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The new America.

THE NEW AMERICA

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THE NEW AMERICA

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etc.

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FOREWORD

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Impressions sometimes equal facts and figures as evidence. Now and again they are even more important. New feelings have been sweeping America in the past two years, and they are feelings which must leave their effect on people all over the world for a long time to come. No one can doubt that one way or another they will be of towering importance to Britain and the British people. As an Englishman resident in America during this period I have touched various sides of life and have formed feelings about the American people in what is probably an historic phase of their development as a nation. The sketches that follow will reveal to Americans the angle of an ordinary Englishman, and to my own people will give perhaps a measure of information.

What I have written is not recklessly laudatory for I pay to my American friends the tribute of sincerity. I trust however they may find an indication, imperfect as it must be, of the affection engendered by unceasing kindness extended to me as to all my countrymen. Of the latter several thousands have been in America on war work, many of them distinguished men whose names are often in the papers, all of them experts in their various spheres of activity. They take back to Britain a new vision of America. And they are missionaries in a double sense for it is certain they have spread among active circles in the United States a better understanding of British character, possibly also of British capacity. These men for years to come will be paying tribute not only to the dynamic force of American genius in emergency, but also to American temperament, its sparkle, generosity and idealism. In common with them I realize the surface variations which must ever exist between the two nations. In common with them also I realize more than ever the basic unity between the two English speaking peoples. Americans and British have had to fight together and they have also had to work together. The fighting is over but they have to go on working together. The more we know each other's daily life the better. Genial frankness is one of the tests of friendship. Those of us who have dived into American life have been always stimulated, sometimes bewildered, generally delighted. We have found that a first class American and a first class Briton are a rare combination when there is anything to be done. Our very differences bind us together. The effect of proper

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Englishmen on proper Americans is something I cannot write on though I have hopes. On the other hand I can say from personal knowledge that American friends leave on an Englishman a mark for life.

F. D.

New York, December 1918.

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THE NEW AMERICA

CHAPTER I THE VISION OF NEW YORK

I came across the Atlantic when America was at peace. At eight on a piercing winter morning passengers of early enterprise brought into the saloon of an American liner the news that the United States was visible, and, in company with a peer of England and a young South African engineer and his wife, I went out on deck to see it.

Romance beclouds any sight of a new land and especially of America. To an Englishman there are generations of history for his race enshrined for him in this first glance. Somewhere behind that break in the horizon is a mysterious nation of genius set in a continent of magnitude and beauty. No pulse but what beats a little quicker at its approach. It is one of the big moments. In me the thrill was not absent on that January morning, but I was tantalized rather than satisfied. Across a drab sea in the distance was a strip of low-lying land with some box-like erections² on it—houses and hotels—and we were told this was Coney Island—of which some of us had read in O. Henry. It looked cold and flat and barren. “You ought to see it in the summer,” some one said. The words seemed empty. Where was the America that filled the imagination?

The next time I went out on deck the city of New York was staring us full in the face. My first impression as we came to the point of Manhattan Island was a hodge-podge of

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buildings—warehouse-like buildings to an English eye—severely squared, enormously irregular in height, and all of them mottled with little windows at rigid intervals from top to bottom. It was a cubist picture. The great towers made a crudely irregular skyline, and yet the whole had an overpowering square uniformity which I knew was misleading. Then I picked out what seemed cathedral spires, and dignity. It was incredible without the actual sight that so much of building should be established on any given space of land. In this initial glimpse of New York I had a flash of knowledge. The peaks of human endeavour were here. Not that I had full comprehension. A grim secret power about this huge, ungainly, orderly colossus of a city warmed the blood one moment, and caused a shiver the next. Mysterious strength lay within its portals. It was ugly, overwhelming, stimulating.

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We sidled into the pier, and within a few minutes we heard the American language in its full strength and savour. The language meant a real touch with this new world of human beings. Later I found that the people, similar in fundamental emotions to those in old Britain, were in many of the relations of life quite different, and in some every-day habits and expressions at least their three thousand miles away. On that cold January morning I was plunged into a world of speech where it is affectation to say “Boston” when you mean “Bawston,” to say “last” when you mean “laast,” where it means confusion, even incoherence, not to speak slowly, very slowly, where it is essential to linger over the vowels and let some of the consonants take care of themselves.

Strangers from Europe come over filled with the knowledge of the hustling methods and rapid minds of Americans and find them to be on the whole the slowest speaking people on earth. They get something additional out of words that way, extract all their savour, make them mean more. All the same the slowness, quite apart from accent and phrases goes towards a different language. Not till later on did I get the full force of this

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discovery. Impressions were too numerous and swiftly successive in those first few hours for separate analysis.

One thing stands out and that was my immediate experience of the generous spirit of Americans to a 4 stranger coming to their land. On the pier collecting my baggage I was debating as to what hotel I should drive when a New Yorker with whom I had made the passage learning of my thoughts sent them all to the right-about. He insisted on taking me to his club, fixing me up there in comfort and introducing me to friends so that I should have immediately the touch of good fellowship in a strange country. His own people were awaiting him and he was anxious to see them, but he put aside his personal concerns and insisted on driving me to his club and installing me. I shall not soon forget his kindness nor that of his friends to whom I was introduced. Such is America's way.

That I did not fully appreciate all the New Yorker did for me in those initial hours is due to the lessons from material things which were crowding each other. We drove along Broadway, famed the world over as one of the great thoroughfares, and through adjoining streets, and so bad was the roadway that we rocked and swayed like an English channel steamer under a south westerly gale. We passed through Sixth Avenue which with some other thoroughfares is disfigured to a European eye by the elevated electric railway on its iron pillars. The sight alone is nerve racking—and when you add the almost continual rattle of the trains overhead you produce in the newcomer a state of mind which treats as absurdly inadequate the ameliorative statement that New York has the 5 best traffic facilities of all great cities. And then one is suddenly cured of the distemper by emerging into Fifth Avenue, among the most dignified and handsome streets in the world, free from railways, trolley cars or disturbing advertisements, dignified by private palaces and great churches set amid shops that resemble public institutions in their scope, their architecture, the richness, reserve, and artistry of their display. There are miles of Fifth Avenue. More than one individual mile among them is worth a visit from Europe.

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But of all outward things that made a mark on me that cold January day I think the most notable was the busy portion of Broadway after dark. I had come from London threatened with German air-craft, bedimmed in all its lights, and on my first evening in New York I went out from 44th Street into Broadway, with its seas of people ebbing and flowing on the sidewalks, with its offices and hotels going skyward, with its roadway vibrating from the trains running beneath the surface and the trolley cars above it, and with the whole scene—here is the point—lighted up like a theatre stage. There are street lamps, I suppose, in Broadway but I have never noticed them. They do not matter. Glowing restaurants and shops and theatres and hotels put them in obscurity, and, surpassing all, there are ever active electric tableaux high above on roofs or on the front of high buildings, telling in 6 pictures of light, the advantages of brands of machinery, of chewing gum, whiskey, sewing cotton or theatrical performances. These electric signs are the joy and pride of Broadway. They constitute a panorama and make the wide thoroughfare as far as one can see in each direction as light as day. Half way to Heaven there is a flickering everchanging multi-coloured fountain with moving mannikins inset, the whole reminding one of the set fireworks at the Crystal Palace, only it is continuous, not for seconds, but for hours. Nearby, outlined against the sky, is the moving picture of a kitten thirty feet long on its back playing with a spool of cotton, entangling itself, its eyes sparkling with fun and bewilderment, and suddenly finding release in readiness for a continuation of the gambol. In another place a huntsman is raising his gun to his shoulder firing bullets of light at birds of light, one of which he unflinchingly brings down every time. There is a dazzling picture of a butterfly, alive with shimmering hues, alighting on a half open rose in natural colours, and that glittering butterfly must be a dozen feet across at least. These are but samples of the Broadway tableau at night. To some I suppose it would give the effect of blatancy. To one straight from darkened Europe these palpitating acres of light extended a sense of vitality and amazing good cheer.

Here then were the broad outlines of the setting 7 of a great community—a community stranger in many ways to an Englishman than those older peoples in Europe which spoke

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not his own tongue. To find out the great secret of this complex nation so full of contrasts, so reputedly material on the one hand, so high minded on the other, so intensely practical while at the same time flaming with a spiritual patriotism unsurpassed in history—here was a riddle not to be solved in a day or in a month, or even in a year. The soul of a nation is no more to be observed at a glance than the soul of a man. My task it has been to take note of the externals, of the symbols so to speak, to try to extract some messages from them, not separately, but as a whole. That I have to observe them with an English eye and appraise them by English standards is because I am an Englishman. And if I do this it is consciously, and not blindly, and with the full knowledge that the Americans have a standard of their own, the American standard, that they proudly live their own life.

The bewilderment of the recently arrived Englishman is best illustrated by personal contacts, and it is easy to provide a sample or two which makes the visitor clap his hand to his head. No one can be more than a week or two in New York without being conscious of the alert sympathy of the new people he finds around him, their readiness to help each other, their quick desire to help even those they do not know. ⁸ They are naturally cheerful. There are no bars of class distinction or stern etiquette to keep people apart as in the old countries, and this lends itself to a helpfulness and friendliness which is delightful to a visitor. The charity of New Yorkers both public and private is boundless. The courtesy and gracious manners of people in educated circles could not be bettered in any society in the world—and indeed in its unaffectedness and genuineness it is probably supreme. And yet in spite of all this the stranger from across the Atlantic, till he gets acclimatized, is jarred and shocked by the new and unaccustomed manners of the people in the streets—the ordinary work-a-day people. They do not mean to be unmannered of course, and would probably be immensely surprised if they were informed of the impression they make. The standard is different, that is all. A crowd on the subway is a good example. It is as different from a London crowd or a Paris crowd as Chicago is from Moscow. No person stands aside for another in a hurry. Rarely is there an apology. No one says “Thank you” for a railway ticket. I have yet to see a smiling query or a smiling response

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between officials and passengers. And all of these things are commonplaces in the old world, commonplaces which are not only smooth and pleasant but which accelerate the business of life. Once in a subway a well dressed young man and woman, probably 9 sweethearts, were seated opposite me. The girl dropped her gloves. I leaned forward, picked them up and returned them to her. The man took them from me. Neither he nor his companion uttered one word of thanks. I should like to think they did not speak our language, but I fear the worst.

It has been explained to me that the continual flow of foreigners into New York is largely responsible for this condition of things. I wonder if that is really so. I was a frequent visitor to the beautiful public library on Fifth Avenue. On six occasions—I counted them after the first two—it was my privilege in passing out or passing in to hold the door open for a well dressed woman, young or old, going in or coming out, and on only one of these occasions did the lady in question say “Thank you” or indeed give the slightest indication that some one was performing an act of courtesy. It may indeed be that this is a sidelight on the tribute that all American men pay to women, that acts of courtesy are taken to be so natural and commonplace as to call for no recognition. It is probable those ladies were all charming in private life, and would have been seriously hurt at the thought that they could be ungracious in any kind of contact. Probably, too, an American man would not have noticed their silence. To an Englishman it seemed strange and is therefore worthy of note. I have the less hesitation in writing down this incident in view of my early knowledge of 10 the intensive charm in American women, their wit, their camaraderie and intellectuality. I take my hat off to them all the time.

After all this was only one of a hundred contrasts. Let me give another of a different kind. In the early hours of one morning I saw fire engines arriving on a street off Broadway. The policemen were keeping back persons who like myself came hurrying up. I stood unmolested for a moment or two, then a policeman approached swinging the inevitable stick and I looked for the stem injunction of the London bobby. I did not get it. He walked up to me like a friend and said quietly, almost confidentially, “Hadn't you better be

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moving?" He inclined his head across the street. "The chief is round here." Who could resist such an appeal?

At the next block I fell in with a friend, a newspaper man on the way home. He asked me to have a drink and I said a word of surprise as I had an idea that by law all refreshment houses at that hour were closed. He smiled at my innocence, took me by the arm, crossed the street, knocked three times on the darkened window of a particular saloon, and a minute later we were comfortably seated in the back part of the restaurant awaiting the arrival of two Scotch whiskeys. Other customers were there too, all quietly respectable. I blessed my friend's kindly thought, as well as the benevolent lenity of New York 11 government. And then I shuddered at the harsh logicity of the rulers of London, and the thought of how such elasticity, even spasmodically indulged in, would bring inevitable business ruin as well as personal punishment, and provide incidentally a small sensation for the newspapers. I suppose on this occasion I broke the law. I make my apologies. I cannot refrain from saying I thoroughly enjoyed it. Perhaps I ought to add that all this was a year ago. Very likely such facilities do not exist now.

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CHAPTER II FOOD, DRESS, DRINK AND TAXICABS

I have heard the genial lamentations of Americans in England on the absence of steam heat in the houses and ice water at meals, and was inclined to smile until after a brief period in America I realized how one was a necessity as well as a comfort, and the other a luxury, the loss of which becomes a tragedy with the temperature one hundred degrees in the shade. But steam heat and ice water are only two of the novelties to an Englishman. The automobiles of New York and in a lesser degree of other American cities, are not only one of the sights but one of the emotions. Sometimes they pack the streets. Always they provide an ever moving flood. There is nothing of the kind to be seen in Europe. Everybody who is anybody has an automobile of some kind, and the interstices are filled with taxicabs, ownership ranging from the pride of a Pierce Arrow

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or Rolls Royce to pride no less in a lowly Ford. Dramatic the revelation of prosperity which allows so many thousands of persons to possess these cars. There is 13 a far-flung automobile comradeship. I should think there might even be a literature in view of the closeness with which the automobile is welded into the life of the people. In New York the cars introduce a new element into human affairs not only with regard to those who own them but to those who as pedestrians tolerate, avoid, or suffer them. They are as the fishes of the sea in number, and as swift, as silent, and as elusive. Their pace is staggering to witness. They turn corners with a speed and at an acuteness of angle which leaves a newcomer breathless till he learns the astonishing skill of the drivers and the suppleness of the instruments they handle. Those knights of the road, the taxi-drivers, are past masters in the avoidance of death for themselves and their charges. To the spectator from abroad they seem almost capable of making their cars rear up on their hind wheels in face of some sudden emergency. When they want to turn they spin round in the middle of the road with freedom and suddenness. At intervals they lounge along by the sidewalk and then go off at lightning speed. They perform swift letter S's among the traffic. They dart unexpectedly up side streets. As to the feelings of a pedestrian, many a time have I had the impression that an idling taxicab has suddenly leaped to its top speed to reach me before I could get across the road. Others have felt the same. I have made myself a solemn vow that I will not be 14 run down by a taxicab in New York. It is one of the preoccupations of my days and nights.

A new arrival will find the Americans more carefully dressed than English people—than Londoners for instance. There is a punctiliousness in the way the men dress which is striking and ever present, and it is noticeable not only among the well-to-do but also right down through the various grades of what may be called the lower middle classes. The ordinary men in the street, the clerk, the official, the storekeeper all are smart, and trim, with well pressed trousers, and bright boots. It is true that with the younger men there is a taste for a brighter colour in neckties, a wider stripe on the soft shirts than is liked by the Englishman. There is also among many an inclination for jewelry which is not one of

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our preferences; tie pins are plentiful, and rings are common, although some moderation is introduced in the fine and delicate watch chains which are the fashion in America. Moreover there is among the young men about town a tendency, especially with regard to their evening clothes, to have them made in an ornate style which does not coincide with our old fashioned ideas. When all this is said however the fact remains that the ordinary man of affairs in America dresses with taste, the taste of good material, simple cut, albeit with some fastidiousness. They are a dressy people the Americans, a fact not unrelated with self respect. 15 In some matters they are more particular than Europeans. When I came out to America I was in doubt as to whether to bring a silk hat—rapidly disappearing in London except for use on formal occasions. I was told that no one in America wore a silk hat. As a matter of fact within a month of my arrival I saw more silk hats on Fifth Avenue than I had seen in London in the course of a year.

I am not an expert in the dress of women but I have noticed with respectful diffidence the variation with customs in England. American women like the men are extremely careful in their dress, careful to a point of elaborateness, and this trait is not confined to any one class. The careful harmonies of the fashionable woman in society functions is reflected in the trimness, the taste, the polish of the thousands of business girls who go into New York to the offices each day. That is the general effect. When a mere man comes to details on this matter he wallows hopelessly. But I have observed that the daytime dresses are rather shorter than those in England, displaying foot and ankle and sometimes a trifle more. Material is thinner, frequently of the chiffon type—georgette I am informed is the correct name, and more of the shoulder and neck and arm is shown—an effect of the climate. There is moreover the widest variety of styles even among those who cannot be classed as rich, and the general result is very pleasing to the male eye.

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Freedom of expression is carried to foot wear. In England low shoes giving a woman's foot a light appearance are in general wear. With American women it is the fashion to wear boots laced up, covering above the ankle. They are of various colours and material, of

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leather, cloth and suede in black, brown, blue, white and various shades of grey. They hit the eye of a visitor. I cannot help thinking that these boots look heavier and in some cases larger than do low shoes. But what is a mere man's opinion in such matters? I am incapable of dealing with other attire except to say that I am sensible of modes different from those across the water. I rarely see the blouse and skirt so generally attractive in England and instead I am told—for I have had to seek advice on this technical point—that “one piece dresses” are in popular use. The effect is good when the eyes have got accustomed to the change, and when one remembers that this is not England but another nation. The care and completeness of the women's dress here is another evidence of that freshness and intensity which strives to get as much out of life as possible. Withal I am not one of those who think that the elaborateness of dress on the part of American women is the characteristic chiefly to be marked with regard to them. But that is another story—to be dealt with a little later on.

