeps a suite “down
town” for gymnastics and business affairs. In-
clined to corpulence, he walks, runs, skips, fences
and plays tennis for hours each day; after which
exercise, taken in flannels relieved by the most
vivid effects in hats, scarfs and sweaters, this Man
of Religion comes upon you as a truly curious
apparition. His English is perfect, but he may
not be overpleased with this country just at
present because of the anti-Indian laws obtaining in the Dominions and Africa and preventing him settling his subjects where he wants to, since he is the material as well as the spiritual father of his flock. His "illness" off Kenya not long ago was purely diplomatic; he was advised that his presence ashore would not be convenient, and it is tolerably clear, from remarks he made to me about the further possibilities of Madagascar and Northern Africa as settling grounds, that one day soon he may switch his subjects from the British to the French colonial Empire.

Many professionals of the dance floor and Paris dressmakers occupy just as high niches among our Diehards as Prince This or Countess That. Fontana and Moss, Jack Gavan and June Day, Harry Pilcer and his latest, are always to be found at the hub of things, while Paul Poiret and Jean Patou are institutions, vying with one another in their fêtes and parties at Cannes, the cost of which presumably goes on to their frocks. Patou, reputed the best dressed and one of the handsomest men in Paris, once had three thousand guests at Cannes Casino on the occasion of an historical fête which must have cost a hundred thousand francs at least to organize; for Poiret of the pop-eyes and purple trousers and flowing ties and altogether extraordinary appearance, to retaliate with an après midi no less costly and artistic. Among others who supply the Riviera with its tone may be mentioned J. G. Doumergue, painter and producer of big galas, Stroewa, the intriguing Russian chanteuse and adored one of her own sex, Captain Molyneux,
the only Englishman to take on the French in their own country at their master-craft, and succeed; Marthe Chenal and Reynaldo Hahn, conductor and composer of the prettiest contemporary light music in France; and, of course, Eugene Cornuché, who "runs" Cannes, and M. Aletti who "runs" Nice, and M. Léon who "runs" Monte Carlo. The first-named began affairs as a bottle-washer at Maxim's in the rue Royale, subsequently becoming animator-in-chief of Trouville and Deauville. Aletti is concentrating on the development of delightful Juan-les-Pins, particularly as a summer resort, while the third of the trio has his hands full with the reconstruction of Monte Carlo Casino and adjacent establishments.

Which brings one to an amusing squabble. Concerning a Prince who wishes to be master in his own domain and a Jewish impresario who declines to budge till his bond is met to the letter. Prince Louis of Monaco and Raoul Gunzbourg, director for thirty years of the world-famed local Opera, and creator of many Saint Saens and Massenet masterpieces for the music-mad and deep-sea-fishing-mad late reigning Prince Albert. The Opéra has never paid—"never was intended to," Gunzbourg once told me, as if that were not done, but Prince Louis, a corpulent, moustached man of fifty, who spent most of his life, until he succeeded in 1922, as a regular officer in the French army, has different ideas of economy. As Prince he draws a salary of 2,600,000 francs a year from the gambling concession, which isn't much nowadays, so much so that latterly His Serene Highness journeyed to the
United States hoping (so it is said) by his august presence to persuade the Washington Government into obtaining the return from Mexico of certain lands, belonging to the “in-laws” of his “adopted daughter,” the Hereditary Princess wife of Prince Pierre de Polignac, and which the Mexicans seized directly oil was struck upon them. Anyhow, Prince Louis wishes to get old Gunzburg out of the way, but the latter has a ten years’ contract and claims 7,000,000 francs indemnity if it is broken, which sum the Prince cannot afford to pay. The climax came in early 1925 when Gunzburg decided to produce an amateur American opera called “Fay-Yen-Fah.”

“You will not do so under my patronage,” said the Prince.

“Very well, I won’t,” said Gunzburg, and promptly had a thick black line drawn through the Prince’s name on all the Opera House placards along the Riviera. Since then it has been a case of open war between the two, though most assuredly the Prince was right about that opera.

Once or twice I have had the experience of being Gunzburg’s guest either at his wonderful old apartment overlooking the gardens of the Palais Royal, studded with Corots and Rodins and other gems, or in “Monte,” and a more remarkable old fellow with his downright opinions upon everything under the sun, one could scarcely imagine. His dining-room in Paris I shall always remember for the fact that on shelves round the walls stand dozens of huge glass jars containing gallons of home-made liqueurs, fruit, alcohol and all, and the
very aroma from which suffices to instil a mild intoxication with the soup. Gunzburg started penniless somewhere near Kieff and has what should be striking memoirs up his sleeve. I angled for these, once, hazarding the suggestion that they might contain the first authentic inside story of Monte Carlo. The notion filled G. with disdain. "Bah!" he said, "not a word of this place shall I mention. My memoirs will be great—and political—for was it not I who brought about the Franco-Russian alliance in Petersburg? Not since St. Simon will there have been such memoirs!"

Mary Garden is another confirmed Monte Carloite, living there most of the year and being godmother to a little hill village up in the mountains towards Sospel. She holds honorary rank in the French army and once a year, up in her little village, passes the local gendarmerie of five in review. Miss Ryan, perhaps the most popular tennis "star" on the Riviera, and the only woman there capable of giving Suzanne a good game,* favours Cannes, as also does the handsome Lady Wavertree, a great hostess, and the Grand Duke Michael and the Countess Torby, who seem to have come through the Russian tragedy better than any others of the Romanoffs. It was Michael, I believe, who once made the very true pronouncement that the Kaiser condemned himself for all time for not making the safety of the Russian Imperial family a prime condition of the Peace of Brest-Litovsk. Solly Joel, the name of whose yach†—at present the Eileen—seems to vary in accordance with the changing

* Penned before the advent of Miss Wills.
popularity of given members of his family, is always a "fixture" at the Carlton, Cannes, while strewn further afield may be found Mrs. Joseph Pulitzer, widow of the great American newspaper proprietor, at the lovely Château de la Garoupe on the point of Antibes, and where her son Herbert of polo keenness entertains so royally. Old Mr. Pulitzer left this lucky young man practically his entire newspaper property, though Herbert was only a boy of thirteen or fourteen at the time of his father's death. The latter, however, was quite sure that he detected the son of the family in H., even at that early age. So determined to make him his heir although, totally blind for two decades, old "J. P." had never as much as set eyes on the lad.

How blindness came to Joseph Pulitzer, senior, must afford one of the most poignant cases on record. The newspaper millionaire, then in the prime of life, was leaning on the rail of his yacht at Constantinople, watching the sun set over the Golden Horn, when suddenly he turned to his secretary, Mr. Billing, with the words: "But it's grown very dark all of a sudden!"

"Dark, sir?" echoed the astonished secretary. "But it's one of the most brilliant sunsets I have ever seen!"

"Then," said Joseph Pulitzer, "I have lost my eyesight. Lead me away."

Finally, we have Mme. Jacques Balsan, formerly Duchess of Marlborough, who lives a life of perfect bliss with her French colonel husband in a glorious villa high above Èze; the Marquis of Cholmondeley, the complete English gentleman, dis-
concertingly handsome and of superb physique on the courts where he spends his waking hours of daylight; Lord Rothermere, who seems to conduct his manifold businesses more and more from his palatial villa at Roquebrune; and Fred Martin, prince of barmen, in command of the two most dazzling and blue-blooded bars in Europe—those of the baccarat at Cannes and Deauville.

Verily a varied and picturesque White Company ... and I was forgetting almost the most important Diehard of them all, Sir Basil Zaharoff, who is generally, but wrongly, supposed largely to own the majority of the shares of the Society of the Baths of the Sea of Monte Carlo, camouflaged nomenclature of the greatest gambling centre in Christendom. So much is known about Europe's Master Mystery Man and his ramifications, that isn't true, that I shall not seek to add to the record beyond suggesting that he deserves a niche unto himself as the first man ever to employ a counter-publicity agent, a canny Scot named Macfarlane, whose business it is to keep all newspaper people at arm's length and to see that where his master wines or dines does not get into the paper. Sir B. lives much of the year at the Hotel de Paris, but never once does he figure as "among those present" anywhere. His hatred of publicity is really rather becoming the foolish obsession of an old man, as was evidenced once when he smashed with his walking stick, on the terrace at "Monte," the camera of an English press photographer who had dared to "snap" him from twenty yards' dis-
tance. Nowadays, however, Sir Basil has to be more amenable, since his charming Spanish duchess wife, and love of twenty years, doesn’t by any means share the loathing for publicity and the camera affected by her fabulously wealthy spouse.

[While his book was actually at press the death of the Duchess of Villafranca was announced. She will be deeply mourned by her many friends on the Riviera.]
CHAPTER XVII

NORTHCLIFFE'S LAST PHASE

A GOOD-LOOKING young valet ushered me into a bedroom on the second floor of the Hotel Eden, Cap d'Ail, and overlooking the Mediterranean. Everyone in Lord Northcliffe's immediate circle had to do their best to be good-looking. I glanced around an apparently empty room. Then, hoarsely from a small bed behind the open door, came a scarcely audible "how are you, young man?" and the proffering of a limp hand hanging from a half-dead wrist. I moved over to the bedside and was shocked.

Seven months before I had seen the Chief off from New York on his world tour, his last tour, and if during those sweltering Manhattan days his mad restlessness foretold serious nervous collapse at a later date, I was not prepared for this. In New York Northcliffe had behaved like one possessed; as a clock with a broken spring making the deuce of of a final row. He had with him Mr. Wickham Steed and John Prioleau, and while the former acted as liaison officer with the American Press, dazzling local editors with his own and his proprietor's views on Europe in general and Ireland in particular, Prioleau "did" New York, wilting, in order to be in a position to write Northcliffe's impressions of that city.

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“I’ve never been in the blinking place before!” groaned Prioleau, “What do you think the Chief would be likely to say about American girls?” And so on.

Mr. Steed, who was then still long-distance Editor of "The Times," did not experience such a smooth passage. Somehow or another a leading New York newspaper came to quote Northcliffe as attributing words to King George with reference to the Irish situation which apparently no constitutional monarch should ever have uttered. His Majesty was alleged, in effect, to have declared to his Ministers: “I won’t have any more of my Irish subjects killed,” and the hullabaloo that ensued upon publication of this singularly humane observation, true or not, is history—such as Northcliffe’s expression of regret communicated to the House of Lords—while the excitement it created among New York’s wild Irish requires little underlining. Nor was that all that kept things sizzling. Simultaneously Lord Curzon saw fit to put a spoke in the globe-trotter’s wheel by instructing the British Embassy that the visitor was not to be treated as an official guest at the White House, or anywhere, and that led to a second “sensation,” the cables humming with Northcliffeiana east and west, and the twelfth floor of the Hotel Gotham, where Lord N. was installed, becoming entirely blocked with reporters and photographers and the general public. Since, not satisfied with having launched these two nine days wonders of the news, the unfortunate undermined one had publicly announced that during his stay in New York he would receive any-
one and everyone who cared to call and answer any questions they chose to put . . . and the local newspapers had not been slow to profit by "News-for-nothing-Northcliffe's" offer.

I shall not lightly forget the scene. There he sat, this once-great man, descended to making himself cheap before foreigners, for that is what this unsolicited, self-decreed day on Delphi amounted to, as deputations from girls' schools, prohibitionists, beggars, Hebrew inventors, publicity-seeking cinema people, etc., most of them come simply and solely from self-interest in order to quote or misquote N. as having said this or the other thing about themselves and their affairs, filed by from morn till eve for three successive days and with the temperature never below ninety. Northcliffe would each day take up his position on a sort of dais with a dozen reporters lined up behind him jotting down all he said as, panting and perspiring, he shot out replies on chewing gum and the Prince of Wales, girls' stockings and British films, a break occurring every two hours or so while the principal actor disappeared to change his Palm Beach suit and to swallow a glass of champagne.

Looking back now, I did not like those days, remembering others, and once sought to check N. continuing so to debase his virtuosity, the Americans having started to see a humorous side. As an instance, if there came a lull, reporters would express themselves down in the elevator, dash out into the street and collecting the first likely-looking passer-by, rush him or her upstairs, on a cash basis, duly primed to put some fresh and inane query to
the poor Chief. This I saw happen in the case of a pretty girl who blushingly, for a fee of ten dollars, came before N. to inquire if he were a believer in free love.

"Don't you think you've said enough, sir?" I ventured after this particular incident. "It's bad policy to be too easy goods with American reporters."

"Young man," was all that came in response, "you're getting old. And you don't know this country."

By night N. would drive frantically round Long Island in a Rolls-Royce—sometimes for four or five hours at a time.

At last he departed West and now here he lay before me, half a year later—quenched, finished. That ominous sagging of the neck had set in, his eyes were wilder, he would periodically gasp as if from weakness, and he was very florid. I pretended to notice nothing.

"You're the very man I want," he whispered, "they've sent me all these papers here" (indicating files of "The Times" stacked high around the room), "but all I've been able to read so far have been the obituary columns. A hundred and fifty of my friends have gone since I've been away. Tell me briefly what has happened since them." It almost seemed as if he felt that the news ought not to have happened in his absence.

After I had finished a tabloid recital during which he would just nod from time to time, N. said: "I'm very sick. I don't know if I shall ever leave this hotel alive. What do you think of these people in the hotel to worry me like this? Last night I
had a cold chicken and a bottle of Chablis and this morning at lunch when I called for what was left over, they said I had eaten it all. I know I didn’t!”

“Chief, I want you to do me a favour.”

“Well?”

“I want to go over your world tour with you, bit by bit, and get at the dominating impression you have formed.”

“Well, sit down. Have you a pencil and paper?” And he began to dictate there and then; presently, however, to glance sideways and break off:

“Don’t you know shorthand?”

“No.”

“You mean to tell me . . .”

“You once told me it was quite unnecessary.”

“Well, I shan’t go on until you find some one who can take down verbatim what I am going to say.” And he picked up a book.

In half an hour I had returned with the necessary “someone” in the form of a girl stenographer from Barclay’s Bank at Monte Carlo, and the séance began in earnest, though not without pathos creeping in. In the old days N. would just have walked up and down the room, looking down at the carpet and puffing away at a cigar, the while he dictated at the rate of a column every ten minutes or so. Now the committing of his last sane and considered thoughts to paper, and this was certainly the last thinking interview he ever gave, was to take three days of slow and halting work, so diminished was the old fire and continuity of thought, so apt was
the doomed mind to wander and alight on Lloyd George or some kindred obsession.

"Am I doing it right?" "Is that what you want?" he would inquire from time to time. "Now show me your next question" (I had had to write out a list of questions to keep him on the track at all). Yes, for anyone who had known this master-journalist in his hey-day, it was pathetic enough "going" at Cap d'Ail. Outside on the balcony, whither he had sent me with cigars he could no longer smoke, I sat in the burning sun for hour after hour while slow, whispered progress was made within. Only the central theme of that last interview need be given here, since it ran into nine columns of the paper; but from the short excerpts appended I think it will be generally agreed that for a man on the threshold of complete mental breakdown, Lord Northcliffe saw extraordinarily clearly in regard to events that have happened, since his death, in more than one part of the world. For example:

"Many of the world's changes I have been noting are superficial, but there are certain vast world movements that have begun to show themselves just as the geysers in the Yellowstone Park make manifest that there is a big something inside the earth that we do not see. I have been profoundly impressed by a movement of which the world is about to hear much, namely Pan-Islamism. And it would be wrong to attribute what is going on exclusively to the war. Mohammedanism as a religion was spreading much more rapidly than Christianity before the war. But what the Moslems
consider to be the ill-treatment of Turkey since the war has bound them more closely together and quickened that which has been crawling along for centuries. The world is now face to face with a body of earnest believers, many of them fanatics, numbering some three hundred millions.

"In the good old times dark-coloured agitators contented themselves with stirring up the folks at home; to-day right across the world they carry on their agitation everywhere they can organize a meeting or subsidize a newspaper. The average Britisher seems surprised that the man with the yellow skin or the dark skin should be going about spreading his doctrines with the facility and often the capacity of a white missionary. I cannot see why it is surprising that the man from the East should be copying our example. He has been well educated for centuries in his own way. Now he has more than a smattering of our learning and the use of most of our mechanical contrivances. And above all he has come to see that combination is power.

"The main future trouble centres I visited, China, India, Egypt, Palestine, and Morocco used to be all separated. Now they are becoming increasingly closely connected; forming a great Islamic chain of power across the world stretching from the Moros in the Philippines to the Moors on the Atlantic coast of Morocco. Do these people communicate? Certainly they do. Their chief means of communication is the same as ours—their newspapers which have multiplied like mosquitoes. The printing press has above all else revolutionized the East. Other means of communication are
letters read in mosques and holy places. All of Islam and the East have been roused into race consciousness, with what consequences no man can foretell. We Europeans and Americans have led them to school; soon they will turn on their teachers. Were we right in handing them immense supplies of what is called education and westernization? I wonder!

