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THE GREATEST AVENUE. PECULIARITIES OF PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, IN WASHINGTON.

One of the Most Magnificent Thoroughfares in the World—No One is in a Hurry, and Everybody Seems to Have Spring Fever—Some Great Parades.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 20.—There is no other thoroughfare in this country like Pennsylvania avenue. It might be called National avenue with greater propriety. It is distinctively the national highway of America.



PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE AS SEEN FROM THE TREASURY.

It is here given up to streets than in any other city of the world. More than 40 per cent of Washington is street, and there are no alleys. But for the new-boys, who march about almost as much as in other cities, crying "Stab-yah!" (Star here), and the innumerable bicyclists, Pennsylvania avenue would put a Chicago man or New Yorker to sleep. These bicyclists are the life of the streets. They are literally numbered by the thousands.

One of the peculiarities of Pennsylvania avenue is that it is a street with only one side. It has two sidewalks, to be sure, and both are elevated by building from one end of the long stretch to the other, but only one pavement is used by pedestrians; on only one side are there bright shops and gaudy windows.

Strange as it may seem, there is not on Pennsylvania avenue, from one end to the other, government buildings excepted, a first class modern city business block. A vast majority of the structures are quaint old things with gable roofs and high dormer windows, peered out from their tops like sentry boxes.



PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE FROM THE WAR DEPARTMENT BUILDING.

It is only one first class modern and metropolitan business or office building in all Washington, excepting, of course, those owned by government, and everything that Uncle Sam owns is first class, if not modern. This one building of the first rate is owned by a Baltimore newspaper. Many of these old structures along the avenue were built by the men who came to construct the Federal City while George Washington was yet alive.

In many cases not inhabitable, the owners finding it more profitable to take large rentals from one of an old building than to erect a new building, and run their chances of finding tenants about the first story. Washington does not believe in going up stairs. The tremendous influence of the modern elevator has not yet reached our capital city.

If Pennsylvania avenue has one characteristic more striking than another, it is its leisureliness. Pennsylvania avenue is not in a hurry. Even the typical American here fails to rush. Nobody jostles anybody. Nearly everybody carries a cane. It is all a saunter. Why should anybody be in a hurry? It is Uncle Sam who sets the pace. Uncle Sam has never been known to be in a hurry. He takes a half an hour for his luncheon. He quits at 4. On holidays and the day before holidays, as well as the day after, and on all days in which prominent public men die, and on every other day for which a pretext can be found, he doesn't work at all. He simply loaf and saunters up and down the avenue. Uncle Sam sets the pace for the whole town.

The avenue does take on a rather lively air between 4 and 5 in the afternoon. At 4 the department turns out 10,000 people. Nearly one-half of these walk in one direction or other on the avenue. You see the old clerks, who have grown gray in government service, trudging along with shoulders stooped from long bending over desks; dapper young fellows who wear big canes and gloves and the very latest in neckties, and who smoke cigarettes; old women, plenty of them, many fighting hard with powder noses, and many with their hair in curl.



PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE IN 1850.

All this is on the favored north side of the avenue. South of two of them, on either side of the Capitol, deep from their staffs. The house and senate have adjourned, and here comes another and still more interesting flood of humanity. It is the fashion in Washington to walk, particularly on "the" avenue. It is the place of places to see and be seen.

Still nobody is in a hurry. Department clerks going one way and statesmen going another, peacefully, two thousand dollar clerks from the Twelfth New York district, or Nineteenth Pennsylvania, or Sixth Alabama, is on the lookout for the congressman or senator from his section who, years ago, perhaps, exerted "influence" to get him his place. He wants to keep on good terms with his teacher. A good deal of the activity of Washington life springs from a desire ever present throughout all the gradations of official society to "keep close" to somebody on the notch above.

Several years ago a coal mine in Japan took fire and forty or fifty miners were entombed. Recently the mouth of the mine was opened, and on searching the bodies of the victims were discovered. The action of water they had been entombed into stone.