The food and drink of America are peculiarly national. 17 It is not until an Englishman has been here for a week or two that he discovers how really different the food is to that which he has been accustomed. Breakfast is almost invariably begun by fruit and delicious fruit it is too, oranges, bananas, strawberries, grape-fruit, something juicy and refreshing. Then there follows in sequence courses which in name have some resemblance to the old country's fare but which in substance are different. There are various kinds of cereals of course, some of them with fancy names. Fish has an important place. Among the varieties of fish are those of which the average Englishman has never heard the name, “Blue fish,” “White fish” “Shad”—fish from the rivers, and fish from the lakes in the Middle West, mixed in with the fish of English names and bearing a family resemblance to what we get in England. It is when you come to the eggs and bacon that you get a real shock. The eggs are the same but alas for the bacon. I am sure Americans like American bacon best. An Englishman on this point must regretfully part company. During eighteen months in this country I have met scores of travelling Englishmen, many of them distinguished in their various walks of life, and it is a fact worth putting down that rarely has our conversation

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come to an end without a heartrending word about American bacon. They do not sigh for English lanes these men of the world, for the 18 delights of London or even for the reunion with old friends, but their hearts are full of gloom as they talk of the English bacon so far from their reach, and try to be polite about the bacon in America. It is difficult because of the deceptiveness of those little strips which with their thinness give an appearance of delicacy but which in the mouth make one think how far away are Yorkshire and Wiltshire. America is a great nation but it has not yet learned much about bacon. Mr. Raymond Blathwayt sat with me in a cheery New York club only a few nights ago in a circle of genial Americans and held them in thrall while he discoursed on the merits of a well cooked Wiltshire ham. He described to smiling listeners a slice of that ham properly cooked, how it required no chewing, how it was full of flavour and melted in the mouth like chocolate. I was much moved. What Englishman would not be? Even our American friends were stirred by this modern Charles Lamb and his roast pig. All the same I believe they would prefer American bacon. It is one of the few serious dividing lines between the two nations. Not to put too fine a point upon it these delicate looking wafer-like strips are to an Englishman on the tough side. Also they lack flavour. I am blunt about this. The matter is not one to be trifled with.

Chicken is a great specialty in America. It is 19 comparatively cheap, well cooked in a score of ways, and the same applies to turkey and other poultry. Beef as it is cooked and cut in many restaurants and hotels does not attract an Englishman for it is carved in slices which are enormously thick and served so underdone as to remove it from the class of delicacies. No lunch or dinner is complete for an American without ices, and they call the course "ice cream" in full, not "ice" as on the other side. For those who like ice cream there is no better in the world and it is served with a profusion which indicates the general taste. The extreme sweetness of pastry, cakes and other confections in America is very remarkable to a European and even the chocolates are far sweeter than we have them.

What of drink? America so far as my observation goes is a very temperate country, many of the states prohibiting the sale of liquor, while in those that do not there is an absence

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of excessive drinking, an absence indeed of regular drinking, which is bound to impress a traveller. One need not put it all down to natural virtue. The climate so dry and invigorating has a lot to do with the condition of things in which a man accustomed to a moderate glass of liquor in western Europe finds the need of it to disappear when he lands in America. The moist winds that sweep the countries across the Atlantic, and the heavier 20 atmosphere, somehow give alcohol less effect, and promote a desire for it which is lessened under the clear skies of America. In the course of a year I have travelled through nearly all of the principal cities in the United States and my travels have taken me out at all hours of the night and day and during that time I do not think the drunken men I have seen on the streets would number a dozen. Another excellent variation to an Englishman is the absence of barmaids in the saloons, all the liquor being sold by men.

So far as non-intoxicating drink is concerned, coffee is the stand-by of the country, and it is made excellently. Tea, alas for English taste, is an abstraction to the ordinary American. They know it by name and by sight and some even drink it, but as a rule it is a thin vapid decoction unworthy of the name. Restaurants and hotels have something they label "English Breakfast Tea," which is supposed to provide for our stronger tastes, but it is only a substitute. I have found a method of meeting the emergency. It is to demand Ceylon tea and to insist that double the usual quantity is used in the tea pot. They mean well about tea, the Americans, but perhaps they retain a prejudice with regard to that little affair at Boston. I once made a pathetic plea on a Washington train to a waiter for strong tea. He was anxious to oblige me but his attitude of mind on this all important matter was eloquently revealed when in his 21 desire to meet my wishes he brought me a jug of moderately warm water and the tea canister and asked me to put in as much tea as I liked so as to give it the proper strength.

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CHAPTER III THE WRITTEN AND SPOKEN WORD

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One of the staggering discoveries in America is the occasional comment on the “English accent” of Englishmen with its suggestion of an amiable eccentricity on the part of a foreign people. It is hard for a visitor from London to get his balance. When he does so and makes his feeble protest he is shaken by the challenge direct—about the mincing intonation of the English, their lack of h's, the impression of sing-song in their speech. I was present at a popular comedy in New York recently where a dialogue on the stage between a young American doctor and an English friend led the American to declare with a fervour which might have concealed humour, “If you wish to hear the real English language spoken as it should be with purity and correctness you must come to America.” A well dressed and intelligent audience applauded this with what struck me to be seriousness. Conceive the mental situation of the poor Englishman who has realized that around him is a new pronunciation and a hurly burly of fresh phrases all of which he had hitherto regarded as a local variation from the proper and accepted English he had brought from the other side. Taking a strong hold of himself the Englishman may make a stand against his American friends; he will give way much but he must and will persist that the true English language is in possession of the English people. And this in spite of the fact that some of the less educated people especially in London drop their h's in pretty much the same way that the less educated do in New York. Broadly speaking there are two tendencies with regard to the English language in America, one towards its reinvigoration, the other towards its dilution and corruption and the difficulty is to say where one tendency unites with the other. The measured speech of the educated American, extracting from words and phrases the full savour with a kind of salty tang, is a powerful new instrument for both wit and wisdom, but who can tell the border line when, descending through a hundred shades, it reaches at last a high pitched harshness for which slowness is no compensation. Then there are the phrases. Show me the alert Englishman who will not find a stimulation in those nuggety word-groupings which are the commonplaces in good American conversation. They are like flashes of crystal. They come from all kinds of people,—who are brilliantly innocent of enriching the language. But here again there is a descending scale which presently touches undoubtable slang. 24 Who is going to mark

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the limit? Perhaps there is none, only a slow graduation the character of which alters as time ripens taste. Let me give a little list of colloquial expressions, some of which explain themselves and all of which are interesting as examples of a language in transition.

“Don't be fresh.” “Don't be cheeky.”

“Rubber neck.” “Sight seer.”

“Foxy gink.” “A sly person.”

“Get wise to it.” “Ascertain the facts.”

“To jolly you along.” “To chaff you.”

“Take a Brodie.” “Take a chance (from Steve Brodie who dived from Brooklyn bridge).”

“Shook me for a blonde.” “Left me for another.”

“Cut it out.” “Stop that nonsense; get to business.”

“The jinx have a hunch on me.” “Evil spirits haunt me.”

“Turn over, you've said a pageful.” “You've talked enough and too much.”

“He's a bird and you want to watch him fly.” “He's smart, keep your eye on him.”

It may be slang but notice how the English translation rather limps behind. Of course it is the figurativeness, the quick pictorial imagination, which helps the formation of the new language. All the same there is a little shock for the Englishman in the mandatory “Listen” for the more gracious “Do you know,” or “Excuse me.” Besides “Listen” there are “Say” and “Gee” and several others. They can be uttered sweetly; when they are not, well then the stranger has to smile and suffer.

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The written word in America follows generally along the lines of the spoken word. In the best magazines and reviews and in the more intellectual of the books one finds a clearness, a correctness, a vigour, not a whit behind similar work in England and in some cases so excellent as to be a model to English writers. There is a nervous directness in the best American writing which is truly part of literature and a distinctive emanation from the American genius. A love of beauty in words shows up repeatedly, a desire to get the core out of language. Moreover the Americans, in a kind of artistic exuberance, are not afraid to use words as we sometimes are in England. Along the façade of the new post office building in New York there runs an inscription from Herodotus. "Neither snow, nor rain, nor heat, nor night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds." Somehow this inscription adds point and dignity to a noble building. Who but the Americans would have placed words with a lilt and march upon a teeming 26 bureau of practical work. They use words in unaccustomed ways these Americans in their daily pursuits, in their business for example. Look at the American advertisements, against those in Britain! I was walking up Broadway near twelve o'clock one night and came to a halt in front of a shop across which was stretched a scroll bearing these words, "Can a snake cross a frozen lake?" I read it twice to know if my eyesight was right and then I thought I was in the presence of one of those tantalizing puzzles for which there is no answer. What did it mean? Was the storekeeper a colossal joker who wished to bewilder the passing crowds just for the fun of the thing? I went up and looked into the store and found the explanation. It specialized in an encyclopedia which purported to answer all kinds of questions. "Can a snake cross a frozen lake?" was one of the puzzles which the encyclopedia elucidated for the curious.

This however is not the whole of the picture, for in writing as well as in speech there is a widespread range of what to an Englishman is looseness, occasionally slovenliness. Americans are never tired of bursting the bonds of convention, but when the less disciplined do this they are apt to emerge on to a stage where freedom though delightful has its disadvantages.

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The leading editorials in the principal papers of 27 America are generally from an English point of view well written, vivacious, with precision and taste. The news columns on the other hand are often enough marked with redundancy, and a certain careless haste. It all rises from that intensive desire to get to the heart of things quickly, to solidify thought without much regard to the medium. It is not a case of grammatical inaccuracy so much as a disregard of construction, an indifference to the briefest and sharpest way of conveying meaning—unless indeed it can be done by the short cut of slang. Formal correctness really doesn't matter so long as the general meaning is apparent, that is the impression a visitor gets. Of course this informality sometimes goes with brightness, occasionally with wit. Whether this is sufficient recompense depends on the temperament and training of the reader. Nor can this restiveness in the presence of arbitrary rules of grammar and construction be charged solely against the newspapers. I have seen in the streets public notices issued by the authorities, in which the lack of grammar stared to Heaven.

However a language must be looked upon as a whole and the American tongue written or spoken with its alteration from the English of England is a potent and penetrating instrument, rich in new vibrations, full of joy as well as shocks for the unsuspecting visitor. The many created words are but another 28 evidence of a trenchant originality. I once cited some of them as well as changes I have indicated to a good friend of mine, a dignitary of the Episcopal church. He was sensitive. "Our English may be a little changed," he said, "but it is an alteration vastly for the better. You are lagging far behind. Good Heavens, why you still spell parlour with a 'U'." I quailed under his air of pride and contempt. I had not the courage to point out the thousand similar illogicalities which still remain in the English language as it is spoken in America. I think he would have trampled on me if I had.

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CHAPTER IV HUSTLE AND HUMOUR

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One of the hasty judgments which a visiting Englishman is likely to formulate in the first month or two of his residence in the United States is that the reputation of America for whirl-wind energy and an ever present poignancy of humour is a fallacy. He moderates this opinion a little later on, but there continues to remain with him the conviction that Europeans have an entirely wrong idea of the temperament of Americans with regard to their quality of action and their humour and wit. One hears so much in Europe of the nervous tension of the Americans, of their electric energy in business and pleasure that there comes a discovery which is in the nature of a shock. Conceive the disillusionment among people in England when told that the New York crowds on the sidewalks, in the subways, in both business and residential sections, walk in a more leisurely way than do similar crowds in London. It is one of the astounding things to an Englishman here. He notes the slowness in a hundred directions, the carefully measured activity of the elevator men, railway officials, the salesmen in the shops. Nobody is in any hurry. New York leads the way in this calm detached disregard of time but New York does not stand alone. At Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, I have stopped in the best hotels and the slowness of the service of the waiters, of the attendants and again of the railway men roused a feeling of disappointment in one who expected a new-world dashing rapidity. Taxicabs are the only things that go really fast. Time is the cheapest commodity in America. Is it heresy to say that I found indications of the same leisureliness in some distinguished walks of life? If it is I would add that I found the atmosphere pleasant. Withal, the daily work gets itself accomplished, new big original achievements are carried through in a score of industries, and there is an output which is large compared to that of similar industries across the Atlantic. Why this apparent contradiction? There is probably more than one explanation for it. The root fact is that America has resources and natural wealth which enables its population to secure a livelihood with less effort than the crowded populations in the severe state of competition of the old countries. No wonder there is a constant stream of immigration. It would be even larger if the poor people in Europe knew the advantages in America and its opportunities. There are some popular restaurants in New York corresponding 31 with our light refreshment houses in London, and whereas in London

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the waitresses working long hours may make fifteen shillings a week the waitresses in these American restaurants (I am speaking now of New York) get three good meals a day and earn in wages and tips from eighteen to twenty dollars—between three pounds ten shillings and four pounds a week for six days' work, seven and a half hours a day. This may be a little exceptional but it certainly is an indication. In New York City it is difficult to get manual labourers except negroes or immigrants from the southern states of Europe. There are so many things people can do besides work with their hands in America. Of course there are poor people, poor for a variety of reasons but speaking generally it is far easier to secure a comfortable material existence than on the other side of the Atlantic. This is in spite of the high cost of living, which may even be double and then leave a substantial margin.

The theory of American hustle arises not from actual daily swiftness in which the British are not outpaced, but in the new state of mind, the willingness and indeed the ardency to try new methods, to experiment with new ideas. Not only in one class but in all classes one finds readiness to discover a more effective method of handling business, to ascertain novelties not only in inventions but in methods. The result is that in some directions wonderful effects in 32 efficiency are secured. In England old traditions are too rigidly adhered to, especially in matters of business, and the consequence is that the people work harder and sometimes achieve less. Of course there has to be borne in mind also the essential consideration that America is a country both new and vast, with potentialities only on the fringe of development, having within its boundaries uncountable riches yet to be produced by the energy and ingenuity of its inhabitants. For the industrious, material life is easier. It is now, no less than in years gone by, the land of opportunity. Meanwhile its progressing development places prosperity within the hands of many classes. Perhaps this is why New York, teeming with ideas, shows no signs of real hurry.

It is a legend, or perhaps it would be more correct to say a religious article of faith, with Americans that the English, to whose many qualities they are not unwilling to pay tribute, do not possess a sense of humour. It is not a matter to be argued about. The

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slow comprehension of the English in funny matters is a text. I have heard it referred to not only in private conversation but repeatedly on the stage and more than once at public dinners, all the references being quite good humoured and without offence but all very downright and made with sincerity. Amusing stories are frequently told in support. A typical one is said to come from Mr. Nat 33 Goodwin, the actor, who during his stay in London told an English friend of his experiences with a cigar salesman. In recommending a special brand of cigars the salesman said the purchaser of five hundred cigars received a valuable leather wallet, the purchaser of a thousand got a watch, and the man who took five thousand received a grand piano. The actor's reply to the cigar salesman was, "If I smoke five thousand of your cigars it wouldn't be a grand piano that I should want but a harp." Nat Goodwin related this instance of his repartee to his English friend who received it with a polite smile. It was the next day that the Englishman sought out Nat Goodwin, shook him warmly by the hand and said, "You know I only got the meaning of that joke last night in bed. I could hardly sleep for laughing. Of course what you meant was that travelling round the country as you do as an actor you couldn't carry the grand piano with you, whereas you could take a harp along quite easily."

I think it may be said that English lack of humour provides the same staple source of merriment to the Americans that the mother-in-law used to provide in funny papers and on the music-hall stage in England. I know one Englishman who listened to a chaffing after-dinner speech in New York and became restive. Presently he said, "I want to get up and make a speech." I asked him his reason. He said, "I want 34 to explain that there is no lack of courtesy in Englishmen when they don't laugh at American jokes. I personally have sometimes tried for as long as twenty minutes to laugh at an American joke. I want to explain that so as to show there is no ill feeling." I do not think this was justifiable comment on the general situation because so far as my experience goes, and I have cultivated an amateur interest in the matter, it is not hard to understand or appreciate American humour. Nor do I agree with many visiting Englishmen who say that Americans are really in essence devoid of humour. These critics in their disappointment generalize from two or

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three individual experiences. It is true that an Englishman's vanity suffers when he finds that what he believes to be his humorous asides, his witty inflexions, and sometimes even the pith of his best narratives leave Americans cold, leave them, alas, not even inquisitive—but this arises from the fact that American humour is developed along different lines, and also that both nations include dull people. The latter fact one may put aside for the moment. Among those whom nature has not forgotten to endow properly on both sides of the Atlantic there are differences with regard to humour although frequently they meet on common ground. If I were asked to specify as definitely as possible the difference between the humour of America and England I should say that American humour 35 was the more direct and English humour the more allusive. It is the situation which appeals to the American, it is the handling of the situation which arouses the smile in an Englishman. The American moreover is not afraid of humour and we English are a little timorous about it. Humour is not in such general currency in England. To the extent that with us it has to have a sharper point, to be well tempered, may be a sign that we are indeed a duller people. On the other hand it makes for an agreeable variety of humour, not essentially subtle, and yet approaching subtlety. It is the flavour of the humour which the English like to turn over on their tongue. We are in fact a gravely humorous people. With the American there are no dilatory measures. They have a crispness, and sharp percussion, stimulating and refreshing. While humour is better understood and more frequently used among ordinary citizens in America it does not seem to me that humour is nearly so powerful a public weapon as it is in England. All our leading statesmen find it a tremendous ally not only in the House of Commons but on the public platforms. Mr. Balfour is one of our subtlest humourists. Mr. Asquith brings to bear on his opponents from time to time a pawky allusiveness which is very penetrating. Mr. Lloyd George sparkles in his fiercest speeches. Mr. Winston Churchill cultivates a mordant turn of phrase which is particularly 36 exhilarating. I have not noticed a similar use of humour in America.