"In China, Chang Soa Ling is the power behind the throne. He is a believer in self-determination for China, and that he is to be the self-determinator. He told me so in his palace at Mukden, and when I asked him how long it would take he said about two years, perhaps three. I thought him an optimist, but many white residents in China think differently. 'The Chinese,' they say, 'are a very unexpected people.' Personally I believe the storm will break in China through the Bolsheviks lending the native population a hand, and that this storm is nearer than many of us suppose.

"The spread of book education, and above all of the newspaper, which form of reading is increasing as rapidly in India as in China, has immensely urged forward the idea of a united people in these two lands, though I believe they never can be so.

"In Egypt the same forces are at work in an effort to counteract Lord Allenby’s projected measure of self-government. My own view is that in the long run here as elsewhere the white race will have to choose between two alternatives: either to rule or clear out. There seems no middle course to me. Not far away, in Algeria and Morocco, the French are certain soon to have similar trouble
to ours in Egypt and India, which is all the more reason why the Entente Cordiale should be made firmer instead of being allowed to disintegrate.

"In sum, I have learnt that while we in the Occident are engrossed with our daily problems, the world of the Orient, which has been more than half asleep for centuries, has been awakened. What this awakening may mean no human being can foresee. It is very evident, however, that the printing press is gathering a force of which a quarter of a century ago we had no conception. Oriental peoples in general, and Mahommedans in particular, were then inarticulate. That day has gone by for ever.

"As Pascal said, 'To foresee is to rule.' I believe we white men must continue to help to rule. I am quite sure that with all its faults the rule of the white man, who has fought his way to freedom through centuries of struggle, is preferable to that of people swayed by fanaticism, and whose general conception of ruling is domination without equity."

[At the request of certain persons the remainder of this chapter has been deleted. I tried to point out that what I had written came from the most sympathetic of pens—Lord N. having been my benefactor and friend to the last—but they said that what they had read had pained them. I only hope that a less sympathetic and instructed pen than mine will not too speedily fill the gap that is bound always to be filled, sooner or later, where the passing of great men is concerned.—F. T.]
CHAPTER XVIII
LUDENDORFF LETS FLY

As unsettling an experience as a correspondent can well have, must be the privilege of an interview with General Erich von Ludendorff.

Others upon high may have their idiosyncrasies of reception—as, for example, Mussolini, who will remain seated at one end of a vast and furnitureless room not deigning to look up from his state papers or newspaper clippings until his poor supplicant has stood quaking for many minutes before him—but for studied terrorization of the visitor the palm is assuredly to Erich. At least that was my experience.

Naturally enough, the object of my call upon him near Munich had to do with his monarchist activities—in which connection, in passing, if it be to-day fashionable to class Ludendorff as a "back number" because of the eclipse he suffered in the race for the presidency of the amusing German Republic, I, for one, humbly find it difficult to reconcile such finality of judgment with the result of that election, with the presence at the helm in Berlin of his "true comrade to death," in thought, word and deed and Feste Burg of all monarchists, Marshal von Hindenburg. It may well be so that Ludendorff has proved himself no

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politician and that he has made a mess of important situations in consequence, yet who shall say that the star of this erstwhile Capablanca of mighty legions has set for ever until a decision has been reached in Hindenburg’s final operation—the reconstitution of the Kingdom of Prussia, for surely the old man of Tannenberg is dreaming out of that apotheosis to his life to-day?

True, Ludendorff is the ex-Kaiser’s man, wishes and works for the return of the head of the House, as against a supposed considerable majority, said to be led by the ex-Crown Princess Cecilie, and desirous of seeing the latter’s son, young Prince William, mount the throne; but so is Hindenburg an ex-Kaiser man. It was Hindenburg, by his own written admission, who on the morning of November 9th, 1918, counselled his imperial master to slip over into Holland while he went back to Cassel to disband the army. And it was Hindenburg again who before consenting to stand for the presidency expressly sought the approval of Doorn, receiving in addition to this, God’s blessing as invoked upon him by the exile. This was done quite openly so that the thirteen million Germans who later voted for Hindenburg, voted for the man who conceived the flight into Holland that is supposed to have barred its chief actor from all chance of ever re-mounting his throne! One seems to have heard much too much of the derision and contempt in which all good Germans are reputed to hold their late Emperor because he made himself so scarce at armistice time. Hindenburg, at least, cannot be at one with his fellow
countrymen in this sentiment, and I beg leave to doubt if it exists at all except as clever national camouflage intended to hoodwink the ex-Allies, to doubt, in fact, very strongly indeed, if anyone save William the Second will ever mount the throne of Prussia in the lifetime of the exile of Doorn.

Time was when in this matter of a restoration the Reich must have held themselves beholden to the Allies, but that day is rapidly vanishing, while a further point to remember is that the German Secret Service, which is putting up a great show of being anti-Kaiser, is actually in the same hands as it was before and during the war, that is to say, in the hands of Ludendorff men... it all leads back to Doorn. A volume recently written by one in this Service, and obvious propaganda for the royalist cause in Central Europe, contains statements by the ex-Crown Princesses of Germany and Bavaria in the course of which both ladies are made to cry out in as many words: "Save us and our country from the Man of Doorn!" Yet this, too, is more likely than not a further and clumsy effort to pull additional wool over foreign eyes in regard to the real intentions of the German monarchist party, namely to have the ex-Kaiser back as King of Prussia.

One often wonders in this respect if the toss royalty took at armistice time was not more spectacular than real. At the outbreak of war, Europe possessed, it is true, eighteen monarchies and but three republics, a state of affairs which was transformed in 1918 into a dozen monarchies and eight republics, and which to-day has still further
been modified to "ten all" by the adhesion of Turkey and Greece to republicanism. One could even go further and argue that over two-thirds of Europe is now republican and that no fewer than half of the surviving monarchies are only countries of second or third-rate consequence, yet the salient point seems to endure: has Central Europe been definitely weaned from the purple? To answer which, it may be necessary briefly to review some of the psychological circumstances leading up to the wholesale rejections of 1918.

From the outset of hostilities kingship came to be definitely linked with the catastrophe. From earliest battle the allied statesmen and leader writers hammered the point home. As any championing of kings and princes emerged as an impossibility in view of what royalty was presumed to have done in precipitating the war, and because of the democratic nature of the struggle, so the allied peoples were permitted, even freely encouraged, to vent their wrath upon the purple, to curse the Kaiser in particular and crowned heads in general. It was good propaganda; a good safety-valve, this popular letting-off of steam against the individual. Heroes and hero-worship. Villains and vilification. Just as the warring people sighed for a hero, so, too, they required a villain to hate with a cheap, unreasoning hatred. They were given several, the French and British and Italians being taught to hate Germany via her "baby-killing" Emperor, and Bulgaria through "Foxie" Ferdinand, and Turkey through the unspeakable Sultan, and Karl as the representa-
tive of dark rule from Rome, while conversely, the peoples of the Central Empires were trained to laugh at easy-going King George, and at Italy's little Majesty, and at the unfortunate Tsar, although a fourth Royal personage, Albert of Belgium, they found it difficult either to ridicule or to hate. But they more than made up for that by painting Edward the Seventh as the devil of all their misfortunes.

Under the knout of Demos with his blood up, royalty had a poor time indeed. Cartoonists, music-hall singers, satirists, statesmen, publicists, historians—all combined to render the multitude articulate in their worked-up indignation at kingship, the leading war-makers of each land conducting the symphony of abuse the while—or rather, it was principally an allied symphony since the Central Empires swore by the imperial sword and the Allies were vaguely fighting for its opposite, a situation demanding that they should keep their own royalty in the background. Which was duly done. For Italian headquarters in the field, and Russian headquarters in the field, where their Majesties of Italy and Russia spent the war, were as sheltered nooks compared with the Quirinal and the Winter Palace. Their Majesties were commanding their armies, doing their duty, and to criticize them was a traitorous, anti-national act. Likewise, though not emulating Marlborough and Napoleon and planning battles like his kingly cousins, King George was "carrying on" in a quiet unassuming manner at home.

It was largely because Germans and Austrians
and Turks and Bulgars seen:ed so uncompromisingly to bend the knee to their royalties that the allied war-leaders, in the popular exultation of those closing weeks of the war, virtually made it a condition of peace pourparlers that the enemy monarchs should be dethroned and cast forth, and with the result that no fewer than nine crowned heads did actually become casualties. Though not, by any means, out and out ones. Hindenburg slipped William over the Dutch frontier, subsequently to slip his immense wealth over after him, while a like "fate" overtook the Crown Prince until one day the latter chose to return unmolested to Silesia. Down south, Ferdinand of Bulgaria was permitted to depart in peace for Coburg where, in due course and to ensure his comfort, he was refunded a matter of £350,000 by the British Government, that sum, held in London securities, having been confiscated during the war. A little later, piloted by a British colonel, the hapless Charles of Austria was pleasantly located on Lake Geneva whence he was to make an ill-fated attempt to regain his throne, while hard by, the last of the big four royal outcasts, Constantine, enjoyed himself for a long time at Lucerne on an allied allowance of £25,000 a year, prior to returning triumphantly, though only for a short while, to Greece. Three other dethroned monarchs, the more or less harmless and passive kings of Würtemberg, Saxony and Bavaria, were permitted to live on in bliss at their country estates. In fact not a royal bond nor a royal piece of bric-à-brac were touched throughout the length and breadth of Europe.
More remarkable, a whole Hohenzoller'ı settlement was permitted to continue in residence at Potsdam, and a similar Hapsburg settlement outside Vienna. What did that matter? The Allies would never permit any of the exiled ones to remount their thrones! Few paused to consider a rather important factor, namely that the fugitives owed their exile principally to allied or external pressure; that no wild anti-dynastic scenes were ever enacted within the Central Empires comparable to similar happenings after Sedan; that in short, if the "group mind" among the beaten Powers was hostile to its royalty in the bitterness of the hour, it was by no means violently or universally so; and that if dynasties have a half of falling after national catastrophies—usually because scapegoats have to be found somehow and somewhere to appease the multitude until it quiets down once more—the incisive record of history indicates that monarchs who tumble in such circumstances have a habit of coming back, or their offspring.

To-day, with the exception of one member, the German Imperial family remains implanted and flourishing in Germany, able to assemble publicly in all its feudal trappings and to organize military reviews in the very heart of the capital. The Empire is still called the Reich and scarcely a crest or banner has been altered. Busts and prints of the ex-Emperor are to be found in every second home, and we read: "above ten million beds in the Fatherland hangs the Kaiserbild." In places of public resort audiences still stand to the Imperial anthem, the Lutheran churches echo each week with
prayers for the exile while pastors are insistent in conjuring the glories of the German monarchy, temporal no less than spiritual. Up and down the land monarchist clubs debate and pass resolutions and students and ex-officers and the Einwohnerwehr march and sing on the flimsiest imperial occasion. The great People’s party is avowedly monarchist in politics; but monarchist sentiment is omnipartisan, including as it does the Church, the aristocracy, the officer and student caste, officialdom and the industrials, and property-owners in general, and a considerable proportion of the peasantry who in their folk-songs and folklore and national costumes and fêtes have become steeped in a form of primitive honouring of the king.

Can this all lead to nothing in the long run with the good old game of regaining thrones, and no lack of Warwicks, being played as of yore, no affair of sealed envelopes and stage coachers and d’Artagnan daring now, but propelled by newspaper propaganda and pushed by faithful adherents journeying from capital to capital sizing up the financial, clerical, political aspect of this and that restoration movement; prelates and politicians, financiers and courtiers, soldiers and members of the diplomatic circle? Exerting, one and all, unceasing pressure upon sects and parties, upon cliques and banking houses and newspapers, upon every sub-division of the five estates, to the end that that triple-headed colossus the Church, Money, and Brains may be satisfactorily lassoed?

Failure and death have so far greeted the only
two deposed monarchs to make bills for their former thrones, Tino and Charles, but both returned at the wrong moment, an error of tactics into which we may rest assured the German kings will not fall.

... All of which lengthy preamble brings me back to General Ludendorff at Munich. For close upon a week I could not get near him. The very nature of the General's activities, his stealthy undermining of the republican position, rendered publicity the one thing he least desired, while there was also the chance that a caller, presenting himself with the best of credentials, might be a camouflaged "Red," bomb in pocket or a revolver on the hip. So that avenue upon avenue of possible introduction had to be explored, and politicians, editors, industrialists, even destitute royalties, applied to in vain. Eventually, disheartened, I tried one more line of approach, and while waiting for the outcome, decided to run up to Oberammergau for the Passion Play. The little Bavarian mountain village I found packed with American Jews and Jewesses, the latter strolling arm-in-arm up the main street, puffing furtively at secret cigarettes hidden away in the palms of their hands, and discussing what they termed the "Pash Flay."

"Where've they put you, Sadie? I'm with Judas."

"Oh, I'm with Chri—... I mean Anton Lang. Bully there. He's got just the cutest son, all long hair and blue eyes like himself. Going to be Christ in 1931, so father says, if the kid's strong enough to stay crucified half an hour."

How difficult it is, in sooth, at Oberammergau,
to keep off remarks the world elsewhere would frown upon, yet which, amid the general incongruity of this play, pass muster, free of the slightest taint of intentional blasphemy. At all events, that is how it occurred to me when a leading U.S. theatrical magnate, beside whom I chanced to be seated in the stalls, and who throughout had been viewing the performance exclusively through a Broadway producer's spectacles, could contain himself no longer on the curtain rising upon the last episode of all—the farewell-to-earth meeting with Mary Magdalene amid boulders cast aside from the sepulchre.

"Gee!" proclaimed Broadway, thinking right out loud, "but I knew there was a strong love interest developing in this Drama!"

The Hebrew men from America, who later were to nudge one another at the culminating line of the play commencing "Mag sein Blut," were principally occupied in money changing. And verily, if the scene in the Temple angered Christ, I do not know what explosion of Divine wrath must not have resulted had He alighted upon the main thoroughfare of Oberammergau. With the exchanges of that part of the world all gone crazy, the street read nothing but "Bureaux de change," "Geldwechsel," "Cambio," "American Express," "Guarantee Trust," while the pockets of its pedestrians, one and all, bulged with millions in paper currency which even lay about the roadway.

I too was billeted with Judas, Herr Zweit, and though my cot was roughly two feet too short, necessitating my resting with my feet half way
up to the ceiling and endangering several holy ornaments on the wall, the two or three days' stay were interesting, if only for the bearing of my twelve table-companions, all, save the afore-mentioned young Jewess and her Momma, Germans.

After clumsily satisfying themselves that neither Momma, her daughter or myself understood German, the Germans proceeded to abuse America and England amid raucous merriment for the whole of the first meal and for most of the three others that followed.

"Ach, but it was great to be able to talk like this in front of the Pig-Dogs!"

The Germans just gurgled with glee—when they were not gurgling with other things. I noticed, too, that they were just the same as of yore in regard to their table bearing. Before the soup was served, there would be a babble of conversation. Then, presto, silence complete and absolute until plates had been emptied to a trough-like accompaniment. Then a fresh outbreak of babble until the arrival of the roast when, presto, once more, silence complete and absolute until plates lay empty again and glistening from bread-work. And so on with the sweet, etc., the repast alternately one of loud chatter and dead silence, broken only by the noises attendant upon utterly uncontrolled mastication.

The last meal concluded, with its climax of offensiveness at the strangers expense, it naturally was incumbent upon the Allies and Associate, to thank the Germans, in German, for the excellent two days' entertainment they had provided. Which was duly done.
"But you speak then, German?" exploded a professor opposite.

We left them to it.

On my return to Munich, the Ludendorff deed had been done; I could call on the General next day, according to a communication from the political editor of the Muenchener Neueste Nachrichten, who enclosed a letter, signed Ludendorff, and saying that although the signatory would not discuss monarchy in an interview, I could come along all the same (I mention this specifically because later Ludendorff, who, I regret to say is not only a blusterer but a dealer in terminological inexactitudes, denied ever having seen me, the incident leading to a lawsuit in Munich of some journalistic consequence).

I had heard that Ludendorff was wont to keep a revolver handy and a stove perpetually burning in case of an emergency calling for the destruction of his private papers, but even such knowledge hardly prepared me for the circumstances of my advent next morning at the Villa Ludendorff at Wilhelmshoehe, and of my meeting with its owner.

My arrival at the gate was the signal for two snailing wolfhounds to leap down the steps at me; so I paused outside. The villa, a big white mansion standing in its own grounds and hedged in by trees, I could see commanded a gorgeous panoramic view of a winding river valley far away below—happy haven of an unpensioned, dismissed officer. Meanwhile, my chauffeur was certain that the police dogs meant no harm—it was just their playful little way to growl and snap and behave like caged
lions the other side of that gate. Ultimately, after a considerable wait, which may or may not have been put to some use within the villa, a small child whom I subsequently clicked heels to as Ludendorff junior, aged three, beckoned me from the porch. The gate opened simultaneously, and for the honour of the Allied and Associated Powers I had perforce to proceed. As I entered the grounds the dogs began describing snarling circles around me, their tongues loosely out, and it was inside of this disconcerting trot that I had to make my mission known to the maid.

