

about that of Paris, and in the Yungas and the Beni regions not far away the pineapples and the palm trees grow. There are wild oranges and wild cotton trees. There are coffee plantations, and in the forests the Indians are gathering rubber to be shipped down the Amazon to Para, whence some of it perhaps will go to the United States to be used in your bicycle tires.

FRANK G. CARPENTER.

A VOICE FROM FRANCE.

My Dear Cousin:—After many cares, troubles and tribulations of all kinds—without counting seasickness—I am at last arrived in Paris; that modern Babylon, that city of cities; that palace of the arts and music which sends daily towards heaven its 3,000,000 breaths "fin de siècle," which rising towards the stars, seem trying to create a dense cloud that would hide from the eyes of the gods, the painful spectacle of its vices and of the atrocities of its refined civilization; sight, it is true, eclipsed by the beauties that one meets at each step in that city, land of marvels, celebrated for its greatness, renowned for its wickedness.

But before proceeding further, my dear cousin, standing as we are just now in the fear of a universal war, I wish to say that I have carefully investigated the feelings that the government of France and its people, entertain for America, and I have been struck by this fact, that the newspaper articles have no knowledge whatever of the relations that exist between the two countries of France and the United States. To convey my idea and the result of my observations, I need the language of the poet and more redundant phrases than those afforded me by common, every day prose:

France and America have been and shall remain for the ages to come, as two beautiful sisters—the one fair and noble, with golden hair, hand in hand with her great darker but smaller friend—wrapped in the tricolor French mantle and forever standing in close union beneath the aegis of the mighty United States' Star Spangled standard; and they shall tread, secure and unmolested, fearless and daring, over the republican paths of universal freedom and bring to suffering, slave-stricken mankind the word of love that must shower its numberless, unpolluted flakes of snowwhite equality over men; and overthrow the rotten, crumbling pillars of olden and decayed royalty, doomed by the fatal, red blooded hand of fate to sink forever within the unsoundable abysses of men's wrathly vengeance!

These are the sentiments which every Frenchman has in his heart and the government also would never do, I am sure, anything against the United States. But I pray you to pardon this digression, and as this is not intended to be a political letter to you, I shall presently resume my first subject.

In the beginning I spoke of all the vices of the great Paris, but my dear cousin, don't imagine that I am a pessimist and that I wish only to see the wrong side; no, certainly, no; but I want you to understand well, once for all, that as a traveler I have a perfect right to seek the discovery of the faults; if on the other hand I notice and take in all good qualities, and I can assure you that those who go to Paris to learn have plenty of work laid before them. Yes, really, one has here no need of going very far in search of beautiful things or great deeds; one has only to walk straight ahead to admire all he wants, but it is true that at the very moment when some beautiful spectacle—well made for moving the most stern heart—strikes

your eyes; at that very moment, I say, when you fall under the spell caused by some trait of grandeur, you discover right close to it some unwholesome piece of dirt; and it would even seem that this state of affairs would be necessary for the development of ideas; because without any doubt the good people wish to allow the rascals to take example of them, who, by the way, must surely be much better than all the other good ones of the world because they succeed in avoiding all temptations that Parisian life sets before them from day to day.

