Gay Life in Paris

Points About the French Capital That Are Absolutely Unique—Fine Monuments in Every Street.

(Special Correspondence.)

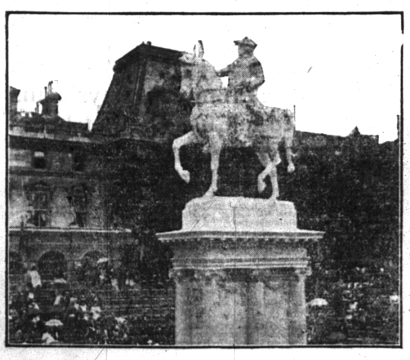
I thought I knew something of city life. San Francisco, Minneapolis, St. Louis in the Fair year, Chicago as the city stands sprung from the ashes of thirty years ago, a wonder of the nineteenth century, and New York city, with its dense population surging through the streets of the big flatiron between the two rivers, and with its thirty-two story buildings cutting the sky line, were all familiar to me. There are none of them like Paris. Rather, Paris has features not found in any other city. The word "unique" is made to do much work that belongs to other words. There are few unique things on the earth. Among cities, Paris comes as near being unique as one will ever find. Chicago and New York city present to the eye features grander than anything in Paris. So far as I see there are no mansions here like those of the New York millionaires. The rich Parisian seems to prefer some other manner of life. He has beautiful seats where he spends the summer. When he comes to Paris for the winter, if a bachelor, he probably goes to a hotel. Those who are men of family have residences in almost every part of Paris, but none of them are anything like the best things in New York and other large American cities.

City Full of Monuments.

The French love glory, the glory of war particularly. They have a warm place in their hearts for the heroes of their race. They deify them in all possible ways. They have filled Paris with monuments to the men who have achieved great things for France. Joan of Arc, in bright brass, stands like a living presence here in the midst of the city. At the head of la cite, where the Seine parts in two to surround Lutetia, stands a noble bronze statue of Henry IV of Navarra, whose exploits at Ivry, Macaulay has immortalized in verse. Down in the Latin quarter very properly figures Danton, the rough butcher of the Reign of Terror. At the very end of the gardens of the Louvre, one of France's most recent ones, Gambetta, stands like life as if addressing the people. Turn where you will, there is a monument to someone or other of these whose names glorify France. Not only soldiers and statesmen are held in everlasting remembrance; so, too, are poets and artists. Balsac's name is borne by one street, Victor Hugo's by a grand avenue leading to the Bois, and Hugo's statue in bronze adorns a pretty square along this same avenue.

What Makes Paris Unique.

Other cities have these things in greater or less degree and number, but Paris has other streets and squares which come very near presenting unique features. This Place de la Concorde stands in the center of the rushing stream of life in Paris. It is but a few steps from the old church of the Madeleine, and not far from the Opera. But it stretches seemingly an immeasurable distance off the banks of the Seine. The Egyptian obelisk is in the center, and all around are gates dedicated to the great cities of France. Nearest the gardens of the Tuileries stand one of these monuments bearing the name of Strasbourg. This is a pathetic sight. It is crowned with mourning leaves like a tomb. New ones are placed there every year on the anniversary of the capture of that city by the Germans. On one facing, in large black letters, is the legend: "Qui vive? La France! quand meme!" ("France lives for always."). South stretches the Champs Elysees, and a long way down this widens into a circle, reaching to the new Bridge Alexandre III, which spans the Seine. At the end of the avenue rises the Triumphant Arch of the Star, built after the war with Prussia, and, like the wreaths and the legend on the Strasbourg monument, breathes the undying aspiration of every Frenchman that Alsace-Loraine will once again be French. From this arch the great avenue runs on a mile or more to the Bois de Bologne.



Statue of Lafayette.

Sights and Scenes of Paris.

