

# SIDELIGHTS ON THE NATIONAL CAPITAL

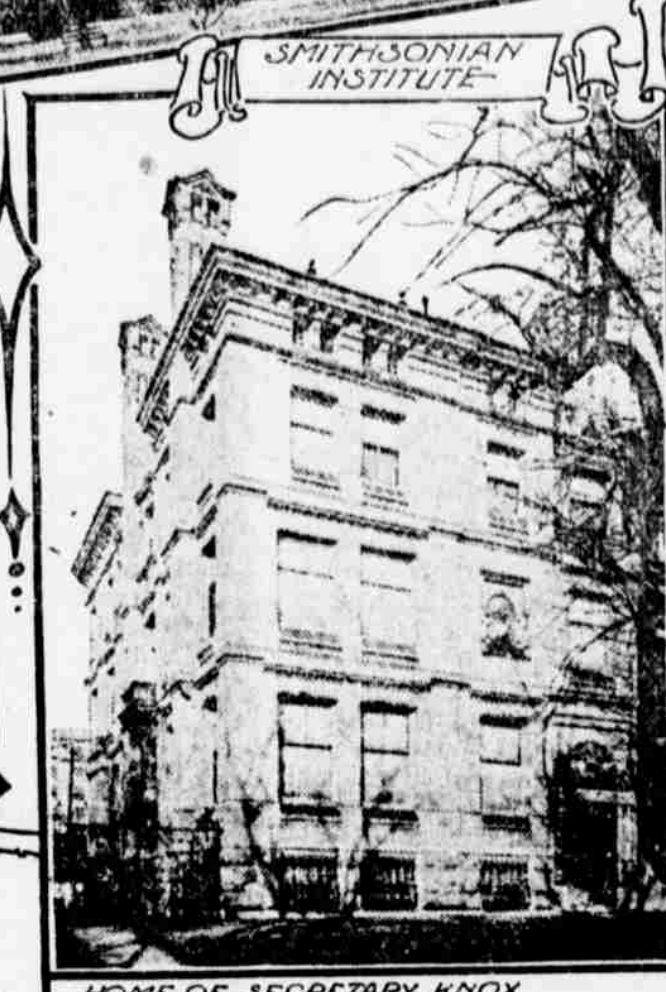