Would I pass into the salon? I moved forward into the centre of the room, accompanied now by only one of the dogs, but the animal was apparently not in favour of my sitting down, so I stood still while it continued his trotting and snarling. I may have stood two or three minutes so—I recall studying three highly coloured life-size paintings on the walls, one of the Kaiser to his ever-true comrade Erich von Ludendorff, another of Hindenburg, more passionately inscribed, and a third of Ludendorff himself, stooping over a map, compass in hand and planning a battle—when I became aware that there was somebody else in the room. The same instant the maid announced: "F.xcellenz von Ludendorff!"

The General had come in without making a sound and stood bolt upright his wife beside him, in the doorway some six paces from me. Tall, massive, and with fair moustache curling upward at either end in the approved imperial style, he fixed his penetrating blue eyes upon me. I noticed
that he had on knickerbockers and wore the Bavarian peasant's blue cotton coat, into the left hand pocket of which one fist was jammed hard down, ill-concealing the outline of a revolver muzzle sticking forward within. Meanwhile, the dog began barking and prancing about me and Ludendorff said not a word, just continued to "fix" me with his small light blue eyes. Finally—it seemed after an age—he appeared to have come to some decision. He waved his wife away and out of the room with an abrupt gesture, and bore down upon me in a near-goosestep, eyes still fixed relentlessly on mine, left hand still pressed down into his coat pocket. A yard from me, he drew himself up, bowed about an incl in a jerk, extended a nerveless hand and said "Ludendorff!" To which I was just going to say: "Tuohy!" as in olden days at Bonn, when he ordered: "Sit down in that chair over there! No, over there! Take no notice of the dog!"—all this rasped out as if I had been a Feldgrau on parade.

After I had seated myself face to the window, Ludendorff walked around me and sat down in an armchair some three paces opposite, his eyes still set on mine (as they continued throughout), his left hand still pressed down in his coat pocket (as it continued throughout). I appreciated that it were best to smile and fiddle about with my wrist watch. Suddenly the General said: "What do you want?" I explained that I was making an inquiry into the chances of a monarchist revival in Europe generally, and in Bavaria and Prussia in particular.
“And what has that got to do with you people?” boomed Ludendorff.

I explained that the Allies were still keenly interested in the future of Germany and that whether the existing Republic endured or not seemed a matter of paramount importance. I had heard him—Ludendorff—spoken of as the head of the monarchists working for the return of the ex-Kaiser to the throne of Prussia.

“Let America mind its own business!” ejaculated Ludendorff, “as it should have done on a previous occasion! What right have you here in Europe? To us Germans you have brought nothing but ill. I shall say nothing to you on monarchy, and mind, you are not interviewing me on it, but I have much to say on other things!”

The ex-Quartermaster General spoke in guttural staccato sentences stabbed out in the best Prussian style and accompanied by a stiff tempo beating with the free hand.

“But you are at the head of the movement to bring the ex-Kaiser back, are you not? At least tell me why you think the Hohenzollerns beneficial to Germany.”

“I refuse to make any declaration to you on the subject. The matter concerns Germany alone. I am living here in retirement in Bavaria. And I repeat, I fail to see what right America has to interest itself in the future of Germany. Let the Americans study themselves for a change. The Americans! One record you established. You entered the war from the worst motive in the history of the world. You entered it for gold.
We, we Germans, we fought for the supremacy of our race. You—you fought for gold! Tell them that if you like!" And Ludendorff leaned forward, rasping out the words, finger shot right out at me. "But, Excellenz. Are supremacy and gold so very far apart, admitted that the object of the United States in entering the war was, as you infer, financial gain? Would not the supremacy which you mention as having been the war object of Germany have brought in its train very substantial monetary advantages to the German people?"

"That may be," retorted Ludendorff, "but we only thought of our race."

"But do you class all Americans the same? What of the German-Americans?"

"They are the worst of the lot. They are terrible people. We got nothing from them then and expect nothing of them now. Bah, the Americans! The most narrow-minded people in the world. We can do without you."

While uttering the above words Ludendorff worked himself up into a declamatory heat, giving each phrase as if it were a military order and gesticulating in unison. It was clear that he nourished the keenest hatred, freely mixed with contempt, for the United States, because of those two million doughboys who by their coming, baulked his plans and wrecked his career.

Presently he burst out afresh: "Ach, was! It was the voyage of the Deutschland across the Atlantic which really decided you. You then began to see your gold slipping from you. Germany has been abominably treated, but there will
come a day of reckoning. Look at me! Picture my position before the war. And now I can only give my family meat twice a week. It's the same everywhere. And they say that we Germans have not suffered! Gott!"

He looked so ample and happily situated that it was hard to repress a smile.

"Take the French," he went on. "The French have imposed impossible conditions and have incidentally wounded our national pride. That is why we are bitter towards them. It is for them to make the first step if the bitterness is to disappear!"

"Well, what ought France to do?" I asked. "Go home and disarm?"

"Disarm!" laughed. Ludendorff aloud, "why, yes—if they were quite mad. All this disarmament talk is pure nonsensical, dangerous rubbish. You can tell your Americans that as well. All the Disarmament Conference did was to cheapen naval war and alter its fighting units. And," he added after a pause, "break up the British Empire. England now only has a fleet equal to that of the United States. Lloyd George has rendered that service to his country. The British Empire is doomed and will be the next to go. And it will not recover like Germany is going to!"

"But how do you mean 'doomed?'" I queried.

"Ah," he proceeded, waving the interruption aside, "if only we had had more of the Irish coast for our submarines in the last war! It would have been all up with England. Listen. In sacrificing her fleet and giving Ireland her freedom England
has made the two greatest blunders in her history. She has failed to appreciate that never again will Canadians or Australians rush to her side in Europe in anything like national numbers. Contingents may cross but that will be all." Ludendorff stopped short, as if afraid he had said too much.

I spoke of Ireland, doubting if he was correct in his surmise that Ireland would range herself against England in the next war. Gradually this next war was coming through the mist. Here, at least, with Ludendorff and such as he, it could be written "nothing has changed." The new Europe he saw but in frontiers for future fighting. He spoke on of the wrongs done Germany and I gathered this perhaps not unimportant undercurrent: that whereas his next Germany after the present one would be resigned to the loss of Alsace and Lorraine for ever, it would put in its "revanche" file the complete re-establishment of the remainder of the German Empire as it existed up to 1918.

Ludendorff next spoke of Russia, and I asked if it were not a fact that he had recently come together at the monarchist headquarters, Rosenheim, in Lower Bavaria, with the Grand Duke Nicholas, former Generalissimo of the Russian armies. Ludendorff shook his head. "Our policy is for one of internal construction, not of foreign scheming. And we are above party. We are concentrating exclusively on internal politics."

"Of what kind, Excellenz?"

"To get rid of the Jews—they are at the bottom of all the trouble in the world to-day. They are the greatest peril in the world today." (Luden-
dorff emphasized this Judengefahr by marching up and down the room and raising his voice). "And America is their breeding centre. If it hadn't been for Jews wanting to make money, you'd probably have stayed out of the war. And now you're supporting this Republic simply because it is Jewish." Ludendorff paused and looked down at me.

"The German people," he proclaimed, "will have a monarchy because they have monarchy in the marrow of their bones. When and how—that is not for discussion. Guten Tag!"

Dis-miss!

Now usually the answer to "when is an interview not an interview?" is, I suppose, "when it's a fake," but not always. Subtle situations arising on occasion when a reserve characterization may become necessary. In this instance Ludendorff had written that he would not be interviewed on monarchy, and I, in calling upon him, had accepted that limitation—but only that one—so that when, uninvited, he began barking abominably for the best part of an hour about Jews and Americans, was one not entitled to chronicle, later, such outbursts? It may have been slightly sharp practice not to have advised the Barker, before leaving, that one intended so doing, but to have done so would have been to have risked everything and, anyway, the morning had all through been a battle of wits, with Ludendorff, Prussian booster, being treated precisely as I handled scores of captured German officers during the war, i.e. being allowed to continue talking without my taking a solitary note calculated
to put him on his guard, or indeed my betraying more than the most casual interest in what he said; a fine point of journalistic ethics but still . . . well, anyway, Ludendorff really isn't nice to know!

Naturally L. saw red when the interview appeared and redder when he was sued for libel by a Jewish organization in Berlin and deprived of many very helpful German-American dollars that had till then been regularly transmitted for Nationalist propaganda purposes, but really, Excellenz, you should not have sworn in open court, later on, that you had never either seen or heard of me, I who patted Ludendorff junior so tenderly both on arrival and departure!

Das war conduct unbecoming ein Offizier and ein Shentlemann!
CHAPTER XIX
THE TIGER’S SWAN SONG

Originally, on the principle of conveying maximum aroma in a title, this chapter was called "Onion Soup." Not that it will be found to have the smallest connection with Paris night life, with junketings at dawn off the Markets where soupe à l'oignon, ultimate stabilizer of the cosmopolitan noctambule, reigns supreme. If it had, it might be more exciting, since nowhere can class hatred surge quite so passionately as in these Markets, on occasion, when dazzling creatures, bejewelled and befurred and leaning unsteadily on the arms of still unsteadier escorts, trip down from limousines, singing, laughing, dancing, colliding with the early morning market throng thriftily astir to save an extra sou.

It is then, on such occasions, that the eyes of the Commune re-flash, hating, detesting, killing, and that some are apt to weigh what criminal lunatics others with money can be.

No, this onion soup of which I tell was never served to pretty women still throbbing with the madness of Montmartre; nor yet to their Harvard beaux pursuing vacation courses in the Immoralities. But it was served for six whole weeks, morning, noon and night, to Monsieur Clemenceau
on his trip to America, to remain to-day quite the most pungen* memory of that political swan song.

The origin of this tour of twelve thousand miles may be traced to an intime tea-party, on a Sussex lawn, attended among others by Rudyard Kipling and Clare Sheridan—that brilliant and beautiful beneficiary of the workings of feminine charm upon celebrated men submitting to the interview. Now Rudyard has ever, so it is asserted, had the smallest regard for the United States, so it may be entirely true that he said, that afternoon over his teacup, something about America having "come into the war for gold"—after all, we have all heard the story that the U.S. Government mainly "came in" to retrieve, or make secure, the vast loans it had made to the Allies who could never have repaid a cent had they, as seemed possible in 1917 without American intervention on their side, gone down in defeat—Kipling may quite easily, as I say, have enlarged upon this thesis, but equally surely, he never dreamed for a second that his words were being lusciously absorbed by Clare Sheridan, reporteress, for publication in America. So he politely but firmly denied ever having used them, only thereby, in the dire way of journalism, to stress them a thousand times over.

As if, forsooth, a denial could stop a stunt! "Let us hear," exulted New York, "what others, equally renowned, have to say of our entry into the war!"

In which manner did it come to pass that I sent out reply-paid telegrams soliciting the views of various French celebrities on this vexed question,
and among them Georges Clemenceau, though without the faintest hope of receiving a reply from him. For years the Tiger had never been known to take the smallest notice of journalists. Like Mussolini, he had been one, and like the Duce, he had come to profess a withering contempt for his former profession and for everything connected with it. Judge then of our amazement when not only a reply came from Clemenceau but a reply containing an offer to go to America and explain to that country her part-responsibility for the current state of Europe! For the hour was grave, said Georges Clemenceau.

Now the first thing to do upon an occasion like this, after palpitation has died down, is calmly and quietly to review the possibility of such a message being a fake, the misplaced humour of some dear colleague. Was it possible that the Grand Old Man of France, the Father Victory of that stunning interlude in human events, 1917–19, was offering to come out of the retirement he had vowed never again to break? And, of all things, to advise América as to where she descended, dismounted, "got off"? Verily had we left the puny realm of mere stunting; here the strong meat of the craft... but was the telegram a fake?

No, not this time. Right across the front page of Clemenceau's own paper, the "Echo Nationale," appeared a reproduction of his telegraphic offer, clear and direct invitation to sundry correspondents, entrepreneurs, promoters, and kindred harbourers of other people's funds to come along and talk it over.
"Land Clem for paper at all costs," was what New York had to say; and so within a very few hours I was train-bound for the inaccessible hamlet of Jard-en-Vendée whither "Clem" had withdrawn in disgust in 1920 on his countrymen altering Père to Perd-la-Victoire. First one jolted for twelve hours in an ancient train to the coast of Lower Brittany, then one took a still more antiquated tram-car and continued jolting into the wilds to a terminus called Talmont. Then you asked for Monsieur Clemenceau and were informed in fearsome dialect that le vieux lived ten kilometres away over there in the direction of the sea and that there were two ways of reaching him—either you walked over or hired a diligence at the Cheval Blanc. On the box of which rickety relic of the Bovary period you finally were bumped for a further hour and a half before espying silhouetted against the Atlantic, a long white cabin perched amid pines on a hill and overlooking the ocean.

"That," pointed the peasant driver with his whip, "is where le vieux lives. But you must finish on foot because of the sand," and this I proceeded to do, to present myself, jaded, dirty, unshaved and stiff and sore in every limb, to Monsieur Georges Clemenceau—for on seeing a stranger within the gates, le vieux had stumped challengingly forward.

"What can I do for you? A journalist! I'll wager you're a journalist, eh? Isn't it so? Well, I'm going to America, and I've got nothing more to say!"
“But, Monsieur le Président, I—that is to say—we feel rather responsible for—”

“Eh? What’s that? Ah, it is you of the funny name... Well, ’tis as I say. I go because of what poor Kipling says. But come in! You Parisians do not like rain.”

The cabin where ‘Clem’ lives on thirty francs a day (not counting the upkeep of a Rolls given him by Sir Basil Zaharoff) is an affair of three partitions, making a quartette of rooms. At one extremity the kitchen and bedroom of a faithful old Breton cook, next door that of Albert, the valet, who is reputed to have saved his master’s life in the trenches as a poilu, then the dining-room, finally the Tiger’s lair, into which he led me and wherein one noticed forthwith a total absence of any mementoes or photographs pertaining to the war. In their stead were big game trophies from the Indian jungle and the Nile, lion’s heads and the like, and Clemenceau certainly could not have been prouder of them had they been the skulls of Wilson, Lloyd George, and a few others of his black beasts. A bookshelf, a bed, a table and two chairs comprised the other fittings.

“You are working?” I ventured, pointing to the table. “Your memoirs, perhaps, Monsieur le Président?”

“You think zat? No, I shall never write my memoirs! What I like is truth and where I can’t tell all the truth I keep silence. I could not write truthful memoirs without making the position of the world worse than it is already. So I am not going to write any memoirs at all.”
"Well, may I ask what—"

"—I wrote all night at my window, looking out at the ocean (ah, but it is best the ocean in fury), a book about God, about all the Gods that have ever lived rolled into one, but not till after my death will it be published. Now about America—"

Briefly I explained my mission. The paper wished to "get" him, that is to say, to publish articles by him while he toured the country, and generally to associate itself with his visit in the eyes of the public.

"But I believe in the spoken word," emphasized Father Victory in excellent English. "With an audience you can do what the most brilliant pen cannot achieve. I wish to talk for the solidarity of those who fought for freedom and won. If things go on much longer as now, it will be chaos all round, and with America in it too. The American people must be told that they are in part responsible for the appalling condition of Europe to-day, and precisely how and why they are responsible. So I go to tell them—with the mouth," and the Tiger patted his lips with a grey-gloved hand.

[In parenthesis, I may here clear up the mystery of Clemenceau's hands which no one living is ever supposed to have seen ungloved. They are sufficiently oriental in tint to give striking support to the assertion, first made by Rodin while he was making a bust of their owner, that the latter has some way or other a decided Mongol, Tartar or Chinese strain in him. Clemenceau's father was a
Bordeaux doctor, but nevertheless there is something uncannily eastern about Father Victory's yellow skin and slanting eyes, not to mention several of his traits and characteristics: his fierce pursuit, amounting at times to cruelty, of all who ever crossed his path, his Buddhism, his asceticism in food and drink, his philosophic retreat from the tumult, his demoniacal powers for destruction, his passionate delight in everything oriental.

But we were saying—

Or rather, Clemenceau was saying that he couldn't write articles. Well, eventually he agreed to do so—although I strongly suspect his right hand man André Tardieu, acted as literary ghost, and not very successfully either—agreed for a consideration of twelve thousand dollars, or two hundred and forty thousand francs at the then rate of exchange; and I left the old Crusader seated before his shanty looking out across the ocean much as, hard on sixty years before, he had similarly meditated on this same coast, only planning a slightly different adventure, to wit, the assumption of the duties of French professor in a Connecticut girls' school, with one of the pupils of which, a Miss Plommer, he subsequently eloped.