There are thus two brands of humour, the American and the English and if you are an American you naturally prefer the product of the United States. Mark Twain, O. Henry, and

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other witty writers are read with avidity in Britain. I have an impression that writers like W. W. Jacobs, an unending delight to the English humorous mind, would not be regarded in the United States as being uproariously funny. From these facts one may draw two entirely different sets of conclusions. It depends on which side of the Atlantic one resides.

37

CHAPTER V THE AMERICAN WOMAN

American women are an acute problem for an Englishman, but they are a problem which it is a delight to solve, even though the process is one which is both prolonged and intricate. It must be very hard for a bachelor from the other side, whatever prejudices and affections he brings across, to keep from trying to marry an American girl. Resistance in the old country calls for delicacy and vigilance, but in the United States it means constant and strenuous labour. The exasperating factor is that an Englishman will note what to him are deficiencies in the American woman, deficiencies which time does not wipe out nor ameliorate. The soft speech of his own women, their unconscious graciousness, their silent and enduring passion for all home things, are but some of those almost indefinable qualities which are woven into the fabric of the English race. There is not the same atmosphere with American women, who have an atmosphere of their own. One lives in a different medium in America and there are additions and subtractions.

38

The companionship of the American women is such as to make them a magnet. They touch fibres which before have been undisturbed. They have a volition which drives them into notice, regard, and, oftentimes, affection. There is in fact something dynamic about the attractions of American women. That does not mean they please the taste of a visitor in every way at the start. There are in the United States women as gracious and as beautiful as any on the other side of the Atlantic, but speaking generally they miss here and there an attribute which an Englishman appreciates. First of all there is the accent which to an Englishman's ears is not so womanlike as the lower tone and softer appeal

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of an Englishwoman's voice. Many of them too are more decided, with a little more of that assertiveness which perhaps comes from independence. The Englishwoman has an intense devotion to domestic affairs and a family, and though this is not missing in America it is sometimes shaded down a little by an interest in outside affairs, in private work, in public activities, possibly in sheer amusement—and this makes her a trifle harder, perhaps more practical but now and again not quite so lovable, at least to strangers who have not yet acquired the taste.

American women away from the damp atmosphere of western Europe have not the bright complexions of their trans-Atlantic cousins, but they 39 more than make up for this by the vivacity of their eyes and the charm of their hair. Whether it is the manner of their dress, or the natural effect of climate or race, they seem to have a slimness and straightness of figure compared with Europeans. It is the fashion, too, I think. All the same one's eyes have to become accustomed to it when one is fresh from Europe. They walk well, the American women, uprightly, with dignity and grace though not with the swinging alertness, and resilience of, say, the Scottish girls. The dress of the American women is a matter of great care, even of elaborateness, and every part of her from her light lace-like collar to her spic-and-span boots is groomed to a nicety. A cultured American woman in evening dress is a delight to the eye. There is, however, discernible here and there a tendency to overdress, a disregard for the charm in simplicity as against the effect of ornateness. From time to time one meets women who are obviously too expensively dressed for what an Englishman would regard as taste. These are the exceptions, and are the inevitable development of the thoughtful care and precision in matters of apparel which is an inherent part of the American woman's being.

One of the charms of the best American woman is her vivid interest in those affairs of life in which an ordinarily well-read man finds material for thought 40 and activity. Right down from the richer circles to the woman in what may be called the lower middle class, there is a pulsing curiosity about life, a desire to know and understand, a courage which flinches from no unpleasant knowledge, indeed asks for it, and withal a humour which if a stranger

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may hazard an opinion is even more noticeable than in the American men. The American woman reads the newspapers fervently. She reads books of all kinds, to an extent which I should guess is unequalled in any other part of the world. It is the fashion to say that the American woman is spoiled by her husband and her men-folk in general. That is probably true with regard to certain circles in the wealthier classes where indulgence is carried to a point which makes not only for selfishness but also for smart emptiness, or sheer stupidity. But it is a libel to apply the verdict generally to American women. By virtue of a camaraderie, a keenness of perception, and independence of outlook which arises partly from the general conditions of the country, the American woman is a live and sparkling companion for an intelligent man. Perhaps it is this very fact that leads in some cases to her being spoiled.

One of the fascinating things about a typical American woman is her truly romantic temperament. She is not as a rule sentimental for the sake of gambling in so-called love as a pastime. She loves attention (what woman does not?), but she is not prepared to pay for it in make-believe currency, in soft glances, in sugary notes, in sweet triflings, which are the beginning and end of the game. She does not respond easily or quickly but when she does all of her feelings are engaged, and there is no turning back. She expects devotion and will respond with self-sacrifice to the limit. The uncompromising directness of the American temperament comes in here. If she loves a man she wishes to marry him and to marry him quickly and no obstacle of convention is too great for her to overcome. She is contemptuous of difficulties when she is really roused. She is thus just such a woman as the poets and the story writers describe for their livelihood. Some of these romantic writers would be disturbed at meeting in the flesh so downright and sincere an example of womanhood. They would certainly meet her in America. Not that this uncompromising attitude towards one of the principal phases of life is without its objections. The ease with which marriages can be legally carried through in America is a discovery for visitors who are accustomed to restraints and delays in England, to retarding influences which have their value in a certain publicity and in the time for reflection which they enforce.

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The nature of the American women must produce supremely happy marriages, but in conjunction with the facilities for marriage it must also at times be responsible for very unhappy results. This is to some extent corrected by the comparatively easy way by which in some of the states divorces can be obtained. It is futile for an Englishman who has lived his life in the atmosphere of his own people with their own racial tendencies and environment to appraise in any way the respective position of the sexes in the two countries. It is probable that while greater heights of happiness are sometimes obtained there are also some extensive valleys of noncontent.

The prevalent American unexpectedness is to be found in women as well as in men. I remember one elderly lady, devoted mother of a charming family, to whom in an unguarded moment I related an incident of American life which to me had a humorous touch. I told of how I had heard in a city of the Middle West with which she was acquainted, of two editors who quarrelled not merely in the columns of their papers but also in their personal activities, and how the quarrel reached a climax when one editor drew a revolver in the street and shot the other dead. I described how an American friend had given me the incident and had related that the bullet which killed the editor went through him and killed another man behind, and how I said an appropriate word of surprise and horror, which was replied to by a reassurance on the part of my American friend. "The assailant didn't escape," he said. "It was too terrible an affair. He had to pay for it. He got a year's imprisonment." This to an Englishman, used to trials where there is rarely anything but swift execution for murderers, whatever the provocation, was a climax which was irresistible. I told the tale to the American mother, a tender, good woman, with a sense of humour and to my amazement she said calmly, "Yes, I heard of the case and the dead man deserved all he got. A year's imprisonment was far too much for the man who killed him." That is only a small and incidental instance of the way an Englishman is unbalanced by new discoveries with regard to mental attitudes.

One finds among the American women a constant striving for a wider, higher experience of life, and by this I do not mean the ambitions of those who seek an outlet for energy

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or an opportunity for public notice in politics or social work of an uplift kind. I mean a struggle towards the messages to be derived from books, from music, from history, from the knowledge of men and women. I was in a city in the Middle West where there was a gathering of scores of young women, typists, school teachers, and others who had contributed from their earnings to provide the fee for a lecture on some special phase of literature by an author from Europe. They filled me with interest and appreciation and their private discussions afterwards showed them to be young women of 44 judgment as well as aspiration. The Chautauqua Movement with its systematic efforts through a period of months, over a great stretch of country, with its lectures attended by hundreds of thousands of enthusiasts carries on the story. There is an avidity in the American woman for the best things of life. They get many of them too. There is vanity and selfishness to be found among some of those who have been pampered by fortune. But there is no Englishman who will remember these with more than a smile and a shrug of the shoulder, while there will remain to him throughout the years, wherever he may travel, the undimmed and fragrant memory of other American women, gentle and devoted, whose unselfishness, comradeship and sweet understanding will always remain a treasure and an inspiration.

45

CHAPTER VI WHAT AMERICAN PUBLIC MEN ARE REALLY LIKE

One has to adjust mental frontiers in nothing more than in meeting and studying America's foremost citizens. They have the blessed quality of unexpectedness. They are unfettered. They are men of juice. From an old fashioned standpoint it might be made a matter of criticism by an Englishman that some of them lack restraint, do not cultivate the dignity which sometimes goes with culture. But an English observer on the spot is forced to the retort that on the other hand there is no opportunity in America for the cloak of dignity to hide stupidity, that in the absence of caste privileges the inefficient have no cover. They stand or fall by their achievements and their personality. It is true they miss here and there

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some of the soft shades—but be it remembered that in the humanities America is a stark nation.

The first notability that I met in America was Colonel House, the friend of President Wilson, a private and unofficial ambassador to foreign states, a devoted worker for his country, one who shrinks painfully from publicity, a man who persistently refuses office, and is unknown to public platforms, and yet one of the most powerful men in America. Here at least was a good study to begin with. Colonel House has been called the man of mystery. To talk to him at all was regarded as an achievement. To get at any of his private views an impossibility. He was the big silent man of the United States. I happened to know where he lived in New York owing to an introduction to him, or I would have had some difficulty in putting myself in touch. There was no reference to him in the telephone book. Politicians shook their heads at any idea of visiting him. I had heard conversations in drawing rooms about Colonel House, his abnormal seclusion, and there were always guesses as to the sources of his personal power.

When I saw him first I did not sense him as a man of power. I doubt if any ordinary person would. I found a man in the fifties, of medium height with thoughtful face, gracious manners, and soft voice. He is a picture of an unobtrusive thoroughbred American. He is unostentation itself, and withal he carries a sincere and simple courtesy. He makes one at home and talks like a friend, talks not too much nor yet too little, just frankly and pleasantly, and it is impossible to imagine him the popularly supposed “man of mystery.” It is in truth a little hard to imagine him the force in world politics he really is. Gentleness radiates from him. Presently, however, it breaks on one that those sympathetic eyes are very straight and for all their kindness are extracting substance from the visitor. One remembers with sudden relevance that this unviolent man with the soft voice is as swift and accurate a revolver shot as ever came out of Texas. There is a clue in that. One of the qualities of Colonel House is an almost unerring appraisal of men. He knows whom

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to trust, and more important still he knows whom not to trust, and he never says anything about either discovery.

Why has Colonel House not accepted office, why has he refused dignities, position, and profit? The answer to that I should think he would never tell in words. I can but make a guess by means of those glimpses of the man which have come to me as a visitor. With a passion to serve his country goes a dislike for public acclaim, a temperamental aversion from clamour. He dislikes noise, distrusts it. He has vision and is uplifted by the knowledge of his silent services. To achieve is his reward. He does not in the least mind being misunderstood.

His qualities include that telling gift of insight not merely to the kernel of a controversy but to the motives that move clever men. Of intimate friends I should think he makes but few but to those few he gives a depth of affection and loyalty which can never be plumbed or exhausted. Colonel House is a man to know.

48

Let me give an impression of another famous American, Mr. Roosevelt. I went down to see the ex-President at his residence in Oyster Bay with but a word of introduction from a newspaper man. His house away in the country stands in grounds which, in keeping with American custom, are unshielded from the road by any hedges or shrubs. I had never seen Colonel Roosevelt and he knew me not at all. After I had knocked at the door for a minute it was suddenly opened by a thick-set burly man in a tweed coat and knickerbockers. His grey stockings concealed huge calves and he wore a pair of heavy country boots. It was Mr. Roosevelt himself. There was genial inquiry on his face as if he were used to strange callers. I told him my name and that I was a writer from England. "Come in," he said cheerfully, "but I hope you are not going to ask me to say anything for publication." "No, I have just come down to introduce myself." I might have added had I been fully truthful that I had also come to see what manner of man was the Colonel Roosevelt of whom I had heard so much. "Come right in," he said cordially, and

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as I stepped into the hall he said, "Here, let me help you off with your overcoat." He was beaming. If ever a stranger had a warmer welcome I should like to know when or where. He took me into his study where there was a roaring fire (the temperature outside being near zero), introduced me to a friend of 49 his, placed me at a comfortable distance from the fire, threw himself into a rocking chair half a dozen feet away, and began to answer questions and to ask them with rapidity, wit, and comprehension. It was before America entered the war and he spoke with remarkable freedom of various countries, of America herself and—I tread a little timidly here—of American statesmen in office. He is an artist with words, Mr. Roosevelt, though I suspect he is not greatly troubled whether he is or not. Some of his phrases had punch in them, many had a piercing humour, and even his asides were rich with interest. I suppose one might call him loquacious, but whereas some people of this kind are merely bursting with words he was bursting with thoughts. Be it said that Mr. Roosevelt in such circumstances is not as is commonly reputed, one who wants to talk all the time; he is a fine listener, and was keen to learn about facts and people in England. Never have I met so frank a man in high position. He talked about himself as freely as about others, and described with humour some of his experiences when President. He suggested his plans for the future with what was amazing openness to a stranger, seeing that those plans were confidential. It wanted no student of human nature to understand the power which this man had secured over vast masses of his fellow countrymen. Electricity was jumping out of him all the time. In moments of excitement 50 or at the culmination of a joke his voice rose almost to a falsetto, giving extraordinary effect to his climaxes. I came away from Colonel Roosevelt feeling that I had had a real experience. I wondered as I walked down to the roadway as to the ease of access to an ex-President of the United States, and thought of the wire entanglements, to say nothing of the earth works, which would confront a stranger who tried to see one of the ex-Prime Ministers of England.

Since my visit to Oyster Bay I have seen Mr. Roosevelt on the platform, heard that falsetto voice just as effective in public as it is in private, seen him rouse thousands as he does

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individuals. He may be right or wrong in his policies, with that I have no concern for the moment, but of the power of the man there can be no shadow of doubt. In speaking on a platform he squares his shoulders, poises his head back pugnaciously, and from time to time brings his closed fist with a sudden blow on to his chest and keeps it there. Once at a meeting after war had been entered into by America, he was interrupted by a man in the gallery who shouted, "Why don't you go?" and Mr. Roosevelt became in a second a roaring furnace. That thick body of his was bent forward, his head was forced out. His finger shook with passion extended towards the interrupter as he hissed that it was not his fault he had not gone to the front, that he desired to go. "But I have three sons at the front and 51 that creature, that miserable creature up there I tell him, although it will be impossible for such a creature to understand it, that I would a thousand times rather have gone myself and given my life."

Very soon after this I went to a down town office in New York to see a man who typifies America's strength rather than her vivacity. So strange are the twists of human ignorance that I in common with a good many strangers vaguely knew that Mr. Elihu Root had been a distinguished secretary of state yet bore him chiefly in mind because of the pronunciation puzzle on his christian name. Well, a triviality of that kind vanishes at the first glimpse of Mr. Root. I have heard political criticism of him even though he is out of politics now, and every word of that criticism may be justified, but is there any one with a discerning eye who has seen him who does not know in a flash that Elihu Root is a big human force! They are not frequent, these elemental men, in any part of the world. I knew he was seventy years of age and yet when he stood up at a meeting in Washington a month before America entered the war I saw a man whose erectness, dark hair and gloomily vigorous eyes indicated fifty, not more. When he spoke there was clarity in his words, and a power that braced and stimulated even one who like myself knew him but as a name with no special recommendation. Robert Louis Stevenson says of one of his characters what 52 he might have said about himself. "He was a type hunter among mankind. He despised small game and insignificant personalities, whether in the shape of dukes or bagmen, but show him a

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refined or powerful face, a passionate gesture, a meaning and ambiguous smile, and his mind was instantaneously awakened." Stevenson would have been on fire at the sight of Elihu Root, a man with words so sternly moderate, with spirit so ruthless and strong, with a brain like an irresistible machine that grinds to power human motives, and the ebullitions of smaller intellects. It is said that Elihu Root has no emotions; it may be. I saw evidence of patience and charity and insight, but possibly these were only instruments of that clear visioned and irresistible will. Seated at his desk in the law office of which he is head he gave me a close-up view a week or two later. My first impressions were confirmed and deepened. The one change was that I saw some signs of age—but not many. A peculiar short fringe coming straight down over the forehead gave a sense of boyishness almost of carelessness. A square face every line telling of power, a strong, hard mouth, eyes laden with grim wisdom—all these things went with a quietness, moderateness of words which was startling. One explanation is illustrative and there is no harm in relating it now. Every one knows that Mr. Root is a leading Republican, that he has been a great fighter, and I mentioned to him the fact, 53 that while other Republican leaders were severely criticizing President Wilson for not entering the war he on the other hand contented himself with praising the President for such actions as might conceivably be taken as encouraging to the Allies. There instantly came from Mr. Root biting words about Germany, and he went on to ask was it not better to encourage the President with regard to policy on behalf of the Allies rather than to pick out matters for criticism? That gives you a touch in Elihu Root. No Englishman could meet this man without feeling that in him America has a bulwark.