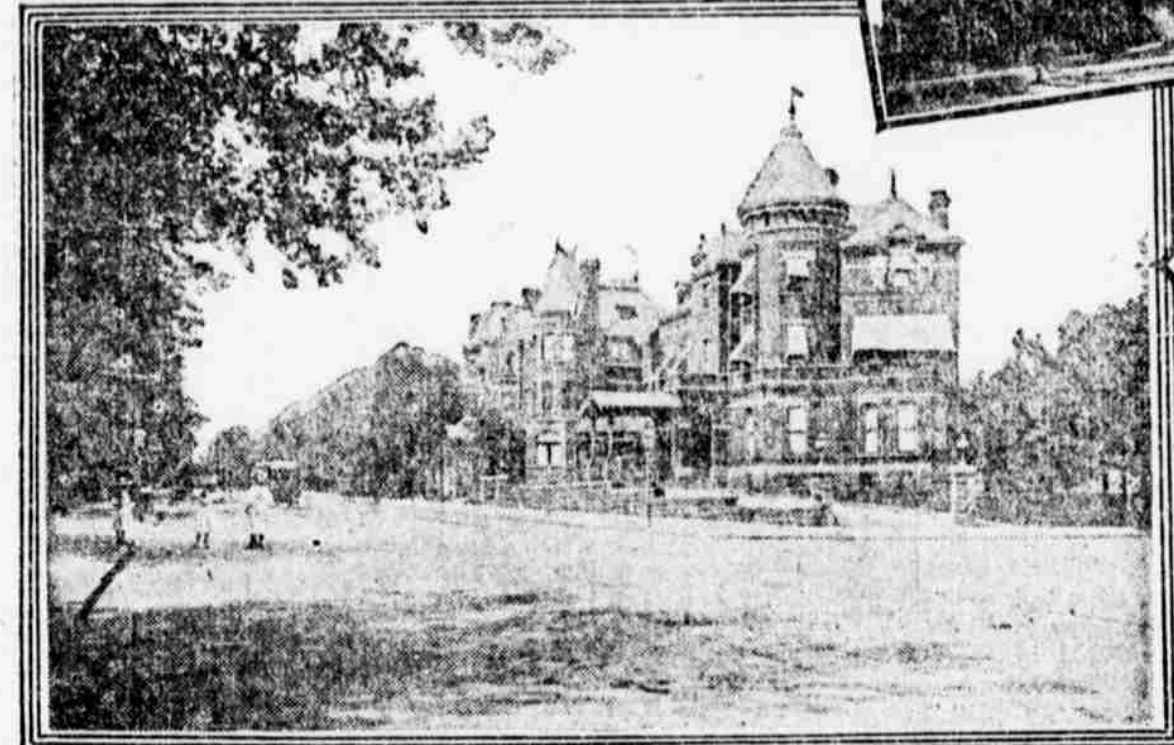
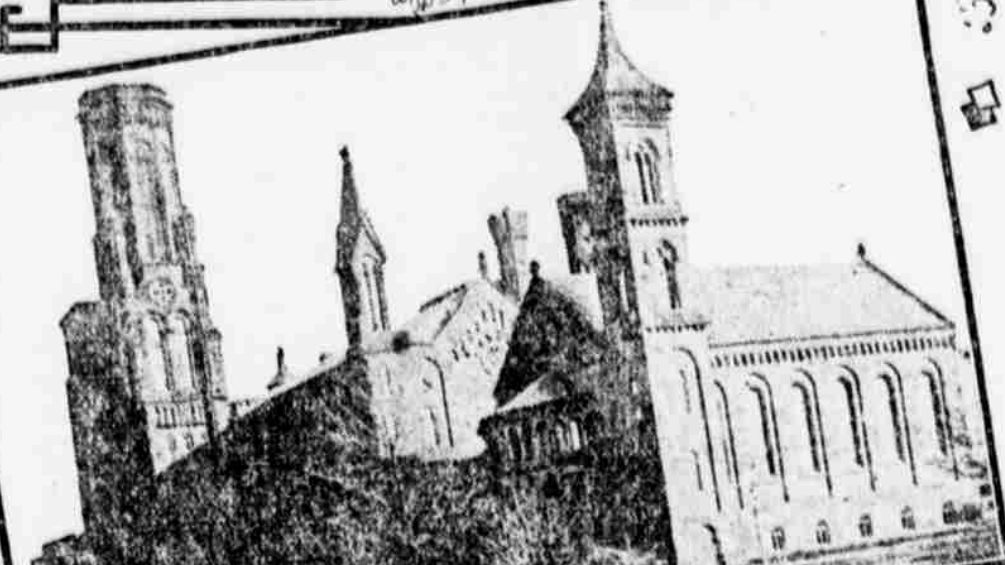
by EDWARD B. CLARK