We sailed silently in the "Paris" on the anniversary of Armistice Day, to be tumultuously greeted in New York six days later. This lionizing of the Tiger endured throughout—in Boston, Chicago, St. Louis and a dozen other cities, yet it would be idle to pretend that the visit was other than a pure succès de curiosité, with Americans thronging
to "glance" Europe's primc exportable character, bar possibly Lenin or the Pope, much as they swarmin to everything else novel and with a "kick." Clemenceau was cheered not as a serious (if self-sent) emissary of the Third Republic, nor yet as the exponent of a popular thesis, but exclusively because of the war glamour attaching to his name and of his record as a ruthless old fighter. Americans expected to be told things, real things, as a variation from the soothing syrup that sickens them so, though very, very nice to the palate, but in this they were doomed to disappointment. True, Clemenceau roused the Senate and some editorial writers with such thrusts as "every article in the Treaty except three was American," "you left too soon," "you have your share of responsibility for the present state of Europe," but in the main his addresses were uninspiring re-hashes of the how-we-have-suffered order. Far from ever getting tigerish Clemenceau adopted—heaven alone knows why—the utterly unnatural pose of a poor-old-man-making-a-last-appeal-before-descending-into-the-grave, and coming from such an acute, worldly-wise, cynical, old egotist, thoroughly bored with everything and everybody except eastern bric-à-brac and pretty women (and, conceivably, war), it fell flatter than many a fashionable frock front. Whether Clemenceau was fairly and squarely overcome by America—others have felt similarly overwhelmed—whether his native politeness forbade his criticizing a people while a guest in their country (in which case he scarcely should have set sail), or whether he really believed Colonel House when
the latter warned him that it would be impolitic, nay even perilous, for him to set about charting American responsibility for post-war Europe, is scarcely for me to dilate upon, since, respectfully, I believe in a fourth answer to the riddle, namely that old Father Victory went to America for precisely the same reason that Clare Sheridan said Rudyard Kipling said America came into the war for. Money he wanted to bolster up his paper in Paris, last flicker of Clemenceauism, and this was assuredly how it occurred to him to get it. Which would account for his following the line the most commod, and for his complete apathy while on tour.

The most audacious thing Clemenceau said in America was: "My friends, I tell you a people cannot be great one day and small the next!" Sometimes, greatly daring, he would vary the "small" to "mean."

For the rest, his addresses were mere rambling reiterations of France's rightful indignation at being called militarist, and of that country's material loss, so much so that a clever parodist, borrowing the venerable visitor's language and putting it into the mouth of the U.S. President, addressing an imaginary Paris audience on Prohibition, achieved the following:

"Well, my friends, why am I here? Why do I come? I come, my friends, because I hear bad words. I am down in my little house by the sea and I hear the bad word—that we Americans are prohibitionists! Think of it, my friends. America prohibitionist! My friends, you do
not understand. Eight million bootleggers. Twenty thousand manufactories destroyed; forty thousand blind, dead. Think of it, my friends!"

On the morning after he had missed fire badly with his first address at the Metropolitan Opera House; New York, Clemenceau sent for me. We were travelling to Boston in Mr. Schwab’s special train lent for the tour.

"And what do they say, the papers?" he asked.

"They don’t think you were exciting enough, Monsieur le Président. Something of a damp squib, as they say in England."

I expected to be thrown out of the pullman car; instead my questioner pondered for a time, then said: "Well, what do they want me to say? What should I tell them?"

The extent of the question took me momentarily aback; but presently I hedged: "May I write down, Monsieur le Président, on a slip of paper several suggestions based on what you yourself said down in the Vendée?"

"Do it—but why write them?"

"Because I noticed last night that you require a few notes while addressing an audience in a foreign tongue."

"Do it, then!"

So I jotted down the obvious: roughly that Clemenceau should tell fully, intimately, and with all the authority that was his, of the circumstances in which he came progressively to surrender French interests in return for the word of a President of the
United States Republic that France would thereafter be doubly protected—by America, through the pact of guarantee against German aggression, and by the League of Nations . . . and to my joy the Tiger "re-acted."

"I will tell them some of that at Boston tomorrow," he said, folding away the slip.

Alas! he never did. In the meantime, hearing of what had transpired, the tour manager communicated post-haste with Colonel House who in turn got in touch with Clemenceau and solemnly warned the latter against arraigning Wilson or, for that matter, against criticizing American action in any way. So we went along our way to a repetition of "comme nous avons souffert," and "ce n'est pas vrai que la France est militariste"; glorious opportunity lost for a man of blood to have brought vigorously home to a nation all too freely humoured in the matter, some truths pertaining to the present state of Europe and the world.

. . . However, life on the Steer King's special train was altogether comfortable and pleasant . . . but for that perpetual and all-pervading odour of onion.

The Tiger's life aboard was intriguing. He rose at 3 a.m. for what he called his midnight lunch of onion soup and hard boiled eggs (4), then would sit alone in his parlour car making notes for his Deity book until the dawn broke, when he would proceed to gaze out for hours on the swiftly-changing countryside. This was his pet diversion. He read nothing, and only on rare occasions sum-
moned members of his entourage for a chat, usually about Chinese curios. Once, however, Foch came under review, when one gathered that in the Tiger’s heavy list of “strafes,” the gallant Marshal must come very near the top. As is known, Clemenceau, largely re-made Foch after the last-named had been “sent to Limoges,” and the Tiger’s certainty was, and presumably still is, that Foch torpedoed his (Clemenceau’s) chance of becoming President (a) because of the loss, at the Peace Conference, of the Rhine as frontier, but more particularly (b) because Foch, the ardent Catholic, was determined at all costs to keep a grim old unbeliever out of the Élysée.

“And yet, did I take note of his religion in 1917?” old Father Victory asked. “Eh ’bien!”

Towards 9 a.m. Clemenceau would have a second meal that can only be designated as “brunch”—more hard boiled eggs and onion soup, and so to sleep. In the late afternoon came a third serving of the same menu, after which bed. Towards the end of the tour the air in the train becoming slightly more bearable by the Tiger switching occasionally on to grapefruit and terrapin—gift of the wealthy “aristos” he perhaps rather unwisely stayed with in the cities. He neither drank nor smoked.

Naturally such a progress had its humours. As when a black woman embraced Clemenceau at Boston because he thought black troops good enough for policing Germans, and when, at St. Louis, a Jesuit university solemnly presented a gold medal to the man who had helped to turn the Jesuits out of France. At St. Louis the visitor
was guarded by police with carbines, whose chief, one O'Brien, shot someone dead on the morning of our arrival, presumably to imbue us with confidence.

And that famous speech to Quakers at Richmond, Indiana!

The good Quakers had asked the Tiger to address them during a brief early morning halt.

"They bore me, these people. What can I say to them?" complained "Clem," appearing in pyjamas at the end of the train. And forthwith delivering an impassioned harangue exhorting these inspired peace-workers to prepare for the next war!

Never was greater silence than when, a few moments later, our train drew out of Richmond, leaving a dazed company on the line.

But most of the time it would be gifts of flowers and strange presents such as gold safety razors, and cries of "Tiger! Tiger!" and the "Marseillaise" and "Madelon de la Victoire." Though Chicago's welcome was frigid to a degree. Here, Clemenceau's arrival was much more like an arrest than a welcome, a squad of police descending upon him as he left his pullman and rushing him out of the station; while progress through the "Loop" in a black fog and to the accompaniment of loud explosions caused by the lighting of photographic flares, impelled "Clem" to inquire if the German-Americans were bombing him. Nor did Mayor Thompson subsequently imbue the proceedings with any greater geniality, receiving Father Victory with one hand in his pocket and, by way of intro-
ducing him to those around, confining himself to: "Guess you don't want to know the bunch singly. Gentlemen, your honoured guest." Upon which back went the estimable Mayor to his work table, we having indubitably disturbed him in his day's schedule.

Nevertheless, Chicago held one great delight for the Tiger—the stockyards. I never saw him in such humour.

"How long does it take to have a living hog ready for sale in pieces? Twenty minutes? That is too long!"

"Do the sheep suffer?"

"They really ought to have a danger sign up for the poor cattle!"

"What do you do with the pigs' ears? Throw them away? Don't do that! Send them to Europe. They are good enough for us."

Of the pig-slitting, carried out in an enclosure gushing with gore and piled high with carcasses: "Ah, but they remind me of the Germans at Verdun!"

The climax of the tour was the meeting with Woodrow Wilson in Washington. The ex-President at first refused to see Clemenceau, as he had declined to see Foch, but relented at the last moment. The interview, however, was of the most brief and formal character, lasting precisely five minutes, at the end of which time Mrs. Wilson reappeared by arrangement in the doorway, interrupting her husband's enthusiasm for autumnal travel in the States, and it was adieu between the two builders, or wreckers, for ever.
"We met," Clemenceau told me outside, "as old friends upon whom common adversity had fallen but who had done their best."

Next day the Tiger paid homage to America's other great leader, President Lincoln, and as he stood with bowed head inside the tomb at Springfield, one could not but wonder if parallel glory and immortality would not have been his, had he died under the bullet of the anarchist Cottin during the Peace Conference, as Lincoln succumbed to the madman Booth before his peacemaking had even got under way.

However, the Tiger desires no such national obelisk above him as this at Springfield. Down in his Vendée cabin he told me of the burial-place he has selected "so far from anywhere that no one will ever want to go there. It is in the land of my ancestors near Luçon in the Bocage (above La Rochelle) and not long ago when I took a relative to see the spot we could not find it for quite a long time. Ah, my young friend, do you see all the pompous funeral ones coming down from Paris to such a lonely, wild and unconsecrated spot? They wouldn't even have the chance for I will be buried very quickly by night."

A distressing enough contretemps between Clemenceau and the twenty or more accredited correspondents accompanying him was to mark the closing stagcs of the tour.

It was common knowledge that Mr. Schwab had placed at the Tiger's disposal on the train the finest of fine cellars, replete with everything from champagne to chartreuse, also that the dis-
tunguished visitor had not had as much as a solitary cork drawn, even for members of his French suite. Picture the tantalizing situation... so near and yet so far... the representations that would be planned by thirsty and hardworked correspondents out in the wilds... how none dared beard the Tiger in his lair... until Thanksgiving Night came round... and nothing save iced water to celebrate with, in a snow-caked siding in the depths of Illinois!

It was really too much! Cordon Rouge! Pom-mard! Château Lafitte! All next door and only a darkie attendant in the way! Bribery, though, had to be ruled out... probably the coon drew a higher salary from his Steel King master than we did; while as for a coup, suggested by some hot-head, such was naturally vetoed. There remained an appeal to Clemenceau, and for this I was selected, though far from relishing the job.

The Tiger was at his onion soup when I knocked and entered.

"Monsieur le Président, I come to ask a great favour on behalf of the correspondents of all the chief newspapers in the United States who have worked so hard and—"

"Well, what is it?"

"Monsieur le Président. It is Thanksgiving Night, and they wish to drink toasts to Washington, Lincoln, Wilson and to yourself. It is their Bastille day, Monsieur le Président, and they would celebrate it."

"Eh bien?"

"We thought you would like us to have some
of the good wine of France from Mr. Schwab's cellar in which to drink these toasts. Mr. Schwab, they advise me, would not mind in the least—would be tickled to death for newspapermen to—"

The Tiger waved me into silence, swallowed some more onion soup, then pronounced: "No. It will not be done. I will not violate the laws of this country while I am its guest."

"But, Monsieur le Président, that has been done already—every mile you have travelled in this train knowing that that cellar existed, every State line crossed, has been a violation of the law!"

"Je m'en fiche! Non, non, et non!"

A hard old nut, the Tiger...
CHAPTER XX

AN EMPEROR’S LOVE LETTERS

These are still unpublished, a thousand of them, from old Francis Joseph to his forty-year-long confidante the Baroness Kati Schratt; nor are they ever likely now to see the light of day, since only poverty prompted the proud old Hungarian dame to envisage their sale, and in the interim she, together with the rest of Austria, has been more or less replaced upon her feet. But we speed——

In the days of Offenbach, the gayest, loveliest creature on the Buda-Pesth light opera stage was Fraulein Kati Schratt. Fair, blue-eyed, a dream, by her pictures and by report handed down, the bright particular star of every supper party, brilliant and amusing and also (by report) a paragon of several necessary virtues, Kati was early on marked down for the favour of one or another Hapsburg. She had not to wait long.

One night in the late seventies appeared her Prince Charming—only he wore a crown, or rather two, those of Austria and Hungary. And, oddly enough, it was the ill-starred Empress, later to fall under an assassin’s dagger at Geneva, who insisted on the beauty of the footlights being summoned to the royal box.
The moment, for the Emperor at all ever is, was psychologically set for love. Fifty and vigorous, things had latterly gone none too well between him and his temperamentl consort, he had a vacancy at heart and Kati proceeded to fill it, not for a month, or even a year, but, passion subsiding gradually into something serener, until 5 a.m. in the morning, at Christmastide 1916, when Francis Joseph breathed his last at Schoenbrunn, his hand in Kati's.

In the forty years between, there may have been other favourites, in the way of emperors and kings, yet Kati remained through thick and thin the love of Francis Joseph's life. Installed in a sumptuous mansion not a stone's throw from the royal palace in Vienna, she had also a pied-à-terre at Ischl, and whenever his Majesty's duties or travels necessitated temporary separation, the Emperor never missed writing, sometimes two or three times a week, now recounting his meetings with the Kaiser or Queen Victoria or the Tsar, now asking counsel or advice or telling of the tragedy of Meyerling; all in his own handwriting, just for Kati . . .

Well, one morning I was ordered down to the Riviera to meet the Baroness Kati Schratt at Beau-lieu. I was to be extremely affable to her and, among other things, to get her local villa out of sequestration, the French having seized it during the war, as the property of an alien enemy. And if she required any francs, to let her have them. After which I was to bring her to Paris and get the Baro-ness's love-letters out of sequestration in the Crédit Lyonnais of the Boulevard des Italiens. These let-ters of the Emperor's she had placed there in a
strong box in 1914, just before the outbreak of war, and now just when she needed them to sell for publication, the blessed French authorities said she couldn't have them! My job was to try and straighten out the tangle and, having acquired the letters for their owner, to sit by her translating them one by one for the paper. As for payment, the sum to serve as a basis for negotiations was communicated as five thousand dollars, or three million trillion Austrian crowns, of which the Baroness had already received one-fifth.

I met a very sorry old lady at Beaulieu. Endowed with a permanent whine, Kati had hardly withdrawn her hand from mine before she opened her purse:

"Look at this!" she croaked, "Twenty francs is all I have left. And this morning I had a million crowns!"

Too bad! Too bad! Might I lend her a thousand francs? Certainly I would! And so to lunch down at the Reserve, a lady-in-waiting, a Frenchwoman, having meanwhile appeared. Yet despite the excellence of the menu and the wine, carefully chosen because of culinary conditions in Austria, and of the fact that the Baroness did ample justice to everything placed within her reach, the meal developed practically no verve or swing. And for the reason that nothing, not even double liqueurs, could get the Baroness off finance in general and her own transmutation, as an Emperor's favourite, in particular—

"To think that I should have to come here and beg for my villa! And twenty francs in my purse
... I who taught them how to live at Monte Carlo in the old days! Aber Gott!" And she fell to talking, or rather moaning, of another royal favourite of the past, the Baroness Vauglian, and of the glories of the latter's villa on Cap Ferrat, one-time haven of kings and princes.

"I can assure you, Baroness, we shall be able to get the villa all right," I interposed, but to small purpose.

"... To think that all my fortune should vanish to nothing! Thirteen million crowns the Emperor left me. A hundred francs I might get for it here to-day. Ah, weh! Ah, weh!"

"Perfectly glorious weather, isn't it? I always think May is the best month down here, don't you, Baroness?"

"... I expect they will ransack my house in Vienna while I'm away! And then it will be my jewellery that will have to go. Twenty francs in my purse! A louis d'or tip to a croupier!"

"Waiter! A Benedictine for the Baroness."

"Yes, and a big one. I drink one also for my son, the Baron Hirsch, who cannot get it in Vienna."

"Here's to your son, Baroness. Look at that lovely yacht out there!"

"... Ach, was! I suppose when we go to the villa presently it will have been emptied by the Franzosen!"

Altogether a most depressing occasion...

But the villa, fortunately had not been rifled, though it had stood unended and uninhabited for eight long years, and within a very few days it was unsequestered and we were able to leave for Paris,
though not without a further advance having to be made to the Baroness who, in the way, I suppose, of de-throned court favourites, betrayed not the slightest idea of the value of money.

In Paris Kati insisted on going to an hotel where she had been used to stopping for thirty years. So much having changed, I tried to dissuade her on hearing the name of the street. But—one might have been talking to a bulldog with a deathgrip for all the effect this had on Kati Schratt. She knew her Paris.

Next day, however, there was a development. Thoroughly worried and ill-at-ease, the lady-in-waiting called at the office.

"Monsieur, it is terrible. We cannot stay in that hotel."

"Why not?"

"Monsieur, people come and go all night. There are noises. It is not convenable."

"It's what we feared, in fact?"

"Yes, monsieur. And the worst of it is the Baroness will not leave. She is a very obstinate woman."

"Perhaps she likes it."

"Monsieur, it is not fun. You will take rooms for us elsewhere, yes?"

"Certainly, anywhere you wish. But I'll bet you won't get the Baroness moving."

Nor did we, in effect.