I was in an aviation field at Dayton, Ohio, to watch demonstrations by a new war aeroplane, and I saw among the group of spectators a slim man of between forty and fifty who in dress and poise reminded one of a certain type of refined well bred Englishmen. He kept himself in the background among the visitors although he was evidently much sought after. His talk was gentle. In his regular delicate features one found traces of that old British type—Celtic or Iberian—which is buried in the recesses of Wales and Cornwall. He had dark blue eyes, dark hair, the straightest nose, and a trim little moustache touched

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with grey. There was something fragile and retiring about him. He reminded me of J. M. Barrie. That man was one of the daring geniuses of America. It was Orville Wright, the man who first left the ground 54 in a flying machine, after years of ceaseless work, investigation and experiment with his brother Wilbur. Since Wilbur's death Orville Wright is the remaining parent of the aeroplane, the inventor who has brought to being the dream of centuries, who has set loose forces the extent and effect of which in war and peace are even now but dimly perceived. And this man who has conquered the air for the world of today, given a priceless secret to future generations, and risked his life in those early experiments a hundred times to do it, looked like the cultured book recluse from the city, anxious not to obtrude himself among the distinguished amateurs who, presumably with a wealth of knowledge, were examining a new engine of science of war. In conversations he strengthened the idea of a man of culture rather than of action. He was not sternly reticent, being far too good natured, but he would rather talk about the ordinary topics of the day than himself. I had a word or two with him on those early days of struggle, disappointment and non-recognition. He described them like a spectator without bitterness, or enthusiasm, though sometimes the glint of a smile stole on him. You could never dream that this man had achieved anything very remarkable, and he calmly took for granted the fact that his postal address was "Orville Wright, America."

55

I went to hear Billy Sunday preach because he is a national institution, and because a man who has been a professional baseball player and has become a revivalist with the power to attract tens of thousands whenever he speaks must be a great actor, a prophet, or a supreme man of business. Billy Sunday has been called all these things. Judgment depends largely on one's temperament. I found him at least a tremendous spectacle.

Billy Sunday is an oval faced man with a big mouth, lively eyes, and the well knit body of the athlete. He is a sensationalist. He is also flamingly sincere. It is the novelty of the man that both horrifies and attracts. I saw him walking up and down a platform on a hot summer evening sending forth exhortations with the rattle of machine gun fire, exciting an

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audience of twenty-five thousand people, and also exciting himself, until at last in a sudden paroxysm of physical energy he slipped off his coat and stood forth in shirt and trousers with handkerchief in hand to wipe continually the moisture from his forehead. The listeners were almost as hot as he was. That is Billy Sunday. His language is ferocious, appealing, audacious, but it is all part of the man. He means every word. He talks of the Deity, and to the Deity, with the utmost familiarity. I heard him break off in the middle of a long prayer 56 and suddenly address biting personal words to the Devil. In order to do so he doubled himself at right angles and looked down over the platform on to the floor as though he had Satan below in front of him. He sneered at the arch enemy, derided him, pointed out to him his failures in keeping away certain individuals from the meeting that night. The reality of it was staggering. He could almost hypnotize you into believing the devil was on the floor there throwing back snarling words.

On top of all this Billy Sunday accentuates his deliverance with his athletics, sometimes swiftly crouching, at other times framing himself in fighting attitude, frequently bounding with electric movement from one side of the platform to the other. He is in a quiver the whole time and so are some of his hearers. Words and action go together with him. He is afraid of nothing in either direction. He was recently preaching on Bible women with special reference to the mother of Moses whom he exalted. "When I go to Heaven one of the first persons I'm going to meet is the mother of Moses. I shall say to Peter 'Where is the mother of Moses?' and Peter, he will turn round to one of the angels in attendance, and say 'Page Heaven for the mother of Moses. Billy wants to see her.'" It was all uttered with fervour and seriousness.

One may or may not receive an uplifting religious 57 influence from Billy Sunday but it is to be perceived why he is an institution praised, and abused, but not ignored. He certainly brightens life for many—though in different ways.

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CHAPTER VII WHAT AMERICANS THINK OF THE ENGLISH

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No written words have ever conveyed or can ever convey to the people of one country what are the motive forces in the soul of another country. Residence among the people is necessary to get a knowledge of that influence called temperament. Statesmen sometimes reflect it but not always, authors occasionally give us a hint of it, newspapers provide a guide sometimes accurate, sometimes erratic. Among the great majority of the English people there is no true knowledge of the spirit and feelings of Americans, and among Americans as a whole there is a similar lack of understanding of Britain and the British. Ask an American who has lived some years in England or an Englishman who has lived some years in America and you will be surprised at the sidelights and the illuminations which will be forthcoming. An Englishman is entitled to a smile when he hears a sincere inquiry as to the powers of the King and questions which suggest that he sits on a golden throne, sceptre in his hand issuing his mandates to the Government of the country with the power to hit on the 59 head with his sceptre any offending subject who opposes his royal will. A smile will hardly meet the case of a high British official who had never been to America but who had a son there spending more money than was good for himself or his father. This high official asked advice of a friend of mine recently. "My son is at Boston," he said. "He is spending too much money. A month ago I sent him a substantial sum. He wrote back thanking me for it but his letter was accompanied by lamentations, for he said he had encountered a misfortune. He had been visiting some friends, five miles from Boston and returning at night was set upon by red Indians who robbed him of all he possessed. Do you think that is possible in America at this time?"

These are extravagant incidents but from farcical altitudes there stretches down a vast range of misinterpretation and misunderstanding. It is one of the ameliorations of the war that it will bring incidental education to both sides, largely by means of those millions of unofficial ambassadors in olive green and khaki who are visiting Europe carrying lessons in their daily talk, and destined to bring back with them to America a thousand truths to be disseminated from one end of the country to the other.

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I find generally speaking that in America the gorgeous history of Britain is unknown save for that disastrous blot upon it in 1776, which, to many, comprises 60 the whole story of that country. For the other side of the picture you have the English with an impression that America, a new country, boundless in extent, still with primitive ways, and detached from the older civilizations is yet in some indefinable manner still part and parcel of the British world. There is but little realization of the sensitiveness of Americans, their intensive patriotism, their fervour at being a distinctive nation, pride at their separateness and individuality. There is, or there has been, one other extraordinary misapprehension among high and low in America, arising to some extent from lack of feeling or tact or it may be intelligence among individual Englishmen—and that is as to the general feeling on America in the old country. With an amiable criticism here and there the English people have never felt anything but the utmost friendliness to Americans. Apart from a glibbing joke or two we never heard even in those trying days before America was in the war bitter comment on the United States, and aside from the war there was an almost exaggerated respect for the American genius, reflected partly in the newspapers but more particularly in private talk. Judge of my surprise on coming to America to find there was an impression that Britain on the whole was critical of the United States, that the English people were always taking the opportunity of pin pricking, or fault finding. I think this impression in America was one 61 of my most amazing discoveries, for never was a belief more mistaken. To an Englishman it seemed that this sensitive and proud nation was entirely mistaking the attitude of its genial if somewhat old fashioned progenitor in Europe. Other travelled Englishmen, friends of America to whom I have spoken, have been equally astonished at this error. One said “I came across from among English people who never say anything unkindly of the Americans to find a belief here that we were always bent on criticizing. It is staggering.”

Long before the war began there was a vast body of responsible opinion especially in the Eastern States which was cordial in feeling to Britain, and that feeling has deepened since the war began. It would however be blinking facts to deny that widespread throughout the

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country among the masses of people there was indifference varied in many cases with suspicions or actual antagonism with regard to Britain. It arose from many causes, some of them unconscious. The story of the American revolution in school books has been such as to implant in the young mind a sturdy prejudice against England, and this has persistently permeated high and low, although subsequent knowledge and travel has modified or removed the feeling in wide circles. Still the prejudice existed. It was buttressed and added to by the influx of Irish population during the past fifty years who have come over 62 here from a land which was poor, and felt itself oppressed, and they and their children and even their children's children carried the rancour in their hearts. Among many of these the efforts of Britain for Ireland in the past generation, the money and beneficent legislation which has been placed at her disposal had made no impression. They still lived back in the middle of the last century. Some of them even hated England more than they loved America. Then there was a vast mixture of other races who with nothing to incline them towards Britain became impregnated with a feeling, cold rather than hostile, but in no case affectionate.

There is a wide change going on through the war, because of the better understanding of the British people which has resulted. Still the old tendency has not entirely disappeared. I was talking to a distinguished citizen of high position only a few days ago and he frankly confessed that in the early stages of the war his instinctive prejudices against England made him feel that America ought not to take part in a war in which she was not specially concerned. He admitted that his feelings were altered now. A prosperous and intelligent tradesman whose forebears came to this country from France half a century ago was indifferent to the British cause. "The blooming English," (with a half smile,) indicates the sentiment. And yet when all this is said there remains 63 the fact that individual Englishmen are received in America with a hospitality, a kindness and a welcoming hand such as is a delight and a comfort to any stranger. He is invited out socially, and professionally. Opportunities are forthcoming and he feels an invigorating warm heartedness wherever he goes. Educated Americans (and these reach down through

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many classes) are keenly interested in the intellectual life of Europe and the personalities of the old countries, and possess what may be called a generous intellectual curiosity with regard to the other world. Just now and again an amiable prejudice against England creeps out but it is not in the least offensive and is such as to put an Englishman at his best rather than to alienate him. Now and again one meets people who are enthusiastic about England, generally those who have lived there for a period and these are almost more English than the English. It has to be acknowledged too that from time to time one meets Englishmen who are incapable of appreciating the advantages of American life, who are narrow, and who, without intending to be so are distinctly ill mannered with their fault findings and their criticisms. Though not a general type they produce a bad impression wherever they go even among the kindest of persons.

If you want to know the opinion of the common people with regard to an Englishman you must visit a place of amusement, the vaudeville, moving picture show, or the theatre where from time to time what is supposed to be a typical Englishman is presented to the audience. You will generally find him to be rather vulgarly overdressed, almost invariably wearing white spats over his boots, with a single eye-glass, with a walking stick, and silk hat. Whatever his class in life he uses no h's and repeatedly exclaims, "Don't you know," "deucedly clever," and the word "blooming" in every other sentence. That is the type which is supposed to represent the average Englishman.

Such exaggerations need not be taken too seriously any more than the accentuated drawl which is put into the mouths of the Americans on the vaudeville stage in England sometimes. Nevertheless these representations do manage to convey an erroneous impression among people who have not, and never can have, the opportunity for learning about a foreign people at first hand. Americans conscious of the power and extent of their country and incalculable future have been sensitive with regard to the complacency and self sufficiency of England. In the future there will be differences. Americans are now confronted with a hundred manifestations that the English are not insensible to the great qualities of America. The war will also demonstrate that England's stolidity is in

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essence one of the virtues associated with good fellowship, a placid kindness and not as is sometimes supposed a patronizing self content.

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CHAPTER VIII WASHINGTON

The name of Washington somehow conveys the impression of a respectable city of officialdom, a city which, though important, is deficient in human interest. I went to Washington and found it to be one of the beautiful cities of the world.

From the Pennsylvania station in New York, a handsome edifice with cathedral like spaciousness, from which one descends as into a crypt to the gloomy platforms beneath, I set out on my two hundred and thirty miles journey southwest, with my English eyes open for new impressions. The flat country, the absence of wheat fields and lush meadows, with a certain sense of barrenness were forgotten in the uplift of two exhilarations—and that was when the train crossed the noble rivers of the Delaware and the Susquehanna. The sight of the great waters like inland seas rolling to the ocean brought back the stories of early America, with the picture of Red Indian life, settlers, cabins and forests sloping to the water's edge.

At Washington I alighted to find myself in what is called the Union Station, but which might in truth have been a King's palace, in its pillared splendour. There was something incongruous in the fact that taxicabs were speeding up to it and hastening away from it. From the station onward one gets immediately the note of Washington, with open squares rich with trees, tall houses and hotels in white, sudden openings with graceful distances and over all a restfulness.

The White House, a charm to the eye, bowered in grounds not too large, is faced by a full foliaged public square with statues which in their gracefulness are a welcome change from some of those in London. Turn your eye towards the station from which you have travelled and you will see nearby a slowly rising hill surmounted by a pile of buildings all in

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white with a domed dignity. This is the Capitol where Congress works. It has an exquisite effect looking down as it does on the spread of the city beneath, remaining meanwhile a landmark, and a symbol.

I had spent some years watching the proceedings in the British Houses of Parliament, and it was with special interest that I went up to Congress to see the House of Representatives and the Senate at work. I found as was to be expected wide differences. In the Mother of Parliaments the parties are divided by a separate aisle down the middle of the Chamber, and in Washington, as in many of the European Parliaments, members fill the Chamber in a fan-like series of seats. The British Speaker, bewigged and begowned, sits in a canopied chair with no desk in front of him. The Speaker of the House of Representatives is seated at a desk on a platform, without mark of office except the huge gavel which to my foreign eyes seemed as big as a carpenter's mallet. There is no Prime Minister to face criticism in Congress, no line of Ministers who have to make good before their audience who when the occasion is of sufficient importance are liable to turn those Ministers out of office. The authority of Congress is, so to speak, delegated and not direct. In the House of Commons centuries of precedent, beaten into form by the needs of progress, and a compromising commonsense, have evolved a procedure which is held in reverential regard by the members. I witnessed some debating excitement in the House of Representatives and the Speaker, Mr. Champ Clark, rose in his place and used his great mallet with all his strength. He had to keep on hammering. In the House of Commons the Speaker has no gavel but just rises to his feet, and that is sufficient on all ordinary occasions to bring a lively or excited assembly to instant quiet. I daresay Congress would find British Parliamentary procedure irksome. Every nation has its temperament.

There is a good deal more freedom in Congress. I saw members reading newspapers, a deadly sin in the House of Commons. I saw, on one memorable occasion, children brought in by Congressmen to sit with them, an unheard of thing at Westminster where the floor and members' seats are sacrosanct. With their greater freedom in many directions in the House of Representatives I noticed however that in debate members were courteous

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to opponents, one of the signs of a public comradeship and joint responsibility which is discernible also at Westminster—a parliamentary spirit born of legislative bodies with history and traditions. This similarity served but to sharpen contrasts. One thing I particularly missed was the sharp cut and thrust of “Question Time” in the House of Commons, where the day's proceedings are prefaced by three quarters of an hour of direct enquiries addressed to Ministers on policy or administration.

The Senate I found more sedate as becomes a second Chamber. In relative importance it outranks the British House of Lords, the legislative effectiveness and human interest of which are much behind the House of Commons. The Senate, a potent instrument in the governing of the United States, comprises able, distinguished and determined men whose calibre is evident even to visitors albeit the speeches like many public utterances are a trifle measured and elaborate in delivery to the ear of one accustomed to the brisker accents of the British Parliament. The House of Lords is a dull place without very much power. The American Senate is interesting with a great deal of power.

In connection with Congress here let it be said that I found not only in Washington but in other parts of the country a wide difference between the estimation of Congressman and the estimation of a member of Parliament in England. A member of the legislature in England is a man of note, who gains social distinction by the addition of the letters M. P. after his name. A Congressman in America is not regarded in the same light. The fact that he is in Congress is of interest but does not elevate him so very much among his fellows. A successful business man in Britain frequently looks upon it as the culmination of his career to enter Parliament. The public so regard it also. A man makes a fortune with the deliberate intention of entering political life when he has achieved his lower aim. In America legislative work seems to be more largely taken for granted, and a man does not derive any special elevation among his fellows because he takes a hand in it. The explanation is perhaps due in part to the fact that there are opportunities open to an English M. P. which are not available to a Congressman, at least not in the same direct manner. To become a Minister of the Crown one has to be a member of Parliament, and

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it is the straight road, if you are fortunate as well as clever, to becoming Prime Minister of the country.

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It is said that all Government departments in every country are more or less bound up with red tape, and there is a certain amount of truth in the suggestion, but in Washington there is certainly more openness and accessibility to officials and to Government leaders than is known in England, probably more than is known in any other country. Provided one has a genuine reason for an interview it is possible to see almost anybody short of the President himself. Before the war it was possible to see even him at times. During the war all communications with him was almost entirely through his secretary. The secretary to the President is an institution. Mr. Tumulty, for he was the incumbent when I was in Washington, occupies a position far greater in importance than the secretary of any Cabinet Minister in London. He is, I should imagine, the President's confidential adviser and friend. It so happened that I had to see Mr. Tumulty, during an early visit to Washington and I made inquiries and found that, busy man as he must be, he was open to callers at the White House each day. I had a most interesting visit not so much for its purport or its result as for its sidelights. I had no introduction but I had a professional card. A policeman stopped me at the White House gates, learned my mission and pointed out to me the entrance towards the wing where Mr. Tumulty was to be found. At the door an attendant asked me if I had an appointment. 72 I said "No" but explained who I was. The attendant weighed me up, although he took but a second to do so, and then he said "First door on the right, go straight in. Mr. Tumulty is there." I entered the room. Mr. Tumulty was seated at a flat-topped writing table at the other end near the window. He was talking to a man who was standing by the desk, apparently a caller like myself. The room was large and round the sides of it, seated in waiting were nearly a dozen people. As the turn of one came Mr. Tumulty would smile across at him and the man would go over to the desk and would sometimes seat himself in front, but at other times Mr. Tumulty would stand up and go a step to meet him, which may or may not have been an indication

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that the interview was to be a short one. The conversation between the Secretary and the caller was generally in full hearing of all others present, though occasionally there would be an unobtrusive retirement to the window where the two could talk together in semi-privacy for a minute. All kinds of persons were there, Congressmen, business men, newspaper men, and I heard at least a dozen problems or questions put to Mr. Tumulty in the hope of transmission to the President. There were consultations on public matters and private matters, but throughout all Mr. Tumulty was serene, genial, unworried. He was capable too. That geniality and slow speech of his concealed a profundity⁷³ of tact, and swift thought. How under the pressure of work he could preserve that wonderful air of cheerfulness and patience with some who must have been bores passed my understanding. I made my mental obeisance not only to American ability but to American diplomacy. It was rather like being in the ante-room of Cardinal Richelieu and watching the efforts of callers, distinguished and undistinguished, to get a hint of the Cardinal's mind, to put some request before him, possibly to try to obtain an audience. The Secretary's swift review of visitors and their needs to the President at a later hour came to my mind. One may hazard a guess that in some cases it would be piquant.