You see queer things here in Paris. At a little restaurant where I got my breakfast many mornings, were to be seen young clerks rushing in and getting a cup of coffee or hot milk, breaking into this a little loaf costing one cent American, eat it with a soup spoon and rush off to business. Another bought two crescents of bread at 2 cents, American, and rushed out to eat breakfast on the way to business. Another, a rough-looking chap from an automobile garage close by comes in and orders four raw eggs, which are laid before him with a little awl, such as a shoemaker may use. He pierces both ends of each egg and actually sucks them. No bread, nothing to drink. That was his breakfast.

On the same block where my lodgings were stood a handsome hotel. It was crowded with guests. The dining-room was on the ground floor, and in passing, one saw without spying, what went on inside, men all sat, or nearly all, at the tables, dozens of them with ladies by their sides, the men wearing their high silk hats while they eat their dinner. In Paris it seems to be comme il faut to eat with your hat on and to break your bread in a cup of coffee and eat it with a soup spoon, also to suck raw eggs at the breakfast table.

Around the corner from the hotel just mentioned, with all its luxury, I met, one evening, one of the most wretched of all the miserable sights one sees in Paris. It was a bitterly bleak evening, and there in the shadow stood a wretched mother, two little tots holding on to her skirts, a smaller on in her arms, and signs too plain of another about to appear. While she shivered there, begging a few coins that she might eat and not die, the whirl of gay luxurious life went rushing with red lights, coupes and carriages, down the avenue with a roar like that of Niagara, and the well-groomed men with the high silk hats and women in costly gowns, feasted in the gorgeous super-heated hotel dining-room against whose walls she leaned her tired body.

Boulevard Cafe.

Along the Champs Elysees old men and women sell sweets to the children who play beneath the trees. One of these old women sat there day after day, as we passed, and in the evening she was surrounded by scores of sparrows, which she fed with crumbs of bread. They covered the chair on which she sat as well as the ground around, perched on her shoulders and on her head and ate out of her hand. If a passing dog frightened her pets she gave it a look angry enough to kill. It was the prettiest thing I saw in all Paris.

The Rest Cure.

Simple people find that it is impossible to live the strenuous life without taking periodic times of complete rest.

There is no more fervent believer in the rest cure than the Marchioness of Londonderry.

Lady Londonderry, than whom there is no more energetic woman nor one whose beauty is better preserved, is a methodical taker of rest. She has found it impossible to discharge her exacting social duties without taking periodic days of absolute rest.

In this way she is able to brace up her nervous system and get through an enormous amount of social and philanthropic work, says the Philadelphia Inquirer.

Sir John Cockburn also insists on the need of more sleep for everybody. He ridicules the old proverb, "Six hours for man, seven for woman and eight for a fool."

Sir John declared he could never do with less than nine, and yet he has been premier and agent-general for South Australia. He believes it is only vacations which save the underslept child from a breakdown. Sleep from 10 to 13½ hours is required for a child between 4 and 14 years, and from 9 to 10 hours between the ages of 14 and 19.

An Error.

"I've been on the bench for years," said Judge Boggs, "but I performed my first marriage ceremony this morning."

"Did you do it nicely?" asked Mrs. Boggs.

"Well, no," admitted the Judge, ruefully. "I started in all right; asked the woman, 'Do you take this man to be your lawfully wedded husband,' etc. And she said, 'I will.' Then I turned to the man, and—

"Well, what did you say?"

"'Prisoner at the bar, have you anything to say why the sentence of the law should not be passed upon you?'"—Cleveland Leader.

MIRRORS COVER HIS WALLS.

Rich Man Says They Teach Grace to Members of His Family.

A rich man has the walls of his house covered with mirrors instead of pictures. In every room he can see himself in profile, from the rear, from the left, from the right—in twenty different ways. He claims that these mirrors promote grace. He asserts he has these mirrors on his children's account.

Mirrors, according to this man's view, do not promote vanity. They promote self-study and, in consequence, self-improvement.

If a young girl is round-shouldered she is hardly aware of her defect in the ordinary course of life, but if she lived in a home lined with mirrors she would see all the time the ugly, slovenly curve of her back, and, mortified and grieved, she would at once set to work with suitable exercises to become straight.