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**W**HEN you take in the city of Washington what the unregenerate call a "rubber-neck wagon" your course is bound to lead by the Cosmos club. Until the Metropolitan club built its new quarters, its building was situated near that which houses the Cosmos members. It was the great delight of the information giver on the sightseeing automobile to declare to the passengers that the Metropolitan club, "which you see on your right, is the home of the lobs, and the Cosmos club, which you see on your left, is the home of the cranks."

Presumably scientists have become accustomed to being dubbed cranks by the unthinking. It has been a long, hard struggle at times for some scientists to get recognition from the world. The Cosmos club has a membership which in-



cludes some of the greatest scientists of the United States, and, in its non-resident membership, some of the greatest scientists of the world.

There are botanists, astronomers, ornithologists, and, in fact, scientists of all kinds and descriptions, to be found nightly in the great, sweeping parlors of the club's quarters. There is just as much hospitality and jollity in the club as are to be found in the rooms of any social organization in the world—and learning besides there, also. In order to be a member of the Cosmos club you must have something besides money and social standing. It is probable that there are many members of other organizations in Washington, who would be willing to throw their memberships into the deep sea, if the act would buy for them admittance into the club of these scientists.

The headquarters of the Cosmos club are in the old "Dolly Madison" residence. It was there that the widow of President Madison lived and held social sway for years after the death of her husband. During the Civil war, for a time, Admiral Wilkes lived in the Madison house. It was Wilkes who took Mason and Slidell from the British steamer "Trent" and thereby nearly brought on war between the United States and Great Britain at a time when such a war might have insured ultimate victory to the Confederate arms.

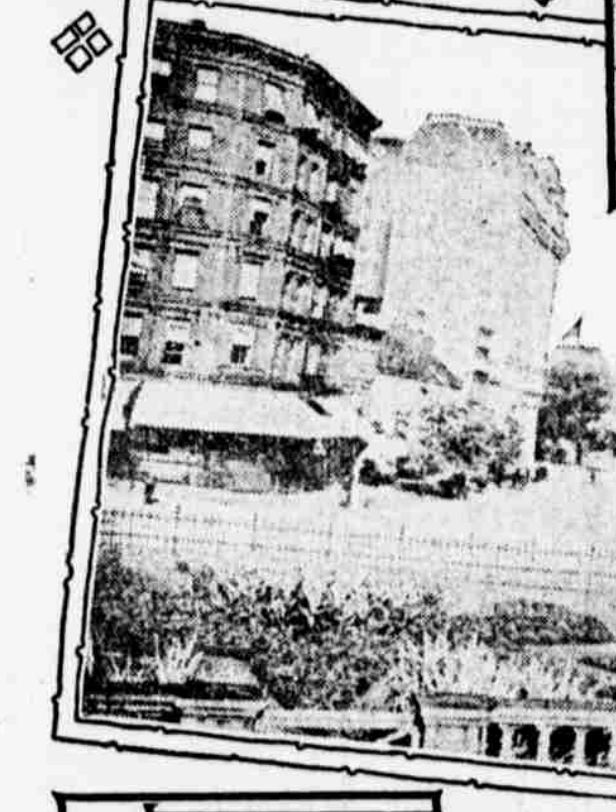
The biological survey of the United States government has lost the services of Dr. C. Hart Merriam, who for years was the survey's chief, and who in the early days worked so hard to make themselves what he succeeded in making it, one of the most useful departments of government. Dr. Merriam has accepted the direction of the Harriman Foundation for Zoological Research. Mrs. Harriman, the widow of E. H. Harriman, the great financier and railroad man, has carried out the wishes of her husband, and has set aside a large sum of money to be used for purposes of zoological study. Acting unquestionably in line with her husband's wishes, Mrs. Harriman requested Dr. Merriam to take charge of the work.

It is probable that the former chief of the biological survey is the foremost authority in the United States in matters pertaining to certain lines of natural history work. It was Dr. Merriam, more than any other man, to whom Theodore Roosevelt went for advice about the scope of his expected work in Africa. The doctor and the colonel have been friends since boyhood; when in New York state both were pursuing bird studies and exchanging letters on general subjects of natural history.

These words about Dr. Merriam and the Harriman Zoological Foundation lead one to tell a story about the late financier, which perhaps will throw some light on a side of his life concerning which most people probably know little. One year ago last winter I went south from Washington, bound for Augusta, Ga., with a friend. E. H. Harriman's private car was attached to the train at one of the stations on the way. It happened that my friend was a close personal acquaintance of Mr. Harriman, and he was invited to dine with the financier on his private car, and was told to bring his friend with him, provided the friend would like to come.

There were several men of large talents at that little dinner party, one of the guests being the president of one of the greatest railroad systems in the world. The conversation, naturally, was about big affairs of the financial world, concerning which I knew very little, and I am free to confess, cared much less. After hearing a good deal about certain things concerning which the discussion was more or less unintelligible to me, I ventured to break into the conversation and to tell Mr. Harriman that I had such of the journals of the "Harriman Alaska Expedition" as already had been published, and moreover, that I had read them.