The hotels at Washington are a social institution; incidentally they provide one of the city's principal industries. I do not know that it has another apart from Government work. Two of the principal hotels are not only places of residence but rendezvous for politicians, diplomats and officials and business men and officers. The entrance halls are like public lobbies, teeming with talking groups and couples. The dining rooms seem to be choked at every hour of the day by those who make eating an excuse for consultations. In one at least of the hotels there is opportunity for public meetings in a hall which will seat hundreds. It was in this hall on my first visit to Washington that I sampled an American representative⁷⁴ gathering and came in contact with the unexpected incident which is never long absent from the stranger. The meeting was that of a patriotic association and the speeches were interesting, but what specially held me was the undertoned talk of a middle aged lady on my right, who had travelled some hundreds of miles to attend

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but who occupied herself in a running comment to her neighbour who happened to be myself. She was well read, slightly angular, and very serious. At first her talk was level headed though rather high flown. Presently a reference in one of the speeches led to her private announcement that she knew the way to bring the war to a satisfactory end, namely by spiritual effort. The Allies should immediately all lay down their arms. I agreed that this would bring the war to an end. She seemed pleased. She then confided to me that she wrote books, and I politely enquired for particulars. In reply she said that one of her writings was directed towards showing how by an effort of will the so-called dead could be brought to life. "We could reassemble Lord Kitchener here at this moment if we chose to do so." She developed her theory at considerable length. I asked for further examples of her work, and she explained that she was interested in the resuscitation of forgotten or neglected branches of knowledge. "For instance there is laughter at the idea that witches could ride on broomsticks and yet 75 there is nothing to laugh at in it. I have written a little book demonstrating their capacity." I was a stranger in a strange land and I wrestled to get command of myself. She seemed quite sane, and was tremendously respectable. To secure my balance I had to neglect her for a time and turn my attention to powerful words by Mr. Elihu Root from the platform for a little. A few minutes later in a pause I sought protection by turning to my neighbour on the other side, a well dressed, middle aged man from New York. It was a relief to get his matter-of-fact reflections on the speeches, and I felt on solid ground again. When the speeches were over I strolled through the crowd in conversation with the New Yorker. He was keen for the Allies. "I ought to be," he said, "my forebears came from France." I was sympathetic and heard other facts. "My family goes back a long way," he continues. "I am indeed descended from no less a person than Charlemagne. By the way, he also hated the Germans. He strung up no less than three hundred of them in one day, and what was more did it when hemp was dear." His face was that of an earnest man. I fled from him to get some tea in the restaurant. I asked the waiter to make it of treble strength.

CHAPTER IX PRESIDENT WILSON AT CLOSE QUARTERS

President Wilson, a distinguished man of letters and somewhat of a recluse, with an intellectual interest in politics and Government, became President of the United States by what his one-time opponents might regard as an electoral accident. If so the accident is one which will leave its mark on the history of the world.

My first sight of President Wilson was in the most dramatic hour of his life, that hour in which he stood up before Congress to declare war on Germany and tell the tense gathering that all the young men of the country must arm themselves for the struggle. The gathering was at white heat. President Wilson was the coolest man there.

I was not sure that he was a great man when I saw him. I had heard a hundred statements about his personality. When he mounted the platform by the side of Speaker Champ Clark on the fateful evening of April 2nd, I found in that slim, well-groomed figure none of the electric output which sometimes tells one instinctively that a great personality is at hand. I even wondered if he were a commonplace man. Vainly I sought for marks of genius. He might have been a schoolmaster or a business man but I could not see him as the leader of men, far less as the leader of the nations. It may have been my blindness. I saw a man on the tall side of medium height, erect, leisurely, serious, with a long face rather pale, with lustreless eyes, with grey hair smoothly brushed, a touch of frontal baldness, a man with long white hands. He was in morning coat and apparelled with a precision and indeed a polish which goes with a scrupulous precise nature. His smile was polite but lifeless as he shook hands with the Speaker. The imagination was affected by his extraordinary calmness in the midst of that Chamber seething with expectancy. Was he an ordinary nervousless man or was he the supremely strong man? He was one or the other. Ice is the only word for him in the midst of that chamber of hot emotion. He took a couple of steps to the reading desk before him, put his hand into his breast-pocket and drew from it a sheaf of notes on small sheets of paper. He placed them on the little writing table, with one hand remaining there to keep them steady, and then he began to read aloud in that

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peculiar voice at once so soft and pleasing and penetrating. Still he might have been the schoolmaster. Deathly silence lay over all the assembly. Smoothly and without a falter in word or phrase, without a misplaced 78 syllable he read on from those sheets of paper a message which was to take a hundred million people into war and which was to set a mark in the history of civilization for all time. He stood erect and at ease, never shifting a foot as a nervous man might occasionally do under tension, and his long white fingers showed no quiver. I began to realize I was looking at a phenomenon. Even so I was not sure of the kind of a phenomenon. Subsequent events have helped me to a judgment but on the evening President Wilson uttered the words which were going to make him a figure in the history books for centuries to come, he might have been a professor addressing a class or the secretary of a company reading out an interesting annual report which called at appropriate intervals for a little warming of the voice, a little stressing of special phrases. When he had finished and the bursts of cheering had died down, he turned and shook hands with the Speaker, put the fateful notes in his inside breast-pocket, and stepped down from the platform on his way out with the air of a man who had carefully and successfully accomplished a task necessitating preparation and scrupulousness in delivery, but which once done was part of the day's work, not to be worried about in view of future activities to which the mind must thenceforward be bent.

I thought about President Wilson afterwards and tried to assimilate the flavour of the man. But for 79 that nervous body, that long rather narrow head and intellectual face, I should have called him stolid and yet I knew he was not stolid. He ought to have given me impressions of British restraint. He did not do so. There was something different, something more direct and boyish despite his reserve, than was to be found in a calm, reserved British statesman. I saw in him traces of the mordant, clear-cut, uncompromising Joseph Chamberlain and yet he had a more effective touch and his phrases were more literary. There was in him a suspicion of Mr. Asquith, intellectual, with that mental poise which accompanies full knowledge and an inflexible will. On the other hand he was the antithesis of Mr. Lloyd George who is a flaming, crackling, bursting kind of a person. The

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mystery of the man was tantalizing. I wondered what the outcome would be. The test to which he was about to be put would unfailingly show his pith and fibre. Was he a great man? Was he one on whom the mantle of his position alone gave distinction?

The months sped on, America plunged into the welter of war, and President Wilson began to loom forth for good or for evil as one of the directing figures of the conflict. He was criticized by sections in America. There were mishaps and delays, confusions and complexities, mere incidents, history will say, in getting a continent into war. Mr. Wilson began to emerge as a force, strong to obstinacy in his 80 courses, sometimes a little rhetorical in his diction, but withal a man who got his own way amid a nation of strong men. He may have been right or he may have been wrong in his policies, but the strength of the man was obvious to an onlooker. In some of the criticisms I heard that the President did not mix sufficiently, did not visit camps and other national centres, shut himself up in the White House away from councillors, would not discharge departmental chiefs who it was claimed were weak if not inefficient. And during all this time his reputation was steadily rising in Europe and he was reaching a pinnacle of estimation probably never accorded to the greatest of American Presidents before. Once in a while he would break forth with a speech so accurately tuned, so poignantly vibrant as to still the voice of criticism and to set up a great chorus of acclaim among friends and opponents alike. I began now to see behind the veil that covered President Wilson during his memorable speech in Congress on April 2nd, 1917.

It so happened that with a group of others I was received by the President at the White House on the eve of the time when the swelling American army was to be able to make itself felt on the western front. On a sunny spring day I went into the White House and came face to face with the man who held the world's destinies in his grasp. It was a different President Wilson from the one I had seen in Congress. 81 He was still the well-dressed man with the carefully brushed hair but now his face was irradiated with a welcoming smile, and gentleness of manner lay on him. The look of friendship was in his eye. He stood in the midst of a group with his finger and thumb in his waistcoat pocket

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talking appealingly. That long jaw, that curiously mobile mouth, and soft southern accent, moulded themselves into an aspect of reserve which never left him. It was the reserve of strength. He had a poise of words, a poise of manner and a poise of will which it was easy to understand would bewilder more impulsive people and sometimes dishearten them because they would not understand it. He turned from one to another in the group with a quick gesture and a toss of the head not in the desire for approbation but because with a probing intuitive instinct he wanted to be in touch with the party, wanted his words and ideas to be understood. Freely and frankly he talked, explaining his policy and always using with a quiet resoluteness the first person singular. He took it for granted that he was the responsible man. He sought to shift no burden on to other people, but there was no arrogance about him for that is impossible in a man with the temperament of Woodrow Wilson. There was however a subtle assertiveness, a crystal consciousness that his work called for personal decision continuously. It was obviously impossible for this 82 man to be in any position of authority without using that authority to the fullest limit in his belief of what was right. He spoke on vitally important matters, but during the whole of his twenty minutes discourse there was not one single phrase or ever a word wasted. As a literary composition it was closely knit and without flaw. His thoughts were interwoven in perfect order, and had a directness and a relevance which set ideas jumping in those who heard it. He used a little swear word once. He joked once. But everything he said fitted into the framework perfectly. No sentence could be called brilliant in itself, but the talk as a whole was that of a brilliant man. I shook hands on leaving him. He has a soft and steady unhurried grip with those long fingers. You can learn much from a handshake sometimes.

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CHAPTER X AMUSEMENTS AND SOME CONTRASTS

The incidentals in life are more important to the ordinary individual than the tendencies of politics. Taken in the mass, men and women are day by day creatures. America is a glittering new country with the characteristics of youth and ardency, a country wherein

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dignity is unexpectedly mixed with a freedom from conventions. Let an Englishman take a glimpse at her amusements.

The moving picture business has become a great industry, and if you want to know why you must go to a place like the “Rialto” in New York, a large and luxurious theatre constructed for the primary purpose of showing pictures on the screen. A delicate pink-tinted light steals unobtrusively through the ceiling and sides. The stage is flanked by changing pictorial scenes placed in recess. An orchestra numbering scores, it may be a hundred, is set in below the level of the stage in front. The entertainment opens with music from this orchestra not slap-dash popular jingles, but extracts from the masters, given with care and finish. No picture in this,—probably 84 the finest picture house in the world—gets so much applause as that music. There are songs by known singers, sometimes opera choruses. Afterwards the picture of the night is given in some romantic episode, a wild and woolly west drama, or some rippling domestic tale, and whatever is the story it is presented with a photographic elaborateness and completeness such as we do not know in England, a story moreover which touches only the healthy sides of life. Finally there is a rollicking comical series probably drawn by one of the popular cartoonists which will tickle the fancy of even the most highbrowed of intellectuals. No more than say ten seconds seems to separate the pieces of the entertainment; it goes like a piece of swift machinery from start to finish. In the course of many visits I have rarely seen the time when there were vacant seats in the large auditorium. Prices go from thirty cents to sixty cents or as we should say in England one shilling and threepence to half a crown. The audience range up to the millionaire class for if you enjoy an entertainment in America you can go and see it without any thought of caste, whoever and whatever you are. President Wilson in Washington visits each week what we should call a music hall performance and what in America is called vaudeville, not a costly and ornate show such as that given in the Palace or Alhambra in London but a lively entertainment of the ordinary well-to-do hall such as the Oxford. 85 People think no less of the President but rather more because of his simple tastes and human feelings.

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Thus it is that rich and poor flock to the movies, not only in the great cities but in the smaller communities throughout America. If I were asked to name one recreation more general than any other in America I should say the moving pictures. It has incidentally some good results. A dozen educational influences can be brought to bear in the pictures which are not available by means of newspapers, the theatre, or public meetings.

With regard to the stage in general an Englishman sees but few variations from taste in England. Good comedies and strong melodramas are favourite meat. George Bernard Shaw lasts a week or two. Forbes Robertson is ever popular. In one direction, especially in New York there is an innovation for an Englishman. Many of the popular restaurants have the so-called cabaret shows, that is to say an entertainment part of which is provided by performers and part by the guests themselves. Either on the platform or on the dining room floor there are what we in England call “turns”—a fantastic dance by a thinly clad young woman, or chorus dances by groups of young women, gaily clad but still not over clad, a sentimental or patriotic song by a young man in evening dress, and sometimes a coarser ditty rattled off in metallic fashion by a lady who makes up in violence of emphasis what she lacks in tunefulness. This entertainment is varied by the guests themselves in the shape of a dance to the music of the orchestra. The dance is in a cleared space in the middle of the room. Young men and women and elderly men and women get up from their places, have a dance and sit down again and complete their meal. It is all very unusual to an Englishman. Dancing it should be added is a rage among widespread circles. Waltzes are a variety, and variations of the one-step and two-step are the staple.

Crowds of thousands and tens of thousands go to the baseball matches. Baseball is and will remain to the Englishman a glorified and developed game of rounders. Americans think that cricket is slow and boresome, and that baseball is the king of games. A cricketer looking on at baseball has his cricket instincts jarred by the way the pitcher sends the ball at the batter. He slings it with a fierce throw, horrible heresy for a bowler in cricket. The

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quickness and power of the man with the club is exhilarating and so also is the agility and skill of the fielders. The game goes with snap and dash: the men are in and out, the sides are in and out, all in a swiftly moving hour or two. "Think of this in comparison to cricket," said an enthusiast to me one day. There is no reply. You have to be an Englishman educated 87 in cricket from early school days to manhood to understand the thousand subtle fascinations of that great pastime. An American will look at you blankly if you try to explain the supreme joy of a "late cut" or a "leg glide." They do not appreciate the accumulated skill of a cricketer, and cannot be expected to understand that one essential is the test of patience, endurance, and doggedness. The niceties in cricket, of judgment as well as of execution, are not for Americans. Their highly strung nervous temperament has no tolerance for a game which to the stranger appears slow, but which for the initiated has its fascinations in a mixture of scientific skill, gracefulness, the power to hold on, touched with flashes of brilliance. Ranjitsinjhi would mean nothing to Americans. They would regard W. G. Grace as a curiosity. In nothing more than their respective affections for baseball and cricket are the temperamental differences of an Englishman and an American set forth. There are however common ideals behind both, the rigid fairness, the unselfishness of team work, the generosity and self denial. To "play the game" is a phrase which in after life has a meaning for the best men of both countries.

Americans and Britons can find a common ground in golf. There are the same joys, the same calamities, almost the same swear words on the delightful courses of the United States. An Englishman who 88 wants to feel at home should immediately secure entrance to an American golf club.

A new spectacle of America at play is the seaside resort in the summer. An Englishman will certainly miss the homelike and beautiful hamlets, the warm and cheering popular resorts like Folkestone or Cromer or Broadstairs. Flat, unrelieved country gives down to the sea. I went one summer's day to Long Beach about an hour's journey from New York. There were thousands of bathers on the scene, men and women all mixed together. Officials were present to see that the proper bathing dresses were worn, and wonderful

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bathing dresses they were so far as the women were concerned—of all colours, all shapes, with a dozen effects. And here be it said that women who go into the water must all wear stockings, a display of the calf of the leg being regarded as improper. I wonder if Americans would be shocked at the sight of our bathing places. Be that as it may I found some freedom, and less reserve than is customary at English resorts. It is a bathing costume life on the American beaches. Men and women in light garb lie on the sand, and sit on the sand, and walk about or run about in their bathing dresses in a way which is not in consonance with the English practice. The prejudiced English eye finds something unpleasant in those half clad men lingering about sun-bathing with their women friends. Long Beach seemed to me to be a 89 packed mass of men and women who in spite of the women's stockings were not garbed for lounging or prolonged conversation. The climate makes a difference. Attitude of mind has also a bearing.

It is a highly coloured mosaic which makes up the American life. I had heard terrible tales about Tammany, had read a book which demonstrated clearly some of its misgoverning features, and was prepared to meet monsters in its leaders. I had occasion to come in contact with a high official, the District Attorney of New York, who was classed as a Tammany man. I chanced to be present when a distinguished foreigner at the District Attorney's office had to give some explanations, delicate and embarrassing for a man in his position, with regard to charities with which his name was associated. There had been some little muddle and, thanks to a temporary official, a touch of doubt as to the genuineness of the charities. As a matter of fact they were honestly run with the highest of motives. But the distinguished foreigner, not a good hand at business, was soon deep in involved explanations with the questioning lawyers who took his preliminary examination in hand. They were courteous but keen, very keen. Their enquiries showed no mercy. In the midst of the business in came the District Attorney to take charge of the matter, and with a kindly salutation to his visitor he motioned his assistants to continue their work. To a 90 purely legal mind the irrelevancies, the tortuous explanations, of the gentle, elderly, loquacious foreigner would have been suspicious. The District Attorney,

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a debonair man with quiet eyes and a humorous mouth, fiddled with a book, looked over a document, turned an occasional uninterested glance at his lawyers and their erstwhile victim. Presently he broke in smoothly, gravely but decisively, drew an illustration from Charles Dickens to show how notabilities should be on their guard against exploitation, conveyed a caution in the anecdote. The next minute he was pleasantly discoursing on Dickens in general which was his way of showing the enquiry was at an end. What had happened was that in those few minutes of listening he had formed a judgment of the man under examination, a judgment which transcended all questions and replies, assured him that the foreigner was an honest gentleman despite his mixed and nervous explanations. At one stroke the District Attorney had cut through all the network. There was decision and charm about him. A mannerly gentleman is the same all over the world. I know this is no argument for Tammany, but after all one is human.