Meanwhile the serious business had begun of getting at the strong-box, and the Baroness had produced at least one document of some interest, namely the printed copy of a letter from the Baroness Vetsera's mother to Francis Joseph, written
directly after the hapless young sweetheart of Crown Prince Rudolph had met her death in the shooting-box at Meyerling. In this letter the writer told the Emperor that her daughter had long feared violence at the hands of Rudolph, who had tried to force her into a suicide pact. She, the mother, was therefore quite certain that Rudolph had murdered Marie Vetsera prior to killing himself. A further phrase in the document, while seeming to convey that the two lovers were, in effect, half-sister and half-brother, indicated clearly that the young woman, at least, was ignorant of this relationship.

With regard to the strong-box, various doors having been knocked at in vain, one day I went to André Tardieu, then still a power in the land. If he would use his influence with Poincaré to get the letters liberated, he could publish them simultaneously in his paper the “Echo Nationale.” To this he agreed with alacrity, and, such being the way of things in France, within a few days was able to return with a Foreign Office permit to be presented at the Crédit Lyonnais. “But,” qualified Tardieu, “M. Poincaré, as Foreign Minister, will go through the correspondence first before handing it over, and if there is anything inimical to France in certain of the letters, he will confiscate these. This applies particularly to the immediate pre-war period.”

Only agreement was possible to this, and the Baroness also acquiescing by telephone, a luncheon in honour of the liberation of Francis Joseph’s thousand love-letters was there and then arranged for that very day at Larue’s.
A memorable affair, too—

As half-past twelve came round I was waiting outside the restaurant when suddenly along the rue Royale there approached in the midst of tittering midinettes and mannequins the most remarkable "creation" that even post-war Paris has seen. The Baroness had donned for the occasion a model of, I should say, the late eighties. Satin in texture, it was a bright canary yellow, both bodice and skirt—the latter billowing out behind from a stiffly corseted waist, while, resting tilted across her fair wig was a spreading piece of head-gear, also yellow, and adorned in front by what looked like a big blue aeroplane propeller. The freest use of rouge and kohl, a green sunshade, and very visible black stockings completed the ensemble, until the old dame drew close, when one found that she had put on most of the Emperor's jewellery to clinch matters, including a mammoth contraption in brilliants across her breast and showing the capital letters "F" and "K," intertwined.

At the entrance to Larue's the Baroness turned upon her followers, shook her sunshade at them, called them "canaille" and made as if to expectorate in their direction. Then we passed into lunch, a heat-wave meal noteworthy for the ricochet appetite of Kati who, arrived at the fish or the entrée, would see an hors d'œuvre, she hadn't had, being borne by, and promptly signal for it.

The rest of this story is simple and sad——

We duly obtained the love-letters, after the Prime Minister had meticulously gone through them, presumably in search of any fresh evidence calculated
to reinforce the Poincaré-la-guerre legend: but then it was that Käti became herself and fractious. She wanted to go back to Vienna for the work that lay ahead, the sifting and sorting and translating. Paris was too dear and noisy and nerve-racking, and besides, disgusted her at the existing rate of exchange. And as I have indicated, argument or compromise being both equally out of the question with her, one had to submit, though not without distinct misgivings as to the possibility of there being a “catch” somewhere. However, little else being feasible, the precious letters were transferred across one or two frontiers in the diplomatic bag of an Allied and Associated Power—the Austrian Customs would certainly have held them otherwise—and the business of collating them at last began in the Schratt abode in Vienna.

Oh, wily, naughty old Kati Schratt! Fie upon you!

At the head of the library table, when the strong-box was brought in, a tall and powerful gentleman took up position—and took over the proceedings. The Baron Hirsch. And every epistle that Kati drew out was passed in his direction, the majority to be passed no farther. What remnants were offered for publication weren’t worth the fare to Vienna—petty gossip about shooting at Ischl and Kaiserliche coughs and colds—and... curtain, the balance sheet working out at:

Kati Schratt... Villa unsequestered, one thousand dollars advanced, holiday in Paris, love-letters returned.

Ourselves... Nil.
CHAPTER XXI

KEEPING THE POPE IN THE VATICAN

Lest anyone imagine that I wax facetious, it is not so.

A hoary old local saying endures, it is true, "a Roma venuta fede perduta," yet I tell here a simple tale of something that befell, tempting and facile as it doubtless is to step from the broad road of reverence, in Rome, into flippant pleasures by the way.

Since, supposedly, one appreciates, values, respects a thing in ratio to its rarity . . . a pretty girl in the Fatherland, a good claret on Manhattan, a Frenchman who remembers that others fought in the war. When one is saturated with a thing, when you find it at every hand's turn, you naturally cease to appraise it very highly. And Rome, of course, is saturated with religion. Packed with churches and seminaries, its streets and alleys ever filled with priests and friars and monks, and with theological students walking two by two and holding hands. Bishops and monsignors, even cardinals (of whom sixteen live in the city), excite not the slightest attention on the Pincio or the Corso. They are so common. The Romans live so close up to it all, have church bells ringing so incessantly in their ears, pass by such countless papal monuments all day,
and expatiate so familiarly anent the Madonna, as to cause them to lose such reverence as other peoples freely and instinctively display.

There may be other reasons why the Romans do not come up to the mark in this regard. Apart from being thick as the leaves of V, the ordained fraternity is a singularly unkempt collection. Poor as ecclesiastical mice, their soutanes often trail the ground in tatters, while their wearers are sometimes very venal. I do not mean anything serious, because I do not know, but priests frequent café bars in Rome, and chew cigars, and elbow you off the pavement in much too mundane a manner. And they simply will not shave.

On big religious occasions, such as have brought me many times to Rome, lay attention becomes more than usually focussed upon these shortcomings. Take the circumstances surrounding the conclave itself. Now, here is presumably a very sacred thing—the election of a successor to the oldest dynasty in the world and to the chair which Peter occupied at the behest of Christ. Do the Romans respect the occasion? Why, they make a Roman holiday of it! In other cities of the world, were these to be so privileged, the public and the newspapers might be counted on to preserve a certain decorum. But in Rome, although everyone may be Catholic (so that the absence of respect is not denominational), the whole business of choosing a pontiff is made the subject of newspaper polemics, of topical jokes, of betting, of sight-seeing, of everything... in the eyes of the visitor... irreverent, as irreverent as the behaviour of women who go to...
church: primarily to see who's there and whisper scandal about them during the service.

The army thinks it a good joke to fly over the Sistine Chapel while the conclave is sitting; the crowd before St. Peter's joyously liberates toy balloons with messages for the isolated cardinals, attached; mannequins come to the Piazza to display the latest creations; film celebrities, with greyhounds, follow suit. The youth of Italy, immensely diverted, makes the Piazza the rendezvous centre of the week for its assignations. In hotels and bars continuous betting goes on in connection with the various candidates' chances.

"He's too old," you hear. Or "he's got a scandal in his family." Or "I'll back Bisletti. He's got a good outside chance." For what? For the vice-regency of Christ upon earth!

In the fashionable hotels it is the same—scions of houses who owe their all to popes of a bygone day, weighing the chances of this and of that cardinal, over martinis, and to the rippling laughter of their lady friends, permanently billeted in the hotel and waving aloft sweepstake strips. Sometimes one stroked one's forehead in perplexity. Had it been always so? Or was this generation, war-altered, really more thoroughly pagan than any that had gone before? And if so, was this paganism really such a terrible thing? Many splendid characters had been pagans, or, at least, had had precious little use for "organized religion." Lots of pagans had been infinitely higher mortals than many an occupant of this chair of Peter. Though, for many popes past, a new order had prevailed. Yet time
A LECTURE FROM THE POPE

was when every form of vice and rapacity had been associated with the Vatican. Time was when popes had played diabolically upon the trust of the faithful, with their warring and with their indulgences, purchasable like food and drink. Of course all that had altered now, and for centuries sovereign pontiffs had shown themselves to be very good and well-intentioned men... but did those Romans remember the kind that had gone before, the scandal and the venal worldliness of an era past?

Therein, I venture to think, is where you are most likely to get your answer to the irreverence of Rome today. In remembrance of the past, and in familiarity with the present. But we were telling of...

...Oh, yes, of Pope Pius the Eleventh and of how His Holiness came within an ace of quitting the papal domain, inadvertently or no, and treading Italian royal territory, with all the annoying consequences such a break with seventy years' tradition must have entailed.

It was in the spring of 1924, and I had gone down to Rome in connection with the bestowal of the red hat on the Archbishops of New York and Chicago—great American days during which one wondered, among other things, if ever a citizen of God's own country would mount the chair of Peter, and what would happen, precisely, in the way of 'speeding up' and 'rendering the Vatican services efficient,' if he did. The ceremonies over, His Holiness summoned in special audience Floyd Gibbons, chief of the 'Chicago Tribune,' and myself, to read us, as it turned out, a little homily on the responsibilities of journalism. Gibbons and I arrived at the Bronze
Door in evening dress and jingling with service medals (incidentally, the only time I have ever worn such few as I collected because they help, in the Vatican, with all these Noble and Swiss Guardsmen and Camerlingos, themselves dressed to kill) and soon we were paying customary homage to the Pontiff. As plain Monsignor Ratti of the Warsaw Nunciature I had last seen him, to speak to, four years before, and I was shocked by the transformation that his brief stay in the Vatican had already worked. Apart from putting on much weight, his voice had shrunk away, his hand trembled, the flesh of his face sagged, and he was ashen pale. Gone the vivacious, active mountain climber; an old man, and not one for many buffetings either, stood before us, slaking a warning finger—

"I, too, have been a journalist. I have written for Milan papers. And I know what responsibility you have today. It is a great, a tremendous responsibility, yours... the Fifth Estate."

The same evening I was preparing to hurry north, having an appointment with the ex-Caliph at Territet, when a chance hotel acquaintance, an American businessman, tapped me on the shoulder in the lobby of the hotel and said: "Are you leaving? Well don't! The Pope's coming out of the Vatican in a day or two."

"E-h?"

"Just what I said. He's coming out all right. Come over here and I'll give you the dope. Only mind, don't say where you got it from!"

The "dope" being: that the Knights of Columbus, that great American Catholic organization
which contributes so freely—nearly £200,000 a year, it is said—to the upkeep of the Vatican to-day . . . Peter’s Cents, one might say . . . had presented to the Holy Father a playground for poor children living in the foetid slums around St. Peter’s; that this, while abutting on the Vatican grounds, was situated on Italian state territory; that notwithstanding its location the Pope had promised the local Knight, Mr. Hearn, that he would perform the opening ceremony in person in four days’ time.

“And,” concluded my informant, “a centimetre outside is as good as a call at the Quirinal!”

Which was literally true, since any voluntary passage of the self-constituted Prisoner of the Vatican on to former papal territory implied recognition of the loss of the temporal power and the end of the “Roman Question” as between Church and State, no more and no less.

In a trice the Caliph was put off, and I was on my way to verify the location of the playground. For which purpose it was no use just visiting it; the thing to do was to get hold of blue prints from the City Board of Health people, settling the matter conclusively, since the Rome Municipality had nothing whatever to do with what might be constructed within papal territory, i.e. if these blue prints of the playground were available at the Town Hall, then it was situated all right on Italian state territory. They were available, and, further, there was no doubt about it; the ground was outside papal territory, if only by a few yards. If Pope Pius came through a certain garden door leading out from the Vatican grounds, an historical Rubicon would be crossed.
To make doubly sure, however, I examined the playground, a long, narrow strip hemmed in by high walls and fitted out to provide exercise and amusement, both outdoor and indoor, for a thousand little ones. Yes, it was all quite as my informant had said. There, above the main gymnasium hall, stood out in relief the well-known papal crown and keys, surmounting an inscription, ill-veiled by a piece of flapping canvas, indicating that Pius the Eleventh had duly declared the place open, in person, on such and such a date.

With the story thus "vetted"—there is nothing save the argot of the trade that just conveys the same—it now behoved me to consider the equally important matter of policy, since no newspaper story can be more delicate than one dealing with religion. Three alternatives had to be envisaged:—

(i) That His Holiness did not realize the significance of what he was undertaking to do.
(ii) That he was in the habit of coming out just a little bit "on the quiet" and that his exit would be nothing startling provided no one got to know about it—just a compliment to the generous Knights of Columbus.
(iii) That His Holiness meant the exodus to become public property in course of time, thus terminating the "Roman Question" with a fait accompli.

I decided to call on Mr. Hearn, chief local Knight. "I can tell you nothing," said Mr. Hearn, and quite an accurate observation on his part it probably was, too. Still, from his demeanour, I gathered that all he wanted was the prestige of a papal
opening for his playground, and that beyond that he didn’t much care what happened. I also came to the conclusion that (ii) of the above alternatives was liable to be the most correct reading of the situation. What next to do? The temptation was strong, burning, to lie very low indeed for the next forty-eight hours, until the playground opening had become an accomplished fact, and then to ring a grandiose “scoop” upon the world:

POPE LEAVES THE VATICAN

right across the page, just like that! Yet was that quite playing the game? Especially, yes, especially, with those pontifical words anent the responsibilities of journalism still echoing in my ears? All the same... the Pope really oughtn’t to come out through a back door like this... the Vatican ought to be more wideawake... jolly rude the Vatican had been, too, upon occasion... and, always, “one owed one’s chief duty to one’s paper”...

The upshot of it was that I decided to send a preliminary cable on the eve of the ceremony, partly that the Pope might be forewarned, but also, let me confess it, because I did not think it conceivable that the story had escaped every other correspondent in Rome, both Italian and foreign; that someone was not nursing it up their sleeve, even as I; and because:

POPE TO LEAVE VATICAN

(which actually appeared) would be good enough, anyway, in the way of exclusive news.

The sequel next day was comical.
Towards noon the Rome papers appeared with the news END OF HISTORIC FEUD, etc., based on telegrams from their New York correspondents quoting my message, and there was much excitement along the Corso. As the day drew on, in fact, all Rome seemed to be debating the surprising news, in cafés and tram-cars, restaurants and in the roadway, while special editions continued to be shrilly proclaimed.

Santa Madonna!

The ceremony at the playground was set for 4 p.m., but more than an hour before that time the place was packed with prelates and functionaries, the full strength of the American College, and a corps of fifty or more native and foreign correspondents, photographers, and “movie” men. The latter had clustered round the now famous green garden door through which His Holiness was expected to come, while the excitement had even communicated itself to the adjacent slum-dwellers, many of whom had taken in their multi-coloured “washing” either the better to see, or at the behest of Vatican officials worried by the intimate nature of some of the garments flapping in the breeze. Women were barred from the playground itself, but that did not prevent giggling girls locating themselves all along its high walls, upon which they sat chattering away and kicking their legs. Meanwhile, every now and then officials would come in from the Vatican garden next door, take in the situation, and vanish through the green door again as if reporting progress.

Three-thirty. Ah! Gorgeous Vatican flunkeys appeared and set thirteen thrones in a semi-circle,
six to either side and a higher one, with the papal crown and keys carried on it, in the centre. He was coming! Also, not far away from the thrones, was ranged a well-laden buffet stocked with champagne bottles in ice-buckets—so that the Knights of Columbus didn't mean to celebrate the great occasion with iced water, either!

It amused, in waiting, to watch the hundred and one scarlet and purple prelates chatting in groups, for all the world as if nothing out of the ordinary was on hand, and then to see them stealing a glance, over their shoulders, at the serried ranks of correspondents in the background who knew otherwise.


The green garden door opens, then, on the stroke of four, a long-drawn-out O-h-h! of disappointment. Functionaries were removing the pontifical throne back through the green garden door. His Holiness wasn't coming!

It emerged later that at a last minute's council in the Vatican (presumably the blue prints were then to hand) Cardinal Gasparri had advised the Pope against coming out "in view of all the attention that had been drawn to his project."

I am still waiting, however, to be made a Count of the Holy Roman Empire for having sent that preliminary cable.

From Pope to Caliph, in a night of travel . . . and what a contrast between these spiritual chiefs of half the world as I saw them at that time—the stately panoply and immemorial grandeur surrounding the one in his Vatican fastness, the exiled plight
of the other, stranded with his wives in a noisy, fashionable caravanserai!

Flung out neck and crop after his House had filled the Caliphate uninterruptedly for hundreds of years, poor Abdul Medjid was a very light Shadow: of God upon Earth that morning I met him at Territet. Kemal, he said, had given him £1,200 and a ticket to the frontier, and it had all gone; he had not now enough to purchase a box of paints or pay for a back seat at the local cinema, much less attend to a weekly bill of circa £200 for the fifteen persons of his entourage. His own helplessness, and Kemal’s insinuations that the Moslem religion was a bar to progress, seemed mostly to pre-occupy Abdul.

"Religious faith," declared the deposed Commander of the Faithful, "develops the noblest faculties of the human soul. Those who combat its influence cannot be numbered among the servants of progress. The spirit of Islam not only doesn’t hinder real progress, but, on the contrary, demands it and stimulates it. Mahommed said ‘Seek after science, even in China.’"