There is no city in the world where it is possible to live so cheaply as in Paris, but on the other hand, there is no place where money can be so easily spent, and in such quantities, too. In the United States, if a traveler stops at a hotel, the whole cost is \$5, that is all. In Paris it is otherwise; and you must pay for everything you get, and, for instance, those who stop at Grand hotel, or Terminus hotel, or Continental hotel, the three fashionable hotels of Paris, one is obliged to pay separately; first—for their room, of which the price varies according to the story; second—for two meals, the breakfast at noon and supper at six o'clock, because in France, early, elaborate breakfasts, as we have them in the United States, are not customary, and if they eat something, it is only a cup of coffee, which is, by the way, counted extra on your bill; Third—They must pay for the service, that is to say, the help employed by the hotel; also for the candles; in a word for all, and it surely is a very disagreeable custom for us Americans. Moreover, if you wish to take a bath, you must order it in advance and then it is a whole heap of trouble. The boys of a bathing establishment carry right into your room a bath tub and you are often obliged to keep it there for two or three hours, that is, until they come back to remove it. Last of all but not less disagreeable, if you are cold, you have to buy wood or coal yourself, and it costs very dear; therefore, many Americans here rather than take so much pains prefer keeping their overcoats in their rooms and literally freeze. Steam heat is almost unknown and it is very hard to keep warm here during winter. I am exceedingly astonished not to see in Paris more sickness and especially more colds, but upon my inquiring, several doctors replied that cold rooms were better for the health. Now, after having enumerated and brought before your eyes the inconvenience and faults of Parisian life, I must change my theme and I shall also show you its radiant splendors. You see in Paris no elevated railroads, no wires as in New York, it is quite different, the French people have sacrificed everything to looks, to symmetry, to beauty. There is nothing here that could destroy the even harmony of the sets of houses all in line, and it is really an admirable sight to be enabled to contemplate that magnificent "Rue de Rivoli," straight, wide, immense with its houses not higher one than the other!

What lucky people are the Parisians! They would be so had they only their boulevards! You cannot dream of anything prettier, more grand, more lofty in appearance and variety; and from the "Opera square" to the "Salut Denis" street, you can walk without having any consciousness of fatigue, entranced as you are by the marvels spread as by a fairy's wand before your dazzled eyes. On each side there are numberless "cafes," multitudinous restaurants overflowing with luxury, but at the very next door of the sumptuous establishment, only made for the

rich, the clinking of the large glasses overflowing with the red wine—the poorer classes nectar—can be heard in a place that seems just as elegant; but it is only to deceive the eye, because in such a place the drinks are cheaper, and although everything around looks nice, these cafes and restaurants cater to the trade of the lower classes, and it can be said that on the boulevards in Paris all representatives of modern society can be seen close to each other. The full dress suit in all its severe correctness mingles with the ragged and shiny coat of the poor and modest working man who, after having earned three francs—his day's salary—comes also, just as the gentleman, just as the millionaire, just as the prince—to drink also his absynthe or an appetizer of some other denomination, and by the way France can be said to be the greatest country for appetizers. However, in the respect of absynthe, I must say that all the very numerous lies we have read in the trashy and cheap literature sold under yellow covers, seem to me, now that I can see for myself, still more false, and surely the authors of these vile books never saw Paris. You no doubt think—just as I used to myself—that all the French people are regular sots and drunkards of the lowest degree. It is not so, however, and I can affirm that I have not yet seen a man under the influence of liquor in the streets nor anywhere else since my arrival here. Moreover, although I might be taxed with exaggeration, I feel secure in stating that absynthe is not drunk in such quantities in Paris as in New York. We generally commit a mistake in the United States when we consider the word "cafe" as a synonym of "restaurant." A cafe is a place where only liquors are sold, while a restaurant serves only meals, nothing being drunk except wine, and this only at meals. In America it is a habit to drink wine between meals, but in Paris it is not the same, wine is used only on the table and outside of meals it would be considered very ill-bred to use any. There are many persons who have been in Paris only during a few days, and they judge the country by what they believe they see, and these people very often come back to America with wrong impressions and you must not believe them because they know nothing about it. You ought not either to believe those who have been in France, and who will assert that they have taken board in families of the "highest aristocracy," as they say. This is impossible, by the very fact that even the French people belonging to the middle class never would condescend to take boarders. They would not board even French people, and by no means would they receive in their home strangers whom they don't know, and I defy anyone to find a truly respectable French family to board them.

Family life in France is surrounded by an atmosphere of holiness and refinement, of respect and love, of sublimity of character, that unites all the members of a whole family under a mighty everlasting aegis that death itself cannot break and it is for this, that if one of the members of a family dies, his place will always remain there, at the fireside of the paternal house under the watchful eye of the good mother who supervises those remaining, but who gives also her thought to those who can be no more seen—the invisible ones whose presence and influence is yet felt. As in America, and everywhere else there is some sorrow in every house, but in France it seems to be more keenly felt. It is the little brother who dies, and whom each one can yet see in his thought, playing with the huge black Tom cat, who, with a white spot right in the