For the next two hours I had ample evidence that E. H. Harriman cared for something besides railroads. Ten or twelve years before he had



taken a company of naturalists to Alaska with him as his guests. He had had a delightful time with the scientists and they had profited much in a knowledge way by the trip to comparatively new fields. I found that Mr. Harriman was keenly interested in birds, trees, shells, flowers, stones and mammals, and that he knew and appreciated nature in all its forms. That was the only time I ever saw E. H. Harriman, but from what he said during the two hours and a half spent in his car that winter night I was not at all surprised when I found out that he had provided a fund for zoological research.

Across Lafayette square, due west from the Cosmos club, is the vacant Decatur mansion. This house was built by Commodore Stephen Decatur in the year 1819, and it was from its portals that he went forth one year later to meet his death at the hand of James Barron, also a naval officer, who had challenged Decatur to a duel. It is American history and the circumstances are known to all, but it might be said that it was Barron who was in command of the United States ship Chesapeake at the time it was searched for alleged deserters from the British navy.

Books have been written about Lafayette square, but the stories that are told about the men whose statues are in the square, and about the men who lived in the houses surrounding it, are endless, and not all of them, perhaps, have found their way into print. The statue of Lafayette was erected at one corner of the square not long after the statue of Andrew Jackson had been put in place in the center of the square, provided a square can be said to have a center. Lafayette visited America in 1825, and even today one hears occasionally of some living person who remembers his visit.

Not long ago there died in Chicago, at her home on Elm street, the aged Mrs. Davidson. She was born in Charleston, S. C. Her maiden name was Ancrum; she was a granddaughter of Col. William Washington, a first cousin of George Washington. It was William Washington who at the battle of the Cowpens fought a hand-to-hand fight with Colonel Tarleton of the British forces. Colonel Washington succeeded in cutting off the thumb of Tarleton's sword hand, and then there was interference which separated the combatants.

Lafayette was a strong personal friend of Wil-

liam Washington, and when he visited Charleston in the year 1825 he was a guest at the Ancrum residence, Mrs. Ancrum, the mother of Mrs. Davidson, being a daughter of Colonel Washington. Mrs. Davidson, then a child six or eight years old, remembered the visit perfectly and kept until she died a present which Lafayette had given to her, the grandchild of his old friend and comrade in arms.

There is no statue of Washington in Lafayette square, though one day there may be, for it is said to be possible that Andrew Jackson may be put elsewhere and George Washington may take his place. The nearest physical approach, so to speak, that one gets to the first president, in Lafayette square, is in the White House, which fronts it. It may not be generally known that the White House was completed before Washington died. It was only a few days before his death, as Washington tradition has it, that George and Martha Washington walked through the recently completed White House, to give their approval or disapproval, as it may be, of the arrangement of the rooms. It is possible that that visit to the capital was the last one which the Father of his Country made, for it was only a short time afterward that he died at his country seat, Mount Vernon.

Reference to Mount Vernon brings to mind the fact that there is living in Washington today an aged man named John Lane, who is the only living person who ever saw George Washington. Now, inasmuch as the father of his country died 111 years ago, this may seem to be something pretty close to a false statement on its face, but it is the truth nevertheless.

When John Lane was a small boy the driver of a stage that ran between Washington and Mount Vernon asked the lad if he wanted a ride, and the answer was a hasty climbing up to the seat of honor by the driver. The boy made the trip all the way to Mount Vernon and arrived there just as they were removing the body of Washington from the old tomb to the new one. In order to make certain that the remains had not been tampered with by ghouls who not long before had broken into the old tomb, the coffin was opened and John Lane, aged ten, was lifted up to look on the face of the Father of his Country. Mr. Lane today is the only person who survives of the little company which was present at the transfer of the body.

## THE WISE AND FOOLISH VIRGINS

Sunday School Lesson for Oct. 2, 1910  
Specially Arranged for This Paper

LESSON TEXT—Matthew 25: 1-13  
Memory verses 10, 12  
GOLDEN TEXT—"Be ye therefore ready also; for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not"—Luke 12: 40  
TIME—Tuesday afternoon, April