But a busybody secretary would not let the ex-Caliph continue, shocked, I expect, that ‘Majesté’ should for a second seek to defend his faith before an infidel, and we fell to talking of lighter things, of Lloyd George and of Abdul’s hobbies, sketching, poetry, composition on the violin. I was shown rather an amateurish drawing of the towering, snow-capped mountains straight out across Lake Geneva, a pathetic enough library of a dozen volumes, chiefly French poetry on Turkey, and a symphony in progress of composition to the greater glory of
Allah. Everything was rather mournful and depressing—except the appearance of the Shadow himself, jaunty and white-haired, sturdy and handsome, spatted and monocled, and with a deliciously droll drooping left eyelid—the effect being one of constant winking at you.

The ex-Caliph’s four wives or “ladies-in-waiting” as they were termed in the hotel, to meet Swiss susceptibilities, had not, I learnt, left their rooms for three months, to be exact since the night of their arrival. For fresh air, the women only sat out on their balconies after nightfall, lest an infidel eye should happen upon them. They had turned their room into a dormitory and all slept together. “Round about thirty or thirty-five, typical oliveskinned, plumpish Turkish women with green slits of eyes,” they did not veil themselves and wore ordinary European clothes of sombre hue and the black charshaf round their heads.

“But what on earth do they do up there, day after day, week after week?”

“They just sit around on cushions and divans,” explained my informant, “and eat sweetmeats and sip coffee and tell stories. Sometimes you hear them playing little string instruments and wailing in their native monotone. They neither smoke nor, of course, drink. You see, they mustn’t take anything that ‘dulls the brain.’”

As for the ex-Caliph, he was there for all the world and his wife to see, tramping up and down the hotel terrace bordering the lake. The last, in fact, that I saw of him was his sturdy form in a far corner of the promenade, turned towards the sun setting in a
golder riot behind Mont Blârc . . . the last of the House of Osman offering up his evening prayer, silently and with fez inclined, while from below him on the tennis courts there rang out in joyous young English: "Play!" "Deuce!" "Fault!"
CHAPTER XXII

THE BATTLE OF PARIS

THE other day a parent met his schoolboy son in the street. The youth was wearing an Old Boy's tie.

"What in the name of thunder do you think you've got on?" said the father.

"I've left," announced the son.

Without moralizing about it, one way or the other, note is merely taken here of the general acceleration of the earthly journey, and of happenings en route, that has spread and spread, as ripples from a pebble, since the armistice and which, by every token, tends to make of the World of Aspirates one big Fast Set—to reconjure a cobwebbed coterie which shocked us so in the long, long ago.

It is as if these people realize their world is slipping from them, never to return; that, the masses on the march, each sunrise brings drabness and universalism one day nearer, and that, so being it, every waking hour shall have its complement of Living.

The pleasant old jogtrot of reposeful security erased for ever, the world I have mentioned seems to have elected to dance before Rome burns; with living-for-the-hour crowned King. Nor all its elders' exhortations have thus far steadied it, or
stemmed the flow from its philosophy; the studied mapping out of excitement and constant change; living on capital and much honour to Malthus; an angry rebuttal of authority; roars of laughter for what used to be done; a general recasting of sins with sexual ones no longer even in the first half dozen, boredom with the stable and the ordered; the pursuit of independence and the rejection of responsibility; a maddish restlessness of body and soul; the acceptance of Christ more and more as a White Man and of religion, more and more as an essentially inward and private thing... the merging, one might say, of these people, more and more into jolly first cousins to pagans, hoping to do a minimum of hurt to others on the journey, yet quite determined, and none apparently more so than those who lived through the war in early man and womanhood, to take, no more risks, but their little heavens increasingly upon earth, while yet the chance remains, and each according to his or her celestial motion.

Rank materialism? Degeneracy? Prelude to disaster? Possibly. I merely state the phenomenon; and pass on thither where it rears its maddest head...

Taking its root in the desire of Allied and Associated officers to come back to France for a "fling," and developed by the rate of exchange, by the sole survival of the French capital as a city of unrestricted night-life, by the Prohibition law in America and its ill-concealed counterpart in England, by the precocity of the rising generation, by the collarin of age-old masculine privileges by the girl of the
times, and by the general will-to-pleasure symptomatic of the day, the Battle of Paris has now been waged for six or seven years and shows few signs of slackening off in intensity.

Sustained in the main by Anglo-American shock troops, of both sexes, with a strong masculine leavening of South Americans and by divisions of vivan-dières recruited from every corner of France, the action has its crescendo periods—notably around Christmas, Easter, and from April to July, when welcome reinforcements arrive in support of the hard-pressed local garrison—but has now become more or less of an all-the-year-round affair of night raids and bombing parties in which casualties are heavy, despite heroic efforts not to "weaken." First-aid arrangements are, however, happily in good hands, with more and more nursing homes springing up outside the fortifications, while it may be confidently predicted that as incoming troops benefit increasingly from the tactical errors of their predecessors, the casualty list will shrink and shrink.

The general strategy remains unaltered, viz.—after adequate preparation, a general assault on the ‘Hill’ with forces deploying, in the main, from the fortified zone enclosed by the rues Royale and Rivoli, the Avenue de l’Opéra and Boulevard des Capucines, back into which, however, the storming troops are frequently hurled in confusion at dawn by the Regular Army of Montmartre, a well-disciplined force counting several famous generals such as Joe Zelli—only to re-form again for a fresh attack after a few hours’ rest and recuperation.

Participated in by duchesses and dagos, under-
graduates and débutantes, scented Latins and fresh-air English girls, film stars and boxers, honeymoon couples and others travelling incognito; by tired millionaires and irrepressible paupers, by Moanmas and Poppas, tough guys and "fancy" men, Quarterites and Senators, déclassées and gentlemen of the Blood, by girls in green hats and Russian outcasts, by Mayfair and Park Avenue, likewise Balham and the Bronx, by petites femmes and confidence men, dope pedlars and guides, unattached young wives and grass widows—grazing—by divorcées and business residents and French "aristos"... the last to join in... the Battle of Paris emerges first and foremost as a major test of the nervous system; and for none more than those beautiful and blasé pillars of the gay local world who, gripped in a fervour, as it were, lest a solitary light should flicker out in la Ville Lumière, keep the candle burning at both ends and in the middle from year's end to year's end.

"All society used to walk up there," one reads of the old Moulin Rouge, "after a visit to Offenbach or the Opera, to dance the valtz between the various café chantant turnc, and then saunter down again in the small hours."

Whiskers and bodices, but what unbridled behaviour!

Circulons...

And if, in circulating, we merely seem to skip from this person to the other, and from that place to this, missing out whole stretches of the battleground and phases of the struggle thereon, that is because it is out of the question to do other than dab here and there within the limits of a chapter. We
must imagine Zizi and her man, and their battle sur les fortifications, as Mistinguette once sang; likewise the private parties of young Frenchmen-about-town and their mannequin friends liable to be as frisky and risky reunions as any in Paris; even the nightly scene in many a smart restaurant and dance-place, since for one thing, these move up and down in "tone" with such disconcerting frequency as to make it perilous to write of any a month in advance. That happens through the craze for change and also because of the whims and fancies of celebrated night birds.

After careful combing, pride of place in the night brigade must be awarded jointly to Mrs. Jean Nash and to Henri Letellier. In fact there could be no more fitting addition to Paris than a monument of the pair dancing the tango. The lady, a tall, thin, American blonde of two English ex-husbands, burst upon the firmament three seasons ago and has not ceased cometing since, her tail of adorers growing ever longer. In fact it seems to be a race between the number of her admirers and the number of bracelets (dit "wound stripes") adorning both arms and mounting ever higher till now her elbows are almost submerged by the flashing jewels (at the present rate an interesting halt may have to be called around this summer.) Mrs. Nash always has her own table at Ciro's—that is one of the things one has to have—and when she arrives Julien bows low and Argentine hearts flutter and matrons lorgnette and college girls query: "Don't you think her chin is too retiring?" Well, that is the only thing that is, chers amis, about Mrs. Nash. Whether at the
baccarat tables of Cannes or on the sands of Deauville, she holds the picture, fresh and smiling, and never, so it is said, appearing in the same gown twice. Mrs. N. has an attempted suicide to her name—the young fool made a bad job of it—and she has very lovely ankles, attributes which are gaining hourly in importance in Paris at the expense of noses and eyes and things. One imagines she must go through well-graphed "physical jerks" in order to keep as she does, since the wear and tear on a Queen Diehard must be dreadful, the mental fight with monotony of milieu, the vitiated air of night-haunts, even the choicest, the repetition of jazz tunes and partners' faces... these rolled into one, and crowned by that anguish mirror scrutiny the morning after, combine in their requirement for an antidote.

On second thoughts we shouldn't have gone to Ciro’s first. I quite forgot the "Glove Department" otherwise the little mixed bar at the Ritz, rue Cambon end, and where the initial ingredients of more hectic nights must be consumed than in any other nook in Paris. In fact the noise emanating from it round about seven of an evening is like nothing so much as that of a parrot house. Here you may often see another pulchritudinous American, Muriel Miles, likewise thin and charming of silhouette and features, if of quieter ways than Mrs. N. Muriel inevitably affects green jade ear-rings, green necklaces, green brooches, and green bracelets, ("even," it was once cattishly said, "green admirers.") Anyway, Erin's is the only colour visible on her clinging black dresses and small black hats, the
effect being highly attractive and not only to Irishmen but also to French noblemen, one of whom, the tall Marquis de Sincay, is said to have once brandished a revolver with almost tragic consequences and all for the love of the lady, to turn the weapon later upon himself with fatal consequences. À propos, the French nobility, dating back to times when a nobleman's land bore his name, has latterly tended to divide itself in twain before the march of events; one section remaining old, conservative and cloistered, and the second developing more cosmopolitan ideas, bent on having a good time, rather than sticking by tradition. One does not refer here to certain notorious individuals who have long habitually sold their titles to "climbing" Americans and who pilot the latter to antique shops on a percentage basis from the house; but to the youthful scions of quite old families . . .

It has been wittily said that Henri Letellier "owns most things in Paris after midnight." Well, around 1 a.m., you are fairly sure to run across this astonishing man in one or another of the famous restaurants or clubs or dance places he is "behind."

Letellier, multi-millionaire, newspaper proprietor, industrial magnate, banker, man-about-town and inveterate all-night-bird, architect, dress designer, creator of fashionable resorts, gambling king, art connoisseur, race-horse owner, and a dozen other things besides . . . as the merest detail, he is voted the finest amateur chef in Paris and treats his friends, when ill, with all the skill of a trained physician . . . "Henri" must be quite the queerest fish Paris has produced this century. Fifty five,
slight, curved and of moderate stature, Letellier's face is the "principal"—sallow and sunken, with long, protruding nose, lit by big brown eyes and topped by sleek black hair, the general effect irresistibly suggesting a bird of prey. Very odd is Letellier, with his fleet of hearse-like Hispanos—every single inch of coach work and nickel jet black, and each car built to his very latest idea. You may say that he has everything—and astonishingly little; quite surely no novelist, taking modern Paris for his setting, could hit upon a better base for his story than the loves, laughter, and melancholy of Henri Letellier.

His father, in the eighties and nineties, was responsible for the principal engineering works of South America, after which he founded first the "Journal" and then Trouville, leaving Henri a vast fortune at his death twenty years ago. The son had meanwhile launched out as a reporter and married a girl of high family, who divorced him later but still queens it in the salons of the Faubourg Saint-Germain as Madame Marthe Letellier. Henri is reputed to have won this wife more by his genius for dress designing than by his wealth. His knowledge of the different types of gowns women ought to wear remains to this day extraordinary, and more than one fashion—such as the Empire gown and the present straight and simple frock—he was the first to inspire by thus dressing the favourite of the day. To be a "Letellier Girl" may not imply some things, but it certainly means that the lucky young lady is gowned right ahead of the day. Letellier's passion is designing things: motor-cars, theatres, casinos,
women’s clothes—but most of all the last-named, which may detain him for hours in his busy day as he tries colour schemes and selects materials. Not long ago, taking a sudden liking to an American girl of retoussé nose and Titian hair—a favourite combination—he had twenty of the costliest frocks made for her at lightning speed just to be able to see her in them during her brief stay in Paris. This young lady (the “Betty” of B deck forward in an earlier chapter,) now that one comes to think of it, really beat her admirer “to it” as they say in her native land, since she came to Paris with the avowed and sole intention of receiving the cachet of becoming a “Letellier Girl” prior to turning that to account on the stage in New York. Sometimes, during the somewhat arduous process of receiving this cachet, Betty would summon me by telephone to her apartment.

“‘Sakes! Look what’s just come from Cal-lot’s!” Betty would indicate. “Just how does he think I’m going to wear all these... why, I’d have to settle down here!”

Poor Betty! Because one of Letellier’s little insistences was that she should dine almost every night in the “Journal” restaurant, surrounded by extremely respectable managers and editors and she completely tongue-tied and, of course, the only woman present; a whim on L.’s part just to parade her beauty in an equally beautiful setting of his own, and a different one each night.

“‘Sakes! but I’ve got to dine with that durned Journal crowd again to-night,’” Betty would telephone, “Come, let’s frisk up at Harry’s or I’ll shoot the bunch across the soup!”
Whereat, did mischance have it, just then would glide in L., followed by a waiter from Ciro's bearing fried potatoes and salad, his standby nourishment in the daytime, and which the great man would eat with his fingers, reclining in an armchair and wanting to know why Betty had not got into the latest Callot affair.

Betty at least did things thoroughly. When, at last, she set sail in the "Majestic," she saw to it that long cables appeared in the New York papers, during the crossing, betrothing her to "the richest man in France;" for her to descend upon Broadway clad to kill and fairly basking in publicity.

Some time after her departure I dined up in the "Journal" with her successor, an auburn-haired slip of a French girl, Mademoiselle H., who has now retained Letellier's affections for the second longest run on record: three years. In addition to a theatre, the "Journal" is fitted up with an American bar and private salons modelled on the ones at Maxim's. But this has doubtless all ceased to be so to-day, Letellier having recently sold his share of the paper for forty million francs, as he has also divested himself of his controlling interest in Cannes, for twelve millions. He still "owns" Deauville, however, which he created fifteen years ago, and is now planning to bring back some of her erstwhile glories to Dieppe by the construction of a new casino and bathing establishment and hotel-de-luxe, at a cost of twenty million francs. Incidentally, a side-light on the extent of baccarat and kindred gambling winnings may be gleaned from the percentage a proprietor has to pay out, the proposed arrangement in
the case of Dieppe being, I believe, sixty-five per cent of net winnings to the state and twenty-five per cent to the municipality, leaving only ten per cent for the controlling director . . . and yet that seems to work out as enough!

Letellier’s home in the rue Spontini is a treasure-house of wonderful antiques, furniture, pictures, porcelains, bronzes and some of the most beautiful lacquers that exist, while he also has a magnificent collection of costumes of the most extravagant periods in French history; all collected for their superb colouring and line. To be bidden to a Letellier party in the rue Spontini is to be sure of one thing: at least, of meeting the most-spoken-of beauties of the day, the Emilienne d’Alençons and Liane de Pougy’s of the hour. One of the best dancers in Paris, Letellier seldom retires before 3 a.m. and yet, no matter how swift the party has been the night before, nine o’clock next morning will invariably see him attending to one or other of his manifold enterprises: oil fields in Mexico, mines in the Ruhr, baccarat rooms in Buenos Aires, hotels in North Africa. And yet, and yet . . .

“Henri is the saddest man in France,” you will be told. And the reason? Just a little American girl, Peggy Gillespie, of Pittsburgh.

Letellier saw Peggy driving in the Bois in the very first hours of her arrival in Paris. She was then seventeen, the date 1909, and within the twelve hours L. had made her acquaintance, to transform her, within a week into ‘he most-ravishingly-gowned and most-talked-of girl in Paris. Petite and slim, Peggy had fair curly hair, blue eyes, and retroussé
nose—the type—only, unlike others, she was to hold her admirer to the end. Peggy’s frail figure, graceful and artistic in line, lent itself to express the true value of clothes, and it was she who wore the first Directoire gown some eighteen months before the dressmakers of Paris dared to promote the innovation which provided for the slit skirt. Peggy it was, also, who wore the first short skirt because one day a long fringe on a gown annoyed her and in a little fit of temper she ripped it off; for all Paris soon to follow her lead.

Slowly but surely Letellier fell genuinely in love with Peggy, and even wanted to marry her. Then the cloud crept over them; Peggy developed consumption. Letellier’s devotion was complete. He bought villas for the sick girl in Davos and in the South of France, and arranged for doctors and nurses to be in constant attendance. But all to no purpose; at last came the day when even the most hopeful of the doctors shook his head. While she was dying—she died next morning—Peggy was married to Letellier so that she might be buried with all due honour in the family vault at Passy.

A broken man following a white coffin, covered every inch with flowers, a marble slab marked simply Madame Henri Letellier, 1892—1916, and—finis.