I had been told that American long distance trains were the fastest and most comfortable in the world. I found them travelling at the same rate though not any faster than the best trains in Europe, found them 91 to speak plainly, not nearly so comfortable, perhaps owing to their steel structure, perhaps because of the different way the tracks are laid—at any rate with a continual vibration and intermittent jolting unusual in British trains. Pullman sleeping arrangements too are in comfort far behind the English separate compartments, each of which is a real bedroom in itself at a cost no greater than is charged for the berth in the Pullman.

The wooden houses of America are a surprise to one who comes from a country of solid brick and stone. The newer erections and especially the country homes, bowered as they are in trees and set in an atmosphere of greenery, are a delight to the eye in their freshness, lightness and comfort. But wooden houses do not improve with age. Unless scrupulously cared for they become shabby. You can however easily build new ones. The big hotels have material advantages over most of the hotels in Europe. Telephones are excellent in their completeness. A feature is the separate bathroom for each guest. One has however to get used to the task of going down to breakfast with unpolished boots, for

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whereas in England it is the custom at night to place one's boots outside the bedroom door in the corridor and find them there brightly polished ready to wear in the morning, there is in America no such habit, and the guest has to take his chance or to use his energy in finding 92 a boot cleaner in the street or in the basement of the hotel.

Some of the principal newspapers are national institutions, a little copious for the Englishman, but carefully constructed, packed with factful matter, and, the best of them, models of good writing on the editorial pages. In the less serious papers there is sometimes a strength of comment due to a lack of stringent libel laws, but it makes life much brighter for readers. The main difference from English papers is that space seems no object, and topics are written up rather than written down. In some journals there is a less meticulous regard for accuracy in detail, but one cannot have everything in this imperfect world, and at any rate American papers are rarely dull. There is frequently an element of carefree gaiety which spares neither man nor his institutions. One of my first weeks in America was brightened by a paragraph reprinted from a local paper announcing news of a citizen in one of the smaller cities in the Middle West. It ran something like this: "Mr. S. Brown, a resident of Newville who has been blind for thirty years, has made it a practice to take a walk of a couple of miles every morning for the sake of his health. Yesterday morning he chose for his walk the side of the railway track. The end of the story is so painful we do not like to print it." 93 The Sunday papers have scores and scores of pages. To a bewildered visitor they seem acres in extent. It is however not necessary to read them all.

In the big cities in New York there is not nearly so much of what we would call home life as there is in England. It is the custom for persons of nearly all stations to live in flats or as they are called, apartments, rather than in houses large and small. People who can well afford a mansion prefer one of these apartments. There is a strange sense of temporariness in even the best of them. They give a visitor an impression, however

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spacious and however luxurious, of being but a halting place, a depot for a hurried breakfast rather than a home.

In a thousand ways America is more outspoken than the older peoples, indication perhaps of a new outlook as well as of courage. In the West divorces are more easily to be obtained than in other parts of the country, and consequently the unhappily married go there for temporary or prolonged residence. The result is a continual but changing gathering of the newly unmarried, and it is perhaps to meet the desires and impulses of these people that there appear advertisements in the local papers similar to the following.

“Marry if lonely—For results try me: best and most successful. ‘Home maker’: hundreds rich wish 94 marriage soon: strictly confidential: most reliable: years experience: descriptions free. ‘The—Club.’”

“Marry if lonely—For speedy marriage, try my club: very successful; best, largest in the country; established 12 years; thousands wealthy wishing early marriage: confidential; descriptions free. The—Club.”

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CHAPTER XI MY MOST INTERESTING AMERICAN

Once in a while a stark man appears in a country. He has qualities which are such, despite any patriotism, to make him a citizen of the world. He may not be faultless, or particularly popular, but he is big, and hard, and strong and real. In such a man sincerity burns like a furnace and shrivels into ashes the more or less innocent everyday evasions, and unconscious dishonesties of lesser men and women. Such men are strong meat—not food for babes. Rich is the country that produces them.

I have met one in America who notwithstanding his eighty-seven years has a mind sharp-edged, and gleaming. His tongue is as caustic, his sympathies as lively, his courage as unabashed as when a colonel of thirty in the Union Army he had an interview with

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President Lincoln at the White House, outlined a method in conducting the campaign and suggested the removal of General McClellan. General Rush C. Hawkins lives in the Washington Square district of New York, a commanding figure of a man in spite of the weight of years, who may be seen taking his 96 constitutional up Fifth Avenue of an afternoon, or mounting the steps of the Union League Club, where even forty years ago he was a prominent figure. It was my good fortune to meet him shortly after my arrival in America, and I knew I had made a discovery. General Hawkins is one of the persons who convey something of themselves in their looks—spare and gaunt with a long face, a fighter's jaw, a delicate uprearing forehead, with a glint of humour in eyes and mouth, and with the eagle nose of the man contemptuous of fear or favour. Virility lights him even at eighty-seven. He is a picture of what I have imagined the old Duke of Wellington to look like, "The Iron Duke" as he was called. General Hawkins, American to the core, has some of the characteristics of that old breed of last century well-to-do Englishmen, kindly in their private relations, fierce to their public enemies, and whose attitude to shallow theorists and effusive optimists was summed up in the phrase "The country is going to the dogs, sir." That does not mean that General Hawkins is narrow, for he is travelled and cultured, with an expert's interest in those things which inspire high natures, paintings, music, literature, philosophy, and, last but not least, men and women.

Back in the sixteenth century there were three Devonshire men who swept the seas for Elizabeth and their names were Hawkins, Drake and Frobisher. It 97 was probably in the seventeenth century that General Hawkins' ancestors reached America, and they came from Devonshire, and I like to think that the old General is a descendant of that sea dog who knew not fear, and helped to tie the British flag to the mast head for all the world to see. Be that as it may there was a grandfather of General Hawkins, Dexter Hawkins, who fought in the Revolutionary war, keeping the family name to the front in the field where it had won distinction. It was his grandfather on his mother's side, William Hutchinson, who was Adjutant of the "First Squadron of Horse, Vermont Forces" in the war of 1812 which patrolled the Canadian border at Vermont.

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Of the fighting blood in the Hawkins family there can be no doubt. Rush Hawkins, a boy of fifteen, deliberately went away from his Vermont home in 1846 to join the American army in Mexico, and although he could only secure enlistment as a private, he saw war in being, slept under canvas, experienced camp life and generally picked up the ways of a soldier. He must have been a hardy young rascal, as well as an independent one, a curious boy too. I should like to have known him.

General Hawkins once said to me with a hard smile, "I was born without faith, hope or fear." But that dogmatic negative assertion covers an implication of positive qualities with which his life is amply marked. 98 In the twenties he spent a couple of years in the South and that spirit, at once so hard and so sympathetic, was revolted by the institution of slavery. When in 1861 the war came he was in New York, and proceeded immediately to raise a regiment for service, and the "Hawkins Zouaves" became the name which even now sounds like a trumpet not only to those who fought, but to their sons and grandsons. He soon had opportunity for service. It became necessary to capture southern forts which had been established at Hatteras Inlet, and in the squadron which went away under sealed orders in August 1861 from Newport News, Colonel Hawkins was the second in command of the military forces, consisting of four companies of his own regiment and other details. There was a clean-cut piece of work, with bombardment and the landing of troops at Hatteras, and Colonel Hawkins was left in charge of the captured forts. He was a man born to incident and adventure as the sparks fly upwards. It so happened that Governor Morgan of New York sent down to him an officer to be joined to his regiment, but Colonel Hawkins, knowing that the character and private life of this officer was subject to reproach, refused to assign him to a regiment of which he was as proud as a sweetheart. There was immediate trouble. General Williams came down, placed Colonel Hawkins under arrest for disobedience of orders and sent him up to headquarters 99 at Old Point Comfort for trial. As luck would have it the Government at Washington wished information as to the position at Hatteras Inlet, and Colonel Hawkins was released from arrest and sent to Washington to give the benefit of his advice and knowledge to the Government with regard

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to the captured positions. He saw President Lincoln, spent an evening with him at the White House, and as a sequel was present at the next day's meeting at the Cabinet. It was during his talk with President Lincoln that Colonel Hawkins was enabled to give the story as to his insubordination and what had happened to himself. Lincoln listened gravely and sympathetically and then said: "You did the right thing although perhaps you did it in the wrong way. This matter must be settled quietly and amicably. You will go back and tell the General this from me. You will say that I do not wish to offend Governor Morgan, Governor of the State of New York, on which I must rely to draw the largest number of troops to end this terrible war. You and the Governor and the General must settle this matter between you. You can say from me that I think you acted rightly."

It was shortly after this that Colonel Hawkins having learned the position of affairs at Washington, "Over run with McClellan's Generals who did nothing but talk," became incensed at McClellan's inactivity, took council with Mr. Caleb Smith, one of 100 the Cabinet, and secured interviews with President Lincoln to whom he explained that action should be taken immediately, that the lack of movement of the army of the Potomac was playing into the enemies' hand, and suggested a line of action which would bring, he believed, both battle and victory. One can picture a very human and very wise Abraham Lincoln listening to the enthusiastic and hard headed young Colonel, and I have no doubt that it was the memory of this interview which later caused him to say "I wish all the officers in the army had your spirit. If they had this war would soon be over." The President took in all the arguments which the Colonel laid before him, put in a questioning word here and there, and showed both sympathy and understanding. When the interview drew to its close he expressed his appreciation. He added: "I shall not remove General McClellan from his position as Commander in Chief. He is my General and I must support him." The President however gave his card to Colonel Hawkins, and instructed him to go to General McClellan and to lay before him his arguments for an immediate advance. Colonel Hawkins went over to General McClellan's office, and sent up his card with the President's only to be told that General McClellan was too busy to see him. The young Colonel would

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not perhaps have been so offended by the rebuff had he known that 101 McClellan a few days before had refused an interview to President Lincoln himself. How McClellan was subsequently removed from his command after the utmost patience and kindness from Lincoln is a matter of history. It was in 1864 that President Lincoln recalling that early interview to Colonel Hawkins spoke of McClellan. "Poor George. I did all I could for him. He could do nothing for himself."

Of the dash and courage with which Colonel Hawkins led his men in action there is evidence in the official records. On one occasion at least his sagacity saved a great deal of useless slaughter. After the first battle of Fredericksburg, where an attack on practically unpregnable positions cost thousands of men against southern losses of a few hundreds there was a council of Generals to formulate another attack next morning, and it was the facts and arguments of Colonel Hawkins, present as a brigade commander, which caused General Burnside to countermand the order for the new attack.

But the salt and savour of General Hawkins springs not from the one fact that he is a fighter, but from many other things that he is in addition to being a fighter. He was chairman of a Committee of the Union League Club in 1875 which investigated Tammany methods and presented a report as poignant in facts and figures as in argument. There were searing words. Needless to say that General Hawkins was 102 the writer. He has his prejudices, and whether they may be altogether well founded or not he retains them. It is possible to listen to his bitter denunciations with joy even when one does not entirely share his views. He has many links with England for which he has both affection and admiration, but he heartily dislikes some of the English. "My first books as a boy were 'Scottish Chiefs' and the 'Life of Wallace.' I loved to read of old Wallace with that great claymore of his sweeping off the heads of acres of Englishmen." (There would be a chuckle after this.) He loves the French. He has a passion for books, paintings, is an art connoisseur and has a fine taste in literature. Forty years ago he wrote the first, and then, only authoritative history in relation to the first books produced from early printing presses. Since then he has spent a quarter of a century in collecting first books or at any rate early books from

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the first presses of the first printers of the fifteenth century. His collection now ranks with that possessed by the British Museum and is probably the second finest in the world. His love of art is sufficiently evidenced by the fact that in 1889 he was appointed American art commissioner at the Paris Exposition. During his work there he had his famous encounter with Whistler, reported in the "Gentle Art of Making Enemies," an encounter in which the General took upon himself, in view of 103 Whistler's demands, to agree with almost offensive alacrity that the famous painter should immediately remove the whole of his exhibits from the American collection. It was during this period in Paris that he had talks with King Edward VII, then Prince of Wales, and received from him a private invitation to call and have a chat next time he was in London. I can not help thinking that the pride of General Hawkins was at least the equal of the pride of the heir apparent to the British throne, who revealed himself as a genial well informed keen man and who in other circumstances might have been an acceptable friend.

Running like a golden thread through the eventful life of this belligerent critical man of the world was the companionship of his wife who was Miss Annmary Brown, daughter of Mr. Nicholas Brown of Providence. She is now dead. Her portrait shows some secret of the sweet influence she brought to bear on a man with few of the softer illusions about human nature and who had one ideal only during forty-three years of married life. It is too sacred a matter for an outsider to do more than touch with the lightest hand. But no one who knows this strong, dominating man can fail to perceive the beautiful mystery within, which has persisted from the day when he married, twenty-nine years of age, and is now, after his wife is gone, as strong and as pervading 104 as in those sweetheart times when few of those at present living had come upon the earth. Since Mrs. Hawkins' death he has established at Providence a memorial to her which houses a notable collection of art treasures, the early books of which I have spoken, an assembly of pictures, old manuscripts and some fifteen thousand letters, many of them from the distinguished men and women who have lived during his time.

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His naked fierce sincerity would lead casual observers to believe that he was a cynic—and indeed in some matters he is a cynic. He has for instance wrestled with divines about the everlasting secret. He does not wish to live again, he says. Brusquely he asks whether the enormous majority of humans are worth preserving. “Why there is only one person in fifty thousand persons who is worth acquaintance, and what is the Almighty going to do with all this trash? I don't want to live another life on one of the rings of Saturn or anywhere else. If there is immortality, dogs and horses are at least as worthy of it as human beings. Is there any man or woman with the fidelity of dogs, with the unselfishness of dogs? Of course there's not.” Here it may be said in parenthesis that the old General has always been moved by a love of animals. He was one of the original members of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals founded by Henry Bergh 105—a society from which has sprung 400 similar organizations in various parts of the world.

He will tell you that he adopts the considered judgment of Simon Newcomb, the astronomer, who devoted a long life to studying the heavens for the practical purposes of the Government, and who once said to him “In my experience I have never discovered any ‘fact’ that leads me to believe there is an existence beyond the present.”

Yet this fierce, contemptuous, unbelieving critic has written down his code of life in words illumined by spirituality. I cull a few passages.

THE FINDING OF PEACE

“Those who love nature
And search understandingly
Will find the infinite.”

THE USES OF LIFE

“Not as we take but as we give,
Not as we pray but as we live,
Not as they say but as we
do, Not as we reap but as we sow.”

CREDO

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“I believe in unconditioned honesty, The power and practice of truth, Love of the beautiful, and the Influence of noble aspirations.”

He is a man of no compromise, General Hawkins, and yet here is an extract which carries with singular 106 clearness the imprint of mingled challenge and hope:

“To men the puzzle of the world will never be revealed. The all-powerful illimitable creative force that directs its course and that of numberless others is a jealous authority holding this secret of the ages under single control. Men may surmise, guess, believe, have faith and hope, but to no purpose. The little we may be permitted to understand about this boundless power and its creation can come to us only through contemplation and study of its works, our world, as we see, love, and learn to appreciate its intimate benevolence and never ending enchanting beauties.”

His comments on public affairs are as pungent as they are penetrating. He is a swift discerner of men and women. Some might find in him a harsh philosopher. His words are often without mercy. And yet in private his benefactions are unceasing, bestowed often in secret and sometimes anonymously. To those persons, men and women, whom he likes, he has the graciousness which for centuries has been accompanied by the name of “perfect gentleman.” He loves to think himself material, living from day to day a straight life, an upright life, just for what that day may bring forth, and yet unknown to himself there is running through him and emanating from him a spirituality which lifts him cloud high, which permeates those who come in touch with him and 107 leaves them fitter men and women. When the time comes for Rush Hawkins to leave this earth, his countrymen may appropriately write on his memorial the words “Here lies a great American,” but those who know him best will realize that an inscription even more fitting would be “Here rests the shadow of a great soul.”

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CHAPTER XII AMERICA AT WAR

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A well-known American clergyman described to me his pre-war attitude as follows: "I am not unfriendly to England and France and prefer their way of life to that of Germany but still I see no adequate reason for leading the American people into the terrible abyss of war." I believe that phrase, in spite of enthusiastic friends the Allies possessed in the Eastern States, gives a pretty good hint of what the majority of American people felt. There were veins of Germany sympathy. There were patches—and big patches—of non-German suspicion or hostility towards Britain. But the bulk of the American people, loving peace and hating war, saw no compelling reason for the entry to a shambles of destruction of millions of their young men. German propaganda probably had something to do with it; old prejudices against Britain helped. But the main reason was the traditional American aloofness from the troubles and quarrels of an ancient continent, the merits or demerits of which had no concern for a self sufficing nation three thousand miles away.

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There were however flutterings of feeling from time to time as German aims and methods were focussed in the light. The plight of Belgium was hard to swallow, and so was the danger to France. Then the submarine activities were unpleasant to America's self respect. And looking back over a period of eighteen months one may perhaps perceive a certain stirring of spirit against the military monster which threatened the world, a rousing which sooner or later would have led to action. And there were of course thunderous champions of the Allies especially in the newspapers of the Eastern States. All the same it was a peace-desiring nation in which I lived in the first three months of 1917. President Wilson was undoubtedly supported by the vast majority of Americans in withholding his hand. That may or may not be palatable but it strikes an observer as an outstanding truth.