All sorts of ugly habits—ugly ways of sitting, of standing, of smiling, of gesturing—are pictured in a true and unflattering way by mirrors. The average man or woman, perceiving these uglinesses, would set to work to remove them. The trouble is, according to the rich man, that the average person does not perceive his several uglinesses and no one is frank enough to point them out to him.

This innovator, opposing hotly the contention that mirrors foster vanity, looks at himself at home nearly all the time, and continually he urges his children to look at themselves, to study themselves and to try daily to improve in grace.

TOO SUDDEN A RISE

Transports Some People Into Situations That They Do Not Fit.

In a flourishing city in Ohio a rather ignorant man had accidentally made a large fortune and was proceeding to spend it in a lavish way. It occurred to him that if he and his wife were going to entertain their friends—for, of course, they now had many—it would be well for them to build a new house. Accordingly they engaged an architect and proceeded to erect a costly mansion. One day someone chanced to meet the worthy wife of the ignorant millionaire and asked her what kind of a house they were going to build.

"Wal," said she, "I don't exactly know what kind of architectcheh it is, but I think I heered the architect say as how it was a mixcher of the ironic and the cathartic."

The same lady was traveling this winter in Europe, and was, with many others, driven from the Riveria by the unusual cold, and took refuge in Egypt. One day she came bustling into the court of the Eden Place hotel at Cairo and remarked to a young American lady who happened to fall a victim to her advances:

"Oh, we are havin' such a fine time here in Egypt; the other mornin' we went on camels an' were showed them periods an' that other thing." She did not trust herself to pronounce the word sphynx. She added: "I do think the Arabs is just magnificent; the'ye so straight and dignified, but the Gymsums themselves ain't no great shakes be they?"—Harper's Weekly.

Healthy Place to Live.

St. Vincent de Tyrosse, a French village with a population of some five hundred people, must be a healthy place to live, if the old age of its inhabitants is any criterion. On a single day recently no less than five couples of the village celebrated their golden wedding together.

The five couples have a combined age of 765 years, and are named Darcant, Fabes, Latailade, Fortabat and Coustets. A sixth couple in the village only lacked a few months of being able to join in the celebration. All of the parties concerned are agricultural laborers, and they are all in good health, and every day finds them at their usual tasks.

He Was Not Suited.

In a certain clothing store in this city it has been the custom for the employes to treat customers with more courtesy than is usually the case in large stores. A suave salesman is stationed at the door with instructions not to allow a customer to depart without ascertaining if the purchase has been satisfactory. The other day a gruff and dyspeptic man started to go out the door when he was stopped by the query from the polite salesman:

"Did you get suited, sir?"

"No," answered the man in a surly manner, "I didn't get suited; I got hatted and shoed."—Philadelphia Press.

Not a Fall.

"Sorry to see you get such a fall," said the pedestrian to a man who had just had a tumble from the rear platform of a street car.

"Oh, I didn't get no fall," was the cheerful reply.

"But you—you tumbled off."

"Not at all. I got into an argument with the conductor and he threw me off."

"I see. And you take it good-naturedly."

"Got to, old fellow. That's the sixth car I've been thrown off to-day because I wouldn't pay fare, and you see I'm getting used to it."

Conclusive.

"Yes, ma'am," said the man with the old valise; "I acknowledge that I used to go trampin' around this neighborhood, beggin' for cold victuals, but I don't do that any more. I've reformed."

"What evidence have I of that?" asked the woman of the house, still eyeing him with suspicion.

"Well, ma'am," he said, opening the valise, "the fact that I'm sellin' soap now ought to be enough to convince anybody. Oughtn't it?"

The First Real Shock.

One morning Adam walked abroad
His soul was filled with joy and laud.

By chance he wandered near the tree
Whence Eve had clothed her nudity.

And as he passed there fell a leaf
Right at his feet—his first real grief!

He picked it up—no thought of ill—
And found it was the tailor bill!

—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

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Lady Branksmere...."The Duchess"
Lady of the Lake....Scott
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Last Days of Pompeii, The....Bulwer
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Plain Tales from the Hills...Kipling
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