BILL NYE AT RICHMOND. A Few Remarks About George Washington and Libby Prison. At Richmond we visited, among other things, the old stone house which was occupied as one of the large collection of headquarters used by Washington.

The old stone house is a queer structure and would rent for about \$4 per month. Washington did not care very much for style in his headquarters, but he wanted plenty of them. He never wanted to be out of a headquarters. So he had them established in all the growing towns of that time. Frequently he would secure headquarters in a town and then not visit them at all. It was so in this case. Washington was a plain man and simple in his habits.

In the back yard the little boy showed us a big tree planted by Washington himself. Washington, Jefferson and Monroe planted all the large trees in Virginia, with the exception of three. On the trunk of this tree are two large iron staples or handles, now almost buried in the trunk. The little mulatto boy says they were probably driven in there for the English to tie their horses to when they came to Washington's headquarters to surrender; or perhaps in after years slaves were tied to these big iron handles when they were whipped. Possibly Washington used them in place of a shawstrap in bringing the tree down to Richmond to plant it.

But all this is just fancy, for George did not, as a matter of fact, have any headquarters here in Richmond at all. He bought a site for one but never built on it. Libby prison is soon to be removed from Richmond to Chicago. We visited it. I do not know what price was paid for it, but whatever the sum I would rather have it than the prison. The work of taking it down, brick by brick, numbering each and putting it back in the same place, taking out the mortar, grinding it up and using it over again, numbering each shingle, board and nail hole so as to put it back exactly as it was before, will be a gigantic one. Moreover, the inner wall is covered with the names of numerous autographs of prisoners, written with pencil or scratched into the hard bricks by those who are living today or gone to their reward. It will be almost impossible to remove the wall and preserve these names, which really make the prison valuable as a relic. Besides, there are many names covered up by repeated whitewashing since the war, and every day a new one is discovered by carefully peeling off the thick coat of lime which hides the inner wall.

Since the war Libby prison has been used as a repository for fertilizers. It now has a breath which will advertise its arrival in Chicago without loss of time. If the people of the north do not visit Libby prison it will not be because they are ignorant of its whereabouts. It is a solemn place to visit even for a little while. The three of us together visited the various floors.—Mr. Riley, the writer and a large, earnest odor. There are still many marks of the old time in recreation, such as the checker boards scattered on the floor and the fox and goose diagram.—Bill Nye in New York World.

High Life in the Nineteenth Century. Millionaire—Have you completed the plans I ordered? Architect—Yes, sir. "Where have you put the dining room?" "Front. A bedroom will be above." "With the study facing north?" "Yes, sir, and the library just behind it." "Of course. And you have put the laboratory where I directed?" "Yes, sir." "What will the total cost be?" "A trifling over \$50,000, and a very nice private railway car it will be." "Is that all? What will my new house cost?" "About \$2,000." "When do you take me for a Cronus?"—Time.

The Small Boy Goes Head. Young Teacher (closing a talk to a school)—Now, scholars, in what way could I rise highest in your estimation? Too's Boy (on a back seat)—By sitting down on a bent pin, sir.—Time.



Her Peculiarity. Mass Kate—Sophie is, as you say, a very attractive girl, but don't you think there is something masculine about her? Harry (looking attentively)—Well, nothing except Mr. Spenser's arm.—Life.

Wanted to Get In. Down in Santa Cruz they have a jail. It is not a very joyous jail, and a man might be kind of lonely in it if there were no other prisoners there. Some time ago the constable found a man lying groaning just under the window, where the bars were broken. He took hold of him and found his leg was broken. In due time he was examined, charged with trying to escape. They found he was a tramp, but had not escaped at all. "How did you come to get there?" "Judge, I fell from the window." "What were you doing at the window?" "Judge, I was trying to get into jail. It's so darned cold outside."—San Francisco Chronicle.

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