Suddenly a dramatic change swept across the nation, already a little restive amid certain sections. Germany practically ordered the American flag off the ocean except in such parts as were specified as exempt. That was the match to powder. The American nation flamed out in a proud rage. Defiance was flung forth. Pro-German and other groups tried

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to stem the resentment among many of the people. They might as well have tried to stop Niagara. When, after a series of outrages on American ships and 110 the loss of American lives, President Wilson went down to Congress and declared a state of war to exist with Germany, the country shouted applause to the sky and set itself with a will to the task of turning the United States into a war machine. The people put out the Stars and Stripes from their houses to show their spirit. It was a real sentiment; no mere outward display. In "Treasure Island" Captain Smollett attacked by the mutineers in the stockade ran up his country's flag and refused to take it in even though it drew the enemy's fire. "My name is Alexander Smollett, I have flown my Sovereign's colours and I'll see you to Davy Jones." There is much in a symbol. The heart of America plunged forth in that show of the Stars and Stripes.

For the first time in history the American flag was mingled with the colours of Britain; the Union Jack on the one side and the Tricolour of France on the other were to be found in quarters where for generations the Union Jack was unknown—and if known was disliked. I remember hearing the story of how a man in New Jersey was lynched some five and twenty years ago because on July 4th he ran up the British flag with the American. It was hard to realize this in the autumn of 1917 as one surveyed Fifth Avenue a blaze of colour in which the Union Jack was prominent. The American temperament never displays its difference from the English more strikingly 111 than in its fearlessness of its own feelings. There has been comparatively little bunting shown in Britain during the war. In America not only was the national flag freely displayed on every possible occasion and in many cases hung out continuously on buildings public and private, but a further display followed as the men began to be drafted. There was devised a white flag with a red border and on the white ground were placed blue stars indicating the number of men who had gone to service from the particular place which showed the flag. Private houses, shops, public institutions, clubs, all had these flags and a brave show they made. A variation and extension was in the enameled brooches and lapel pins indicating by their stars the number of those in service from the wearer's family. America went into the war sternly but

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with high heart, and with something of that chivalrous display which marked a cause in ancient days of knightly service.

War songs began to appear. They were direct and not oblique as in Britain where the soldiers adopted a music hall ditty like “Tipperary” which had no possible relevance to battle efforts. Nor did the people in America take readily to plaintive melodies like “Keep the Home Fires Burning,” which replaced “Tipperary” as the favourite among British soldiers. The ardent nervous temperament required something direct, something with a lilt and a march and a ring 112 about it. And thus the popular places of amusement rattled with such choruses as,

Over there, over there, send the word, send the word, over there, That the Yanks are coming, the Yanks are coming, The drums rum-tumming everywhere, So prepare, say a pray'r, send the word, send the word, to beware. We'll be over, we're coming over, and we won't come back till it's over over there.

or

Where do we go from here, boys, where do we go from here? Anywhere from Harlem to a Jersey city pier, When Patty'd meet a pretty girl, he'd whisper in her ear, “O joy, O boy, where do we go from here?”

Indifferent America had vanished as though in a landslide. And a visitor soon had striking evidence of the distinctive temperament of the country. There was a mingled boyishness, fierceness, and intensity totally unknown in the older nations. Pro-Germans bowed timidly under the storm. A storm indeed it was. In the cities a word in sympathy with Germany in a restaurant would procure a man's arrest and sharp punishment. From the West and South came news of prominent citizens who had spoken slightly of the Allies' cause who were compelled publicly to kiss the Stars and Stripes and retract their words. There was one story of how the convicts in a big prison tarred and feathered a prominent 113 pro-German among them—though how they obtained the material is a mystery. Young

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drafted men refusing to don the United States uniform were promptly sentenced to twenty-five years imprisonment. Public men and women with a tendency to pacifism, and possibly pro-Germanism, simply found themselves under arrest and sentenced to terms of up to thirty years imprisonment. There is no nonsense about America when she is roused.

At the various times when a week or a fortnight was set aside for subscriptions either to Liberty Loan issues or the Red Cross Fund the great cities were in a ferment. Leisureliness was gone. In New York at the start of one of the Liberty Loan campaigns cardboard representations of a bell—the Liberty Bell—were made by the million, and in the early hours of the first morning they were hung on door knobs not only of houses and shops and offices but on the doors of flats and apartments in hundreds of thousands of homes; crowds of enthusiastic boys were enlisted for the work. There were bands and banners at street corners from early morning till early the next morning. Impassioned speeches were made from the stage of every theatre, moving picture palace and every vaudeville show, and clever orators both men and women extracted competitive announcements from individuals in the audiences, pitting city against city, country against country in the amount of subscriptions. 114 Every office in New York, large or small, was invaded once, twice, or thrice in a week by a collector who might be a nurse in uniform, a boy scout, a sailor or a bank official; there was no escape for the stingy. At various busy points in the city a large coffin on trestles on the side-walk, with nails resting on the lid, was forced on the attention of passing crowds by collectors, hammers in hand who invited men and women to drive nails into “the Kaiser's coffin” at the price of a dollar. Sums amounting to millions of dollars for the Red Cross, and billions of dollars for the war loan were readily obtained. It was a wonder where the money came from.

When the Government put restrictions on the use of fuel and light during an exceptionally cold winter there was but little grumbling. And when the country was appealed to for voluntary food rationing so that the necessary supplies might be sent to the Allies there

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was a response which practically did away with the use of white bread, and put a sweet-loving nation to the test of the smallest lump of sugar in a cup of coffee.

In the Streets of Washington and New York could be seen each evening couples and groups of British and French soldiers and sailors (principally sailors) enjoying themselves amid strange scenes and with hospitable hosts. I was in one of the table-d'hôte 115 restaurants in 49th Street crowded with diners when a couple of French blue-jackets, attracted by the French name on the sign outside, came in looking rather at a loss and perhaps a little shy. Directly the man at the piano and his companion with the violin saw them they struck up the Marseillaise.

The whole of the crowded gathering rose to its feet and sang the chorus, while the French soldiers, staggered at this blast of welcome, were conducted to a table by the proprietor, and had set before them the best the establishment could provide at no cost to themselves.

There was no mincing of expression among the ordinary people whether with regard to their likes or dislikes. A great blazing electrical device over the door of a moving picture theatre on Broadway in its most crowded section displayed as the legend of its evening entertainment "To Hell with the Kaiser." Here is the copy of a printed notice apparently specially directed towards the millions of aliens which was prominently shown over some business establishment in New York, and for all I know in other cities also:

"This is an American house. You earn a better living here and live better than you ever did before. Don't criticize our President, our Government or our Allies. If you don't like the way we are running our Government, Go back to your own country, 116 If you are just a natural rebel, or if you have no country then go to Hell."

I found in the cities and villages of the Middle West no resentment at the war but a steady acceptance of it as a national trial and a duty to be performed. There was seriousness

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but no repining. The responsibility of Americanism was almost a religion among the quiet work-a-day-people with whom I made it my business to mix from time to time.

A spectacle never to be obliterated was the first parade down Fifth Avenue of thousands of soldiers on their way to the camps preparatory for France. They were taller than our English lads, not quite so thick set, with lean faces, and nervous muscular bodies. They differed too from the British in respect of what may be called thoughtfulness, what to an imaginative mind reflected a touch of the old puritan spirit. The English lads set with a touch of squareness in their faces marched off with a joke and a rippling smile even to the serious business of war, and I dare say that attitude represents to a certain extent a temperament which includes reserve as one of its first qualities. The pulse beat quicker, and at moments it was not easy to speak, as one watched those gallant young Americans so lithe, so full of health, going forward to offer their lives at their country's demand on a foreign battle field.

One of the effects of the war at Washington was 117 to produce not only a famine of offices, speedily met by the erection of vast new Government buildings but also a famine of hotels. Persons with business in the capital frequently had to stay at Baltimore, an hour's railway journey away because they could not get accommodations at the seat of Government. What some regard as a minor tragedy and others as an undisguised blessing fell upon Washington during war time, namely the prohibition of the sale of alcohol. "A dull place has become duller," said one American scoffer, to me. But a more just estimation would be perhaps that the laws of revenue and the laws of luxury on the one hand were compensated for by the trade of war time on the other, by the gathering of great men and small men from all parts of the country, by the increase of population amounting to twenty per cent. in the course of a year. I remember visiting Washington three months after prohibition was in force and calling to see a genial friend of Irish descent who received me with what I felt was an increase of his usual warmth. He expressed his pleasure at seeing me in a way which was more than usually gratifying. I was really flattered. There was a pause after a minute or two and then he said appealingly and expectantly, "Have you

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brought anything with you?" I was humiliated, not so much at the blow to my self-esteem, as at my lack of foresight in neglecting to provide for the emergency.

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President Wilson progressed from stages of respect to those of admiration and presently to high popular acclaim. He was recognized as a great possession of the American people, who it seemed, were not unappreciative of the fact that he was also regarded by the allied people as one of the great assets of the cause. The President came to New York once or twice. I should not like to be asked to decide whether he had his greatest popular following,—when he went to see "Polly with a Past" at a theatre, or went on Sunday to the Old Brick Presbyterian Church to attend service.

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CHAPTER XIII SHIPS AND AEROPLANES

To a visitor in America there has been nothing so typically dramatic in the awakening of the giant as the gesture with which she set about to make ships. That the colossal and continuing output of mercantile vessels would help to turn the world into a different place when peace comes again was an incidental. The consequences during the war and after the war were both in my mind when I travelled along the eastern coast and saw what had been done after six months in the construction of a new industry. I had a full untrammelled view of the genius which in great emergency comes forth from beneath its occasional disguises.

It had been the practice to bring sheets of steel to the water front, and there fashion them for the sides and interior of the ships. But now ships were wanted in a number previously unheard of, and it occurred to the agile mind of the Americans to utilize the great steel works in the interior of the country in order to manufacture the parts of the vessel where special facilities existed for the work, 120 and to bring them down to the coast and fit them together there. This meant, of course, there would still be a great amount of work to be done at the shipways but it would be enormously less than under the previous system. I

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went to Newark where a new shipyard was to consist of twenty-eight shipways. Twenty of them were already finished, and on the afternoon I arrived ten keels were laid and before I left the yard this was increased to eleven keels. The ship on the first way was well advanced towards completion, and I walked on the deck. Fifty to a hundred feet behind the ship were big piles of steel work in all kinds of shapes, dotted with rivet holes, for all the world like parts of a child's jig-saw puzzle. They were the sections that were to be rivetted together. I stood on the deck of number one ship and looked down into its interior, and it was like looking into the workings of a clock. It is no simple matter to build a ship. I glanced along the line of shipways by the water front, and they seemed to me to reach beyond sight. That was partly the effect of the busy activity, the noise of rivetters, the movement of men, the network of working cranes and machinery, in a word of a pulsing soul. Optimism, energy and organizing verve radiated from the Vice-President who accompanied me, and his spirit was found in all parts of the yard. The ten thousand workmen there had founded a newspaper 121 of their own. It was called "Speed Up," and contained all kinds of news and stories and pieces of verse contributed by the men. Here are two samples:

HUNKA TIN

You may talk about your voitures, When you're sitting round the quarters, But when it comes to getting wounded in, Take a little tip from me, Let those heavy motors be, Pin your faith to Henry Ford's old Hunka Tin. Give her essence, give her l'eau, Crank her up, and let her go, You back-firin', spark-plug foul'in' Hunka Tin.

Chorus.

Yes, Tin, Tin, Tin. You exasperating puzzle, Hunka Tin. I've abused you and I've flayed you, But by Henry Ford, who made you, You are better than a big car, Hunka Tin.

BUILDERS OF SHIPS

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Lay me a keel, and build me a framework, Build it of steel with rivets to hold; Strong be the plates and true be the workmen, Fervent as iron when red in the mould.

Out of the ways, then, launch me a vessel, Proud as the proudest, impatient to be Clearing the pathway, the sea road to England, Speeding to France for dear Liberty.

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A journey to near Boston took me to a ship-building yard, long established, but which the needs of the war were intensively developing. Here were great merchantmen being erected, and lines of submarines in dry-dock strung out like huge mackerel. In one part of the yard where a month or two before there were ten feet of water on swamp ground there had been formed a solid platform of earth and piles on which destroyers were rapidly being built. This yard has a corresponding establishment on the Pacific coast, and the foremen from the two yards had a bet of ten thousand dollars between them as to which yard would turn out the most ships by the end of the year. A mile or two away an entirely new shipyard was being built up, and thousands of men were swarming over skeleton erections, hammer and rivet and drill in hand. There was one shed practically completed. It was of glass and iron about one hundred feet in height and sixteen acres in extent, all under one roof. Here it was that I saw first the interesting operation familiar in the building of sky-scrappers, namely the continuous supply of white hot rivets or bolts to mid air. These cannot be heated by the men who are a hundred feet or so above the ground seated on a swinging strip, and they are made hot in a little furnace down below and are then tossed up aloft. It is a fascinating sight. With a long pair of pinchers the man on the ground extracts from the furnace the white hot rivet, and with an apparently careless, but quite accurate jerk, projects it through the air towards the men up on the building. It is like the shooting of a meteor. Up above a man makes a casual sweep of a little basket and the rivet is caught,—or missed,—as the case may be. There is always a thrill in the onlooker as to whether that stream of white hot rivets may not hurt one or other of the men to whom they are directed. It is hard to take one's eyes from the operation. None of those

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concerned are ever perturbed. But some time, somewhere, some man must be hurt by one of those deadly incandescent missiles. Even the best of cricketers gets a nasty blow from the ball sometimes. The spectacle is one which for a thrill cannot be equalled in the entertainment on any New York stage.

Hog Island is one of the much talked of war incidents of the United States. Eight hundred acres of flat swamp and marsh land on the banks of the Delaware near Philadelphia have become famous as Hog Island. I went there six months after an army of men had been at work on its natural desolation and emptiness. I found it midway in transformation. Fifty shipways were to be constructed on the edge of the Delaware, and the program included the launching of fifty-two ships before the end of the year. But to get the proper perspective of Hog Island one must thrust the imagination forward and picture it in the following year, discharging into the Delaware an unbroken succession of great ships, several a week.

Hog Island may in the future be the leading world depot where ocean going ships will be fitted together like children's toys. All these reflections and forecasts came upon me afterwards. An automobile ride which, as soon as we left the city behind us, was Siberian in its bleakness and monotony—through windswept flats over an extemporized road, miles in length, which for all the outlook there was ahead might have been leading to a desert, took us by a sudden twist in the road through some undulations, then over an almost imperceptible stream. I was at Hog Island. The first impression was of an earthquake, and of attempts to produce order out of chaos. Confusion and activity spread everywhere to the limit of the eye. Boarded roads ran through morasses of mud, gave access to labyrinths of wooden barracks, towering cranes, gangs of men, hustling locomotives, mountains of stripped tree trunks, packed masses of steel in every conceivable size and shape. To the uninstructed eye crudity and disordered effort lay over all the world. Then came relief. I was taken to the top floor of an office building right in the middle of the grounds where from a glass encased turret one could survey the eight hundred acres of Hog Island in a bird's eye view. A square faced chief pointed out with his finger

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the parts of the establishment and their functions. Away went the chaos. He was like a commander in a battle displaying from an eminence the co-ordinating operations of his troops on a wide-spread field beneath. The magnitude of Hog Island grew upon me. One realized American daring. Here were strips of railway lines where material was received, here were branches to other groups of lines where orders were delivered with material for the use of certain ways, here were great workshops in carefully arranged order for their special activities. Every crane that I could see, every automobile, every intersecting excavation, every pile of material, all the barracks in assembled places, were working towards a smooth running operation as a whole. It was an illuminating idea, that glass turret.

I asked about the workmen. I learned that there were twenty thousand altogether, most of them engaged at that moment in building the Island into a huge machine, although later they would be instructed and drafted into the actual shipbuilding, which when in complete working order would employ thirty thousand. The twenty thousand men were drawn from all parts. There were Italians, and Mexicans, negroes. Greeks, and Indians. They were paid well. Even the unskilled labourer would earn \$3.85 a day. His living expenses including his board and all his food would cost him about \$1.00 a day on the spot. Food was provided and there were games in the club rooms and comfortable chairs for the men when they were off duty. Nothing was omitted to stimulate efficiency. All over the shipyard one found notices, "The sooner we finish these ships the sooner the war will be ended."

I came back to New York, tired with night journeys but with a comfortable feeling that if all round the American coast there were to be found establishments such as I had opportunity of seeing within a few hundred miles, Germany's submarines would have to be as thick as ants on an ant hill to cope with the fleets of ships which America a few months hence would be discharging each week into the ocean. I wondered what was going to happen to all the ships after the war was over.

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From ships I went to see aeroplanes. At Dayton I was shown the instruments of air warfare, and stood side by side with Mr. Orville Wright in the flying field while the latest war model did tricks in the air above us, standing on its head, so it seemed, throwing itself backward, pretending to fall a thousand feet, recovering itself and then shooting past three hundred feet above our heads at the rate of a hundred miles an hour.

“What is the essential difference between these machines and the early aeroplanes?” I asked.

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“Little enough in fundamentals,” said Mr. Wright. “The main factors are still the same.” I extracted from Mr. Wright the story of the hour when he on behalf of human beings in general made the first flight into the air.