... Two other inveterate and picturesque night-birds are Yves Mirande, the playwright, and Sem the caricaturist. Mirande, who has had as many as seven pieces running simultaneously in Paris theatres, started by running away from his Breton home, rather than sail the seas, and spent his first three weeks in Paris on a street bench, cold and
hungry. Letellier's father then engaged him at three francs a day as reporter at the Morgue, the young man's duties also taking him to the police station adjacent to Père Lachaise cemetery, whence he used to ride down town, faute de mieux, on the backs of hearses, a factor which led to most of his early plays having to do with coffins and cemeteries. One thriller, at the Grand Guignol, told of the disinheriting of a man save for one item of property, the family vault, where he went to reside and would give wild parties to his intimates. Mirande doesn't like work, preferring to lead the night-life, entertaining royally, and but for a certain Monsieur Quinson, his collaborator, who kidnaps him periodically and whisks him off to the depths of the country or aboard a yacht, Mirande would never get on at all with the numerous plays he always has in hand. He explains his business notions as follows: "'The Marvellous Day' is written round the Deauville gambling rooms and has brought me back all the money I have lost in gambling. 'Ta Bouche' is connected with the expensive restaurant life and is repaying me all the money I have squandered in restaurants. Once, too, I hob-nobbed with society a great deal, until I found it was costing me a lot of money. So I wrote a play about these same people and got all my outlay back again."

Too indolent to look after a house or an apartment, Mirande lives in hotels, and when one asks him what he does with all his money, he will point to a heavily laden supper-table to which he has invited all, and say: "That's where my money goes!"
Sem is a funny little man who loves to caricature people as animals and does himself as a monkey. I have seen him do a prominent American hostess as a seal and the thing showed genius. Sem is ever "taking in" someone. Suddenly, at the height of a champagne supper, you will see his hand dive into his pocket and come out with a little pad of paper and a pencil. For a second the pencil promenades on the paper, then, as quickly as it came out, the whole thing goes back into his pocket. Every year Sem produces an album which is nothing but the story of Paris qui s'amuse, containing caricatures of those who are prominent in night-life. Sem drops heavily on the ridiculous and the over-done and many a Parisienne who has displayed bad taste shudders at finding some dress or stupid hat of her's caricatured in the album, there to stay engraved in the memory of the French capital.

In the "Kicking-off Place," alias the New York Bar, one is always certain to come across a lively contingent of assault troops, preparing, down below in the cabaret, for the attack on the 'Hill.' A curious contradiction "Harry's" which despite its frankly bar-room atmosphere, manages to attract some of the best known people on either side of the Atlantic, including an ever-changing panorama of American beauty. Accustomed to utter safety and subservience in her own land, the American girl is always getting into scrapes and awkward predicaments when she transfers her restlessness temporarily to Paris. Usually travelling in twos and threes, and either unchaperoned or tolerating the attendance of "Mommas," duly "parked" in social centres
and bridge clubs directly Paris is attained, these young moderns think nothing of an afternoon with Kraft Ebbing in their hotel rooms but flare up should some poor Latin or Argentine, who may have been invited to such a reading, chance to "get fresh"... these lovely creatures of uneasy virtue desire to see Paris absolutely as men, and her Petite Chaumière and Chabannais no less than her Louvre and Carnavalet. They know all about everything, thank you, and if you're such a poor specimen as to have scruples about taking them to this, that or the other "joint," why, nothing simpler for them than to get a guide!

I recall once refusing to take a party of three college girls to the Chabannais, hazarding the remark that they probably hadn't an inkling of what they might see there.

"Two college friends told us all about it before we sailed, so don't worry!" came the riposte.

"Well, what do you want to see those kind of things for?"

"We came here to see Paris, bonehead! Have us gaze up at the Eiffel Tower all day long, would you?"

I advised them, at any rate, to have the edge removed from their perception before getting their guide, to which came the answer: "Thanks, but we don't drink. We want to see what they've got to sell in this joint. Not just sit there fuddled!"

... Well, sometimes, as I have hinted, Paris wins, even with these capable ones, so well able to take care of themselves. Aside from the perpetual peril that exists of these girls being blackmailed by those pestiferous people known as guides, there
exists in Paris an international organization of confidence men who make it a point to appear respectable and to get acquainted with unwary visitors, usually American women. Vanity bags containing travellers’ cheques or bank notes, jewellery and other valuables are for ever being signalled as lost by Miss America during her assault on the City of Light, even if she usually manages to escape heart-whole from her adorers, Italians, French or South Americans for the most part. Furthermore, these are apt to misunderstand her, every minute. If she asks, say, an Italian to ring her up on the telephone, the gentleman immediately thinks she is in love with him, while an invitation up to her hotel room to tea, quite in the American style, sends the Southerner’s temples fairly throbbing... since, in Europe, yes, no respectable girl receives in her bedroom, therefore Sadie can’t be quite——

Whereas, as likely as not, Sadie simply asks her visitor to sit down and be good. I remember hearing once of an amusing case in which a Frenchman, thus invited up and asked to read passages from a novel, his astonishment subsided, sought to kiss his fair hostess, only promptly to be ordered out of the room.

“Ah no, mademoiselle! it is not good to fool with Frenchmen like this. A novel? But what you think I am? I stay. I kiss.”

Whereupon Miss America summoned the hall porter only to be told that she was entirely in the wrong receiving visitors up in her room, and that she’d have to get out of it as best she could.

Yet on occasion, in the current American rush
of sex to the head, the scales come to be rather heavily weighed down in the opposite direction—

Desirous of introducing her college girl daughter to European culture, a grande dame from the Southern States transplanted her old Kentucky home, even to its negro staff, to a mansion in Passy, whence, in due course, and in the manner of American flapperhood, the heroine of this episode was daily issuing forth "on her own" to prosecute her studies and attend such lectures, art classes, etc., as took her fancy. Unrestricted freedom being permitted the student, with no questions asked as to her irregular hours and habits—even if she remained, as it were, off the map from day's end to day's end.

Besides being blissfully sure of her attractive young offspring . . . Cornelia had such a "head" . . . Momma thoroughly appreciated that her daughter's quest for culture necessitated her meeting, and mixing with, people of temperament and unconventional mode of life. So that as long as an adoring parent received her good-night kiss, token that her cherished one was immune from the pitfalls of Paris-by-night, all would be well.

As it happened, though, Cornelia's good night was not only to mother but to the house . . .

Nor would the sweet young thing's midnight decampings from Passy, and subsequent all-night sessions elsewhere, ever have come to light—Cornelia having "bought" her maid to say she had gone out, lecture-bound, early in the morning, thus accounting for her absence at breakfast-time—but
for one of those stupid financial shortages one night in a low "div.3" up in Montmartre.

Usually Cornelia footed the bill at these crazy parties, out of her pin-money (which also went towards keeping her cavalier), only, as luck would have it on this occasion, the revellers inadvertently outdrank their exchequer to the tune of several hundred francs—though this in itself would not have been so serious had not the defaulters at first sought to brazen things out, and then, indignantly and hiccoughingly to emphasize the fact that they possessed copious funds elsewhere, by smashing everything within reach. Which, naturally, led to the entry of the police and to the locking-up of the party—a process which, unfortunately, involves the giving of one’s name and address for verification purposes.

In this manner it was that Momma, at Passy, learnt next morning from the lips of a gendarme that her daughter was in the "violon," where she was liable to remain, moreover, until the joint supper-cum-damage bill of the night before had been met.

Post-haste the distraught mother dispatched her negro butler to the police station with the necessary funds; only, in the interval pending her daughter’s arrival home, to learn much worse tidings from the absentee’s darkie maid, now thoroughly perturbed.

It had been quite a common occurrence, for some time past, for Cornelia to go out all night after having simulated going to bed!

"Is this true, Cornelia darling?" quivered a
voice in anguish, on the prodigal’s eventual reappearance, looking decidedly morningish.

"Why, yes, Momma!" confessed Cornelia, attempting the same airy nonchalance with which she had just succeeded in carrying off the affair of the previous night ("a student’s lark!"). " Didn’t I tell you I’d rented a studio way up in Montparnasse? Why, sure! To pursue my serious studies! That’s where I’ve been, nights."

And our ewe lamb would have "got away" with that, too, had not Momma innocently insisted on her faithful old negro butler at once proceeding to the address indicated, to pay off some rent which Cornelia had mentioned was still owing there. For the report of the old retainer, when he returned to Passy, was somewhat shocking: two young American girls and a young man of doubtful nationality had been occupying a cheap and nasty back room in a certain maison de passe almost every night for some weeks past. The room, strewn with empty champagne bottles, was in the utmost disorder, and its tenants were on the point of being cast forth on account of their noisy orgies, and inability to pay for same.

"Cornelia!" gasped a horrified and transfixed Southern lady.

"Why, Momma, you’re so old-fashioned! You just can’t understand!" condescended a very superior daughter. "We just sat up there night after night reading Shakespeare and Wordsworth and Shelley!"

English girls may not be quite so advanced as their American sisters in regard to "seeing the
sights,” yet they also are freely to be seen nowadays
dancing at night haur ʻs side by side with cocottes—
if not sometimes with them—while the stalls of the
“Casino” and the “Folies” contain a solid nightly
contingent of Anglo-America jeunes filles, listeniung
to the extremely offensive book and libretto of the
French révue . . . though one hopes that much of
what is said passes over their fair young heads.
Some make a point of keeping a straight face when
their French neighbours laugh, thereby preserving
a certain dignity. An important section of the
battlefield which has to be “done” by these
young explorers-in-thrills is Montparnasse, hub of
the Anglo-American-Scandinavian Quarter, late
Latin.

Clustered round the bisection of the Boulevards
Montparnasse and Raspail is a whole collection of
“arty” cafés and bars and dance-places, notably the
Dôme and Rotonde, the Jockey, the Suèdois, the
Cochers (sometimes mistaken by visiting American
Jews for a kosher restaurant), and the Dingo. To
go on a party in this neighbourhood is now quite in
order among the best people, ravishing creations
from the Place Vendôme being found beside the
stained and torn velvets or corduroys of painting
people, while millionaire film stars and duchesses
and Green Hat ladies—all three of the young ladies
Arlen is reputed to have rolled into one—may be
seen beside penniless residents of the ‘Quarter,’ in
pavn at their favourite bar or restaurant. Once, at
the Dingo (which means cracked) might have been
seen, hugging the bar all day long and far into the
next morning, an English quintette who, having run
up some thousand odd francs in bills, were now in pawn—having nowhere else to go to sustain themselves until funds were forthcoming from home.

"May we leave for a few minutes?" they would mournfully beg the patron; "we will be back again shortly."

Whereupon Old Man Dingo would look up from his figures and smile... he was always smiling and totalling up figures, was Old Man Dingo. Two years ago he went to a medical home for it, and now, I fear, he has returned there. The jotting down of thousands of figures all day long, referring to bills paid and unpaid, their subtraction and multiplication and square-rooting, such was how it took Old Man Dingo. Some of the swiftest living in creation must develop around the Dingo when boatfuls of U.S. undergraduates and college girls unload at Cherbourg and Havre and when it requires all the well-known stamina of hostesses of the rue Delambre such as Nina Hamnett and Florence Martin and "Willy" to stem the onrush and keep up with events. Nina, of the admirable soda-water colours, has since 1914 been in the forefront of the battle, yet survives completely as the live wire of any party she may be on; no less so, though a post-war recruit, fat Flossie, formerly of the Ziegfeld Follies and possessor of one of the sweetest voices in Paris, also of its choicest recorded vocabulary. "Free as the air is Flossie," and only by myriad asterisks and stars could anyone faithfully set down her table-talk, up at the Dingo, when she is really en train; and the more people may wince or show signs of being "put out" at the next table, the more inti-
mate in her dissertations, accordingly, and revelations grows Florence, until in the end she manages to make the Confessions of John Jack Rousseau resemble a bedside tale for peevish children.

Sometimes "rough houses" develop in this part of the world, as when a young American, a brilliant lawyer given a month to live, decided to die in a crescendo of inebriation, halting neither night nor day, and compelling all, friend or stranger, to imbibe with him. Gradually going mad, he died from an overdose of veronal some days before his scheduled exit. The last I saw of him, he was running up and down the rue Delambre, semi-naked, and raving, and offering persons sips from a bottle containing the drug which, presumably, later killed him.

"Regulars" of these parts, and of the wild living there, only manage to keep going by periodically withdrawing from the 'Quarter' (feeling distinctly drawn and quartered) and vanishing round France, in the quietest, loveliest and cheapest retreats of which fair land you will come across them, leading lives reminiscent of Marie Antoinette on her milk farm. Upon the return of which defaulters to their former haunts, the action takes on crescendo proportions again. American visitors have latterly sought to imitate, and profit by, similar rustic nerve cures but the thing can't be done so easily as that. I remember once disappearing into Touraine with a swift New York group, the principal members of which had begun falling asleep at lunch and at the races, for the whole Château country to have been torn through by sundown of the day following our arrival at dreamy old Chinon.
Quieter joys, such as smoking a "pipe," also attract devotees to Montparnasse. Opiate-smoking, due to the ease with which the drug can be smuggled through via Marseilles, is rise in Paris, especially among women, and the possessor of a nimble wrist at cooking a pill can rest assured of a steady income, provided he, or she, is known for discretion. Sometimes smokers visit real dens with bunks, but indulgence of the poppy also goes on in ordinary hotels and meublés. One young lady, who shook things up considerably in Paris in early 1924, would disappear periodically with two companions on such a private smoking party, to return at the end of thirty-six hours or so, very subdued and in the grip of a great lassitude. Their method of avoiding detection was just to stuff cottonwool in all the slits and apertures of the room they had taken, and then to lie down in a row on mattresses on the floor and—smoke; an acrid odour still disengaging itself freely from their hair and clothes when later the trio returned to western civilization.

Around 2 am, there is a general move by Montparnasse roysterers across the river and up to Montmartre, upon which others have been steadily converging from various preliminary "ports of call." Such a "twelve to two" establishment is the evergreen Harry Pilcer's Acacias which has the advantage of being convertible at short notice into a semi-open affair. Opened by Elsa Maxwell, a stout San Franciscan with a walking stick, the Acacias is mainly noted for its entertainer, Raquel Meller, the idol of Paris and who started life singing to sailors in Spanish coastal taverns. Raquel is small, dark, has
bobbed hair and wonderful facial expressions. She will never sing in any language save her own and is as temperament as a Duse, as many famous hostesses have learnt to their cost. The Acacias being ultra-chic, you may also see there Clement Hobson, who owns the Ciro’s chain, a strange figure styled the best-dressed man in Europe. His monocle seems to have taken a permanent hold in his eye, like a porthole in a ship. He is tall, thin, has smooth hair and a permanent smile. Maybe if the smile faded the monocle might slip. Or maybe it would require more than that to do away with that piece of glass.

. . . A famous casualty of the Battle was George Burton, who descended upon Paris after having been left at the altar in New York by a younger lady who preferred to marry a dancing Count. Huge, handsome and well-to-do, Burton was an “every-night-in-the-week” man, except Saturdays, when, his favourite haunts crowded out, he used to stay in his oriental apartment. Burton had his nights all planned out. Thus, Tuesdays would see him dining at the Ritz, then on to the “Jardin” and then to Zelli’s—so, let us say, it would always be on Tuesdays. And the same set programme, if he had any say in the matter, for every other night in the week. Another curious habit of his was that of visiting places on their known slack nights. But, in the end, the going proved too much even for this giant and he was found dead in bed one morning after a typical last night up the ‘Hill.’ Which went to stress the infinite resistance to excess and fatigue a Paris “all-the-year-rounder” must
develop, since Burton, with nothing else to do in the world save keep himself primed for pleasure and self-indulgence, had had recourse to half a dozen different vigour-perpetuating expedients, including sitting in Swedish mud-baths at Passy to keep his waist line in order.

Perhaps the women, as usual, take more care of themselves in the long run. Jacqueline Campbell, for example, blonde little French beauty ever followed by a train of anxious wooers and wearing her famous three rows of pearls that were once ripped from her neck by Jeanne Renouardt, the actress, in a restaurant in the Champs Elysées. Or the Baroness d’Erlanger, fair, tall, blue-eyed, and ever in the limelight with her new young husband. The Baroness always dresses in the 1830 style, with crinoline complete. Or the Princess Vlora, once a Gould, and now divorced from her Albanian spouse. The Princess affects an eastern style and once appeared in a crêpe-de-Chine affair which looked like an endless veil winding finally up over her head into a turban. This lady is noted for her mysterious light grey eyes, the colour of which changes according to the shades of her head-dress. These are really of the Ritz dinner dance “crowd” which has “come on” for further revelry; mention of which hostelry recalls a laughable enough little comedy——

At the Ritz there is, or was, an understanding whereby men may not dine alone on Sunday evening in the restaurant—not the same kind of ban as obtains in New York where, according to the rules, men may not take tea in the chief hotels unless
accompanied by a lady, the notion being the admirable one of protecting the fair sex from the horrors of admiration. It isn’t as strict as that in Paris, at the Ritz; still, when one Sunday night an American presented himself, alone, to the head waiter, the latter was sorry but there were simply no tables free.

“But there are several of them,” said the American, gazing round. “I’ll come back presently, and if one is still free I’d like to dine.” Whereat the head waiter bowed but was quite certain that it would be useless.