“My brother Wilbur and I had been experimenting with gliders on the sides of hills for some time,” he said. “We had devoted ourselves to exhaustive calculations with regard to progress through the air, calculations which, of course, were increased and multiplied as our experiments progressed. Finally, we built an airship and put a motor in it, with a view to trying to make a flight. We went down to North Carolina on the shore. It was in the winter on December 17, 1903, that we made the venture down there. We got the machine out in the morning—I remember it was about 10.30. There was nobody about, but while we were fixing up things a man made his appearance, attracted by the unusual sight of the aeroplane. ‘What is this?’ he asked. I told him it was a flying machine. ‘Do you expect to fly with it?’ he said smilingly. ‘Yes,’ I answered; ‘that is if the conditions are favourable.’ ‘Oh, yes,’ he said, ‘your machine will fly— *if the conditions are favourable.*’ The intonation made his meaning perfectly clear. He went off and left us, apparently having no time to waste on such useless fads.

“The moment came when we were to start the machine. 128 It was a question who should make the first trip, Wilbur or I. We tossed a penny as to who should be the first. Wilbur

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won. He got into the machine, but after a lot of trying we couldn't start it. We spent some time in adjustment, and then I took my turn. The machine began to rise in an undulating kind of way, then it got clear off the ground, some fifteen feet or more, and made a flight of about one hundred and fifty feet. That was the first flight. Later in the day we had longer trips."

I asked Mr. Wright if he had any idea when he and his brother were trying to make the flying machine as to their eventual use in war.

"From the very first the idea of their use in that way was in my mind."

I asked him if in the course of his experiments he had read a story by H. G. Wells in which the author brought into being flights of aircraft, demonstrating their destructiveness, and going so far as to visualize air battles over American territory. Mr. Wright pondered for a moment. "No," he said; "I heard of the story since. I don't think I have read it even now." He spoke apologetically.

I went to Buffalo and saw another huge factory. There as in Dayton messenger boys in the factory were progressing over the wooden floors on roller skates in order to save time. It was a real piece of American hustle. If it was interesting to a spectator 129 it was also very exhilarating for the boys. My one general conclusion was that in skill, in material, in labour, in organization America had facilities to turn out fleets of aeroplanes with no less speed and volume than she could turn out ships. I look into the future and see that the ships and aeroplanes of America may be one of the governing factors of the world not only in war but in peace. I saw no rushing, hustling operations such as is sometimes conceived by an Englishman of Americans at work on a special object. I saw manufacturers and workmen waiting for Washington and the soldiers at the front to determine the details of the best kind of battle machine so that they could be turned out not by the thousand but by the tens of thousands. Of course a great many machines were being made but the impression left on me was that they were but a fraction of what could be achieved.

America's shrewdness is sometimes minimized against her rapidity. She can be slow when slowness is an essential of success. For long vision you must have the proper focus. The magnitude of America's task had to be met by the magnitude of America's power. You cannot set the earth a-spinning by the quick turn of a crank handle.

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CHAPTER XIV CHICAGO AND DETROIT

An expedition to the Middle West to see and hear what the industrial districts were like in war-time left on me the sensations of the moving picture. It was at eight o'clock one morning that our train approached Chicago, and looking out of the window I saw quite close to the tracks waves mounting high against lines of piles, and an expanse of water to the horizon, which for all the world was like the English Channel under a south westerly gale. Really it was Lake Michigan. I had heard terrible tales about the gloom and other disadvantages of Chicago but my first real sight of it from a taxicab was an esplanade by the water front miles in length with solid and handsome buildings on one side as far as the eye could see. It had a kind of family resemblance to Kings Road at Brighton, though less sparkling and less crowded, as becomes a great business centre compared with a holiday place. But the miles of open water front, the buildings massed behind had a rather home-like air to an Englishman who is familiar with so many somewhat similar outlooks in his sea-surrounded island. Streets humming 131 with traffic ran from the water front in to the heart of the city, and up one of these we turned to a big hotel where the courtesy of waiters and attendants was only equalled by their slowness in doing things.

Within a few hours I was under escort to the stock-yards, one of the sights not only of Chicago but of America, and presently I stood on a long wooden bridge and surveyed all around spreading acres,—it may have been square miles,—of cattle pens and enclosures with connecting passages, and on the rim the great factories for turning the live animals into meat. Riding through the enclosures were men on horseback, sometimes by themselves, sometimes in pairs. They were the agents for the farmers who had sent live

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stock, and the buyers for the big packing houses, and the bargaining was going on under the open eye. A deal was settled by a crack of the whip. As I passed along the overhead platforms I saw in one of the yards a lonely steer with long horns, pacing up and down like a wild animal paces up and down in its cage in the zoo. "Mad," said my guide. "They get like that sometimes after a long journey. We have to keep them apart then because they become dangerous." I shall remember that solitary wild-eyed long-horned steer making his swift mechanical passage round his yard long after I have forgotten astounding figures of production. Presently in one of the buildings I witnessed the nasty scene of systematic 132 slaughter. Bullocks, sheep, pigs proceeded in single line with automatic regularity towards a department where blood ran like water continuously. I had as a companion a war correspondent who had been for three years on the western front and had seen all manner of terrible sights. He turned his eyes away in the slaughter houses. He resolutely refused to see what was going on. The most unpleasant memory I have of the business is the grin on the face of a negro whose duty it was to stun the sentenced cattle with a long hammer before they were dispatched. It was a real relief to get away to another part of the establishment where they were grinding up peanuts into the most delicious looking butter, and producing other manufactured eatables which go under the name of groceries. My limbs were aching not with physical fatigue only as I came out of those vast stock-yards. I had a strong warming of the heart towards vegetarians.

I went to see a picture of a different kind on the next day at a spot about an hour's railway journey from Chicago by the side of Lake Michigan. It was a place where tens of thousands of young Americans who have never seen the sea were being trained to be sailors. When they emerge from the Middle West to the Atlantic or the Pacific in order to smell salt water for the first time they are completely equipped for ocean work, fit to match the best sailors in the 133 world. The secret, of course, is that they have a great lake to train on, and the lake reproduces nearly all the conditions to be found on the ocean. The Great Lakes Naval Training Station in peace time had about a thousand men under tuition. When I visited it there were in training over twenty thousand men with volunteer

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recruits coming in at the rate of a thousand a week. Park-land, hundreds of acres in extent, fronting on to the lake side, gives opportunity for open air training of a dozen kinds, while spacious buildings are available for such indoor work as air-plane construction, and repair and the necessities of navigation. It was on Sunday afternoon when I was there, fine and sunny, and throughout the grounds there were many visitors. With a whimsical smile the young officer who was going around with me said that one of the problems was to regulate the influx of girl sweethearts, sweethearts in being or sweethearts potential. Sailor boys are a great attraction but so far as I could judge from a casual observation of the couples and groups in the grounds the attraction was mutual. Let me make my salute to those young sailors so obviously keen, so fresh and energetic. They are under training for three months, training which is not surpassed in the world, that of the American naval officer. Generations of new men were being turned out by that three months' training at the Great Lakes Naval Training Station, not only 134 new men but very fine men. Classes of them will, be utilized in managing the vast mercantile fleet of America.

A two hundred mile journey west to Rock Island Arsenal on the Mississippi, swelling under war pressure and highly efficient superintendence to a huge military manufacturing depot, remains in my mind not only for its national importance but because my visit afforded me at least one sidelight, that had nothing to do with the war. I was in the State of Iowa, which is dry, only I did not know it. A long fatiguing journey had inclined me for a glass of claret with my dinner, but my request in that direction was met with the refusal of a law-abiding waitress who seemed to reflect a puritan aspect in her amazement at my request. After dinner I went from the dining room into the lounge of the hotel with a stranger's fear that I should not be able to get anything to smoke. But I found not only a cigar store in the hotel but means other than cash for the buying of goods. Two sets of dice were there, one plain dice, one poker dice, and you were invited to gamble for what you wanted. If you won you paid a purely nominal price for your goods, and if you lost the nominal price was taken from you without any return. It was quite easy to lose money. One cannot get strong drink in Iowa, but one may at least get other little excitements.

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Come away back to Detroit where I saw the manufacture 135 of the much discussed Liberty motor, a sight which could not inform the non-expert eye as to its qualities but which was at least impressive as a mechanical spectacle. I went into a field where the testing sheds were erected, dozens of them, scores of them in long lines, I wouldn't like even to guess at the number. Here, sheltered on a stalwart platform surrounded by testing apparatus of various kinds and watched by an engineer from a special little cabinet, was one of these sober grey complicated compact masses of machinery. To it was added a propeller similar in its weight and air resistance to that used in the flying machines. I stood at the end of one of the open sheds while the propeller was revolving under the stimulus of the Liberty motor. The noise was that of a thousand railway trains, and it was accompanied by a hurricane which made it necessary to plant one's feet very firmly and wide apart on the ground, and to hold one's hat. For hours afterward the vibration of that machine sang in my head; I was even a little deaf till the next day. The mechanic in blue overalls, with clean shaven face, and disordered hair who superintended each one of these experiments was like a spirit from another world riding on a thunder storm.

They test these motors in all kinds of ways, test them for hours at a stretch with revolutions per minute which stagger the imagination, test them occasionally 136 to a point, deliberately reached, in which the machine is dismembered by the force developed. After two or three or four tests the Liberty motor is taken to pieces and examined part by part, screw by screw, examined by the naked eye, by touch, by magnifying glass and by testing acids, and all of this is done not by ordinary workmen but by highly skilled experts. I am no judge of the merits of the Liberty motor, but this at least can be said, that no man's life could be imperilled in the air for want of skill or care in its manufacture. It was the same afternoon that I went and saw another wonderful thing, namely the miracle known as Ford's factory. I regard it as one of the sights of the world. Here is an establishment which employs thirty-four thousand men, no man of whom after six months service receives less than five dollars a day—obtaining up to that time three dollars and fifty cents. Throughout the whole of the previous year only two men had been discharged because it is a rule

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of the factory that if a man is not suitable for one job he is put in some other position for which he is better adapted. I saw how the Ford motor car is manufactured. There is a bench, breast-high, winding its way through hundreds of yards of the factory, and along that bench at intervals of a yard on either side stand workmen. Above the bench within reach run forward-moving belts containing various parts of the motor 137 car. The nucleus of the car, about the size of a bushel basket, is placed on the bench in front of the first of the men, and by means of a travelling carriage passes on a slow but continuous journey between the two lines. Each man does something to that nucleus, or adds something as it passes, and by the time it has traversed over the winding line it has been built up by the hundreds of workmen into practically a complete car. And these cars follow each other at intervals of seconds only. I went into another part of the factory where the genius of Mr. Ford was constructing a new submarine destroyer which contains improvements not only in construction but in material. To the uninstructed eye it looks like a big ship. Conceive the impression made by the sober statement that Mr. Ford intended to turn these out at the rate of two a day. He is a wonderful man. He is also a good American. Mr. Ford, be it remembered, was a leading pacifist who wanted to stop the war before his country entered into it. Afterwards he sought to stop it by seeing his country victorious, and was doing everything possible to help produce that truly inevitable result.

When I came back to New York I was in some doubt as to which day to make the journey. I took the first of two alternatives. The train on the second day was dismantled by a landslide mid-way and there was one death and some people injured. I congratulated 138 myself on missing at least one American experience. From various causes I was beginning to glimpse the power and temperament of the American people.

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CHAPTER XV ENGLAND THROUGH A TELESCOPE

The American in England will soon find contrasts with his own country, and while all of them will be strange, some of them will not be unpleasant, although he will naturally prefer

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the other ways of his home land. Let me tell in a few sentences the unaccustomed things he will see in Parliament if he has been used to the congressional system at Washington. He will find that while the laws of Britain have to be agreed to by the King, the House of Lords, and the House of Commons, it is the House of Commons which initiates nearly all legislation and has practically complete power. The Cabinet, which is the executive government, depends for its existence on a majority vote of the House of Commons, and if it fails to maintain a majority it has to go out of office, and the King has to select a Cabinet which will be supported by the Commons. Generally when a Government is thus overthrown there is a general election, and then there comes back direct from the people a Government in consonance with the desires and wishes of the community. Hundreds of years of experiment 140 mixed with struggles and many compromises have evolved this system, which suits the temperament of the British people. The King remains the glowing symbol of a continuous and proud history of a thousand years, and thus represents an emotion which has its part in the make up of the nation. And he moreover serves the purpose of what may be called a permanent chairman of the nation, summoning to him the Ministers whom his people desire. The Prime Minister presides over the Cabinet, each member of whom takes his office direct from the hands of the King and is responsible for his own department. Each Minister, the Prime Minister particularly, has to face his supporters and opponents in the House of Commons day by day, and if necessary to explain his policy and administration. The business of the sittings is prefaced by a period during which members may put questions to the various Ministers, friendly questions, hostile questions, critical questions. Question-time therefore it may easily be seen is a testing period, and often enough a critical one, for the Government. It may be asked what would happen if the King refused assent to the laws passed by Parliament. The answer is that no King would do so, for the situation would automatically adjust itself. The King acts on the advice of his Ministers, who are responsible for Government action. With the House of Commons rests all the 141 power to run the country. It controls the purse strings of the nation, arranges not only the taxation but the way in which the money shall be spent, provides the resources for the army, navy and civil services. If the Government were mad

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enough to advise the King to stand out in opposition against the will of the majority of the House of Commons, the House could bring matters to an abrupt conclusion by refusing supplies, by refusing to conduct any business. The position is such that neither King nor Ministers are effective without the support of the House of Commons. With this system runs. many traces of ancient ritual, some of them interesting from a historical point of view, and others indicative of a love of liberty which is ineradicable. When a message is brought down by an official from the House of Lords to the House of Commons one of the attendants always closes the door of the House of Commons in their face, locks the door, ascertains their mission through a little wicket gate in one of the panels and finally with the permission of the Speaker admits them. That is to show the Commons are supreme in their own house and that they can shut out even the most highly placed persons if they desire to do so. The American who is interested in history will discover traces of the Norman conquest remaining in Parliament. The King always transmits to this day his assent to bills in the Norman French language. 142 “Le roy le veult” (The King wills it.) is the phrase still used after nine hundred years.

In the smaller things of life the American will find English life in some respects different from his own. The raw cold weather will be extremely disagreeable to a visitor especially in the absence of that excellent system of steam heating or hot air heating which is prevalent in America. The sense of comfort with which one enters an American house or store or any kind of building in America in the winter will be absent. Open coal fires are the rule and though very cheerful they are nothing like so effective for the warming of buildings. The halls, the passages, the upstairs rooms, the shops, the public halls, lack that gratifying soothing warmth which is such a comfort in the United States. In the summer a visitor will also miss the use of ice water without which no American meal is complete. English people do not put ice in their drinking water and the consequence is it seems soft and warm and unpalatable to an American. He will find, at least in peace time, surprising cheapness for some of the common services and ordinary commodities. An excellent shave may be had for six cents although some of the more elaborate establishments may

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charge as much as twelve cents. Motor omnibuses radiate from London to all parts, and the common fare for short distances, say a mile, sometimes as much as two miles, is one penny (2c), 143 longer distances being charged in proportion. He will find that the men in the street, the policemen, the postmen, the salesmen in the shops, the omnibus conductors, the railway officials are good humoured and kindly, with the word "Thank you" given in return continually, a species of graciousness which in its various forms reaches down to the lowest class. He will find caste distinctions to which he is unaccustomed, a respect for good clothes, good manners and educated speech which while it sometimes descends into snobbery, has valuable uses, and curiously enough helps towards providing self respect. One thing not nearly so agreeable is the difficulty to be encountered in meeting people in authority, in approaching big business men, and in securing a foothold for original proposals in whatever line of life one's activities tend.

There is reserve, too, among individuals which will certainly be a little irksome, a standoffishness which requires that a stranger must be tested out before he can be admitted to acquaintanceship much less to friendship. On the other hand once a visitor is received by a family he is treated with a cordiality and open heartedness unsurpassed in any nation. If you become a friend you are a friend for good, and there is no kindness which will be denied. The true American will find little real difficulty in securing admittance to English home life and that home life is one of the most beautiful possessions which the country has. An American who has been a few months in England travelled about it, mixed with the common people, will, I trust and believe, find the truth in the words of a recent writer, "A great country of hill and valley, moorland and marsh, full of woodlands, meadows, and all manner of flowers, and everywhere set with steadings and dear homesteads, old farms, and old churches of greystone or flint, and peopled by the kindest and quietest people in the world."

I have set out some of the differences in temperament, in manners, and in method, between America and England. Each people has to live its own life. But the differences only throw up into relief their common nature in the big things. No person can live for a

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period in England and in America without perceiving how like is the thread which runs through the life of each. Determination for freedom, freedom for the state and for the individual, burns strongly in the old country and the new. Both nations are virile, tenacious, idealistic. In rich America some of the leading citizens, with their faces forward, are almost ashamed of their dollars; in ancient aristocratic England labouring men are warmly welcomed as part of the Government.

The strength and pride of each, with that intervening three thousand miles of water, have in the past 145 contributed to misunderstandings. A closer, more sympathetic knowledge of each other's daily life and daily thoughts is to be the great emollient. The millions of American soldiers will play a great part in drawing the two nations together. Many of these soldiers, perhaps the greater number of them, have seen something of England, and of English people. Equally important they have been at close quarters with Englishmen in the crucial days and nights of the battlefield. They will bring to the English people, new sidelights, new ideas, from the great republic of the West. There are moreover millions of letters coming back from Europe to homes in all parts of the United States, telling of the discoveries that have been made among these people, only known by tradition or by rumour. And presently there will return to America the victorious American army, the glory of the nation who sent it forth with a thousand further messages.

Herein should be the consolidation of unifying factors already in existence. Ties of race are one of those factors, a common language is even a greater. Knit together thus with an extended knowledge and a new sympathy, united in their vision on the problems of humanity, is there a clear observer who can doubt that the joint effort of America and England in the future presages a new era for coming generations?

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