In due course the American renewed his application, only to meet with further regrets, whereupon he became annoyed.

“Gentlemen are not expected to dine alone,” apologized the maître d’hôtel at last.

“Oh, aren’t they! Have to have womenfolk along, eh? All right! I’ll remember that.” And out stumped the hungry one.

. . . Towards the end of the following week the restaurant people were already busy on a particularly sumptuous repast of twelve covers which had been ordered for the next Sunday dinner-dance. A veritable banquet, and the host . . . a Mr. . . . how was it pronounced . . . well, anyway, an unknown American gentleman. Great, in fact, were the preparations for the meal, since had not Monsieur sent a fat pourboire along in advance and left everything to the discretion of the head waiter?

Sunday night arrived, and with it the customary ultra-chic cosmopolitan throng, royalty and million-
aires, international celebrities and famous beauties. Some may even have asked who was giving that big party out there in the centre of the room, with all the empty chairs in position.

Presently they were to know . . .

For when the evening was at its brilliant height in walked the American who had been refused a table the week before for not having women with him. This time, moreover, he was in order. He had brought eleven women with him and frequenters of Montmartre night establishments who may have been present can have had practically no difficulty in recognizing Dédé and Suzy and Lili and Zizi as they entered the stately hall and took their seats around that noble board, to the horror of nearly all of those present, and not least, of the head waiter.

But to pick up our nocturnal round again—

One of the most curious descents that ever happened upon the night life of Paris was that of Jack Dempsey, in his prenuptial period. For several days and nights it fell to me to participate in chaperoning the champion, and no light task it was. Wherever he went, to the Claridge for tea, to the Hermitage for dinner, to the Perroquet for dancing, the champion would cling to the arm nearest him, as if in holy terror of all the females crowding round, while he resolutely refused to take a drop of liquor of any kind, or even to smoke a solitary cigarette . . . preferring, this colosarus, to sit there munching away at chocolate creams, even at three in the morning, and some very hectic mornings.
Yes, Jack was very much as he should be, almost a wet blanket on occasion.

Early one morning his party had migrated to a resort not far from the Opera notorious for the intimate nature of the "shows" which are staged in return for two or three thousand francs. Further, as became such an occasion, the party was reclining in Roman ease around the performance, with champagne glasses brimming over. All except Dempsey. For some minutes, there he sat moody and dejected and munching away. Then he reared himself on to his feet of a sudden and made for the exit.

"This may be Paris all right," he vouchedsafed from the threshold, and jerking a disdainful finger at the entertainment, "but what I want to see is Napoleon's tomb!"

One effect of all this kind of "bombing" is that engagements next day are freely apt to go awry.

In a dark period, C. B. Cochran once asked me to assemble for an informal little lunch over at Laperouse a dozen or so of Anglo-American correspondents who might be interested in a rather important hope he had of getting Racquel Meller to go to America. A list of names was duly made out, and everything had been arranged, when, on the eve of the affair, "C. B." rang up.

"Do send each of your friends a petit bleu first thing to-morrow morning as a reminder to ensure their turning up!" he enjoined.

Which was duly done, eleven little blues being sent out next morning by the concierge of my hotel... only, he should have sent twelve. I
forgot to send one to myself, overslept, disgracefully, and with the result that it was long past the noon-day hour when I arrived over at Laperouse, "C. B." having had, in the meantime, for once in a way, to present himself!

Towards 3 a.m. one or another of a quartette of establishments is on every lip: the Abbaye, the Perroquet, El Garron's and Zelli's. The first-named is noted for its French theatrical clientele, prominent among whom is Spinelly, her hair pulled straight back and her face startlingly free from make-up or powder. Spinelly is now a mother and has become a little severe, judged by the standard of those astonishing parties she used to give in her Roman mansion, the principal effect in which used to be a great Roman bath. But the person who attracts most attention at the Abbaye is Maurice Rostand, son of the immortal creator of Cyrano. Rostand, 2nd, has been described as the type of man who is always picking invisible fluff off imaginary people. His hair is long and fair; his mouth weak and ever arched in a disdainful smile. He wears bell-bottom trousers like a sailor boy, and goes in for high heels and a tight waist. Rostand moves about a great deal, and when he talks brings immense stress to bear on his words. He is, in fact, a sight for the gods, yet a very remarkable young man withal, not without genius, and he was to the end a pet of the Divine Sarah. So that there must be something in him besides those bell-bottom trousers.

Lower down, at the Perroquet, the eternally fair young Fanny Ward is invariably in her corner.
Fanny is a grandmother, but seen in the dazzling sunlight doesn't see a day over thirty. Her special mark is her coiffure; hair drawn back into curls that mount high above the top of her head.

El Garron, which only opens at 2 a.m. and is named after a low "dive" in Buenos Aires frequented by the basest class of Gauchos, is the joy centre of the young Argentine millionaire, than whom none spends money more recklessly. Because of her fondness for the tango, the ex-Maharanee of Kaputhala is here, dark-skinned, and more matronly since her divorce from the reigning Prince—who may be sitting hard by, with an escort. The lady must still dance, however, she who once danced her way to fame and fortune from the wings of a Spanish stage. The ex-Maharanee has never ceased wearing the shawls of her country and usually has an exact reproduction of her own features dyed on the top of the shawl reposing on her head. Many people may therefore be forgiven for seeing the ex-Maharanee twice, and it is even on record that one man saw her four times.

... A gay chatter comes from one end of the salle. The Dolly Sisters, both talking (chiefly about themselves and their doings which is good publicity) at a hundred words a minute, in somewhat raucous voices still very Hungarian. The utterly inexhaustible Dollies are ever a source of worry to their French suitors who start pouring in honcyed phrases into the ear of one twin one week and continue their suit unknowingly into the ear of the other the next. Even His Majesty of Spain is popularly reputed to have fallen into this error at
Deauville, but that, too, may be good publicity work.

But of all the Montmartre night-haunts that have sprouted up since the war none is perhaps more typical of the whole Battle than "Zelli's," packed from year's end to year's end and principally, one suspects, owing to the personality of its presiding genius, a young Italian who has the sense to drive off at 5 a.m. each morning and spend the next twelve hours in a château on the Marne, prior to returning to take over again the following night. Otherwise stark, staring lunacy would stalk any human being attempting to take on "Zelli's" every night in the year. Everyone looks in here—even prominent Clydeside "Reds." There sat Mr. Blank, one night, swilling down champagne with little ladies to the left and right of him and—holding forth, the while, on the horrors of tenement life in his native Glasgow!

Another abiding memory of "Zelli's" concerns the prominent lady who invariably confesses to a famous murder when in her cups. The crime in question, in connection with which her name was mentioned, was one of those affairs mysterious only to those investigating it close up. To Milady it offers no mystery at all. She did it, and tells you about it in full detail—what led up to it, how she got out of the mess, etc. But should you happen, next day, to mention the matter casually, suggesting that she really had better be more careful about what she owned up to in public . . . the dear, sweet thing just looks at you in open-eyed amaze.
One elderly citizen of the U.S.A., fell so much in love with the ‘Hill, and more especially with “Zelli’s,” that he went solemnly about making arrangements, in the event of his death in Paris, for a midnight funeral full of poetry. According to his instructions, given to a well-known legal firm, his body was to be cremated and the ashes taken up in an aeroplane for sprinkling, in the small hours, over the places and people with whom he had loved to commingle so joyously upon earth, while simultaneously, gallons of champagne were to be opened in his favourite haunts for a final toast to his memory.

"'Pristi!" as a little lady one night observed on hearing of the project from its inceptor, "but I will stay at home that night rather than risk getting a piece of you in the eye!"

A second citizen, likewise of the U.S.A., hit upon a no less picturesque idea. Of an irascible character, when imbibing, this personage had grown weary of receiving black eyes as the result of his misdeeds, so devised what he termed "the anticipatory apology." This took the form of a printed card bearing the following notification:

_I wish hereby to apologize in advance for any trouble or unpleasantness I may cause you while enjoying myself to-night_

which he would distribute to all around him on entering a bar or night place.

Fights, usually for no valid reason, are frequent in the Battle of Paris, where more than one enterprising chemist makes a goodly revenue by doctor-
ing up damaged eyes. Thus, with carefu’ applying of flesh-coloured paint, and kohl, it is possible to “tinker up” even the worst eye so that it looks merely... odd. The usual causes of trouble are drunken arguments, jealousy, imagined or real, ladies of the evening taking a dislike to each other, shortage of cocaine, or the arrival of somebody, usually a Frenchman, in irate search of his amie. The Beautiful and Kept are for ever running away from the meticulousness and perpetual sobriety of their native protectors for a fling among the less comme il faut but possibly more amusing Anglo-American brigade... in fact, if French girls had a say in the relations of their country with England and America; such relations might easily be more cordial than they are. Which may, or may not, be an additional reason why Frenchmen look askance at said peoples and countries.

And so farewell to our scene of operations.

If any should care to join in the Battle, here are hints, for both sexes, forwarded me by a young gentleman who should know:

**Feminine**

When the gentleman you are with kicks about the bill, side with the waiter.

When he adds that he will never come back into the establishment, wink amorously at the head waiter and confide loudly that you will be back the next night.

Make eyes at the men at the tables around, were it only to entertain the one you are with.

Don’t dance with professional dancers. They are... (censored).
Go "o the New York Bar, but say that the Abbaye de Théleme is bourgeoise.

Never smoke a cigarette more than a third of the way. This rule doesn’t apply to cigars which are too expensive. Use pipes only in taxis; in private cars they create a disagreeable odour.

When coming into an establishment always spend fifteen to twenty minutes on the left as you go in. This is very feminine.

When you are having a cocktail exclaim “Mon Dieu! my coiffeur is waiting for me!” This shows that you are going to a smart place that evening, where women don’t wear hats.

Always buy dolls, etc., in night places. The men with you like to buy trash and then have to carry it.

**Masculine**

Part of the game is always to be in evening dress. This helps when in difficulties with gendarmes and other public nuisances. A flower in the buttonhole is not at all necessary.

Never give a large tip or they’ll think you are small, but trying to make an impression.

Waiters should know you by your front name, and vice versa. Hire them to bow low and ask in a loud tone: “the same table to-morrow evening?” as you come out of a joint.

Always say ‘tu’ to a chasseur.

Always come away from the races with a disgusted look. Not only is it more chic to lose, but you may meet your tailor or Boyd Neel or Zelli. and it might help you to look sad.

Always sign your “additioae” everywhere you go, or people will think that you have no credit.
CHAPTER XXIX
FROM A BRETON ISLE

PICTURE, I beg you, the idyllic composition of this island as a haven in which to refit mentally prior to setting sail on the homeward journey. For journalism is apt to be like that nowadays, for some—out and home again. It isn’t a bit like any other business or profession I can think of. Yours to be, and to remain, in the cockpit of the maddest world since time began, to lunch with Experts and dine with murderesses and see heads fall for breakfast, to sort out your welter of collected notions, feelings, convictions, doubts, fears, disgust as best you may, but to emerge daily the chronicling machine you are paid to be, even if the events you live and portray sear themselves into any soul you may have.

Two years before coming here, I was increasingly unable, as a European, to share the American mind on Europe, the heavy labour of which continent I was paid in dollars to interpret. I was unable to behold Europe as my superiors seemed to behold her: as a colourful news-ground in which every new trouble, every fresh tragedy or ill-turn of fortune’s wheel was to be written-up to the skies, and turned, where possible, as the coldest steel against Europe’s heart. Certain set themes and principles, against everything I believed, I had to
follow, such as: that France was militarist, that Germany had been shockingly ill-treated and now meant no harm to any man, that the Allies were miserable debt-dodgers, that the bearing of the American nation vis-à-vis Europe was both noble and just. I used to put myself in Denver or Duluth and try to reason like a Bryan, and yet be unable to bring myself into line on this last head. Worse, it slowly dawned upon me that even as the American Expeditionary Force most assuredly won the war, by permitting Foch, with its ever-teeming presence, to make the dispositions and prosecute the strategy he did, just as certainly the American nation, by deserting ship after the relaunch of a Europe it had mainly remodelled, and, later and more grave, by insisting on the over-payment of a debt the nature of which, in its essence, must ever be closely akin to that of a joint, uncontrolled and uncontrollable bill run up by friends on a night up at Montmartre, to be treated accordingly... by such dual defaulting from elementals the American nation had hit a racial trail along which there was no following by any self-respecting European so placed as to have to sustain, even to glorify, such defaulting in return for a weekly salary cheque,—a fine Wilsonian heritage, in the case of my paper, becoming debased by a blind German-Jewish antagonism towards France,

Millions of Americans think, thank goodness, as I do, yet there comes a day when a foreigner thinking in print as they, is permitted to think no more that way... so behold the caravan, and now what do you think has happened?
Well, first of all—to revert to where we were before we became all serious and soulful—a little imagination forward, please, in re the idyllic composition of this island for trying to think out what it is all about on the mainland and taking fresh bearings, for "running to seed after running to speed," as one charming correspondent puts it (any drawing-out from the big cities nowadays being, of course, a sure sign of weakening). Picture us red-rocked, fertile, in the Gulf Stream, exporting fish, potatoes, seaweed, gushing with cider and living like belligerent roosters for, per diem, what it costs to take a taxi from Harrods' to Piccadilly Circus; a tiny H-shaped isle eighty miles from Plymouth and yielding everything to its few hundred hardy Breton sons and daughters, soothingly cut off for days on end, and great sea sport with tacos and lieus and congres; and not a tourist—nothing to attract them, no dancing, no tennis, no hot and cold running chambermaids, and great and refreshing variety of weather, everything, in fact, that the Atlantic gets tired of; a delicious numbness, too, towards happenings on the mainland...

Coolidge might insist on debt cancellation, the Prince of Wales win a steeplechase, Foch send Ludendorff the Legion of Honour, the French name a street after Lloyd George, Lady Cunard enter a nunnery or Lengien take to ludo... it would all be one to us. Or rather, "have been" one to us.

... Things came to a head with the arrival of the Bishop this morning.

Monsieur has only come for the actual purpose of slapping a lot of little girls on the cheek and
calling them "Anne" and of similarly assaulting a collection of small boys, and calling them "Yves"—after which ceremony Anne and Yves, in their new-found strength, are allowed a solid day's patisserie gorging—but apparently not since Bora-parti fortified the island against the English in 1802 (infernal French interference with Breton sovereignty!) have the inhabitants been so worked-up over any event. You see, only a few weeks ago, and following upon the creation of a cell over at Brest, a Communist municipality was returned of neutrousered and red-bloused believers of the deep, awfully fatalistic fellows who seem to look out on, and talk of, the sea as the only supreme or mysterious anything with which they are ever likely to have truck; and so the Bishop's projected coming propelled a fever-pitch affair, the Reds wanting to keep the Church off the island and the Blues, chiefly women decorated with the light blue of the Maid, working night and day to welcome Monseigneur. Because one of the staples of such a Breton welcome is the preparation of evergreen archways along the processional path, hung with the Tricolor and the Blue and White of Joan, and of a carpet of flowers set in vividly dyed sand for the Bishop to walk upon, a fragrant mosaic of wild roses and heather and lilies, often beautifully done, and depicting en route well-known religious episodes.

Well, it was late last evening before dozens of women and children on hands and knees had completed this sacred way with an infinity of tenderness and care; had returned to their suppers and beds in the wall.
For what fell purpose to be realized as they slumbered on in grace! Madam! Madam!

At the landing-stage, where Monseigneur had to don his robes and mitre, had been erected in the right a triumphal archway consisting of crabs, lobsters and sea-spiders entwined round a couple of oars and with an anchor suspended topside.

Old Gendrot says the Bishop was obviously afraid someone was going to let the anchor down on his head, but probably the fact of the shell-fish having long departed this world had a deal to do with Monseigneur's brisk passage through the archway . . . that, acting on a bad crossing from the mainland . . . only for worse Red sacrilege to reveal itself, on the way up to the church, in the imprint of dozens of heavy fishermen's boots on the sacred way, crunching, squeezing all symmetry and design from that fragrant work of love.

And as for things as they are, in consequence, in our only estaminet this morning, one might be back at the Genoa Conference.

"Name of a dog, but I never saw the thing! I was coming home in the dark!" protests a young Red over his bowl of cider.

"That you did, liar!" pipes old Mother Le Huy from the doorway, "for it was all lit by hurricane lanterns!"

"Your jaw, old trout! And if I did tread on your carpet? Aren't my boots as good as the Bishop's?"

"Flowers weren't made to tread on either by you or by bishops!" throws in Hélène, drying
glasses behind the zinc, pretty, blue-eyed, sensible Hélène.

"You're all daft!" says old Gendrot, "I thank God, ou son secrétaire, that I lived when I did. It was a passable world in my day."

"Wait till Sunday, old idiot! Hear what Lucas and Kerzedec have got to say! They're coming from Brest!"

"Wait for whom? Wait for what?" (old Gendrot always shakes a gnarled and ancient stick when excited) "I've done my Iceland! I was Loti's first mate! I know what they'll tell you! Only to catch red mullets!"

Lordy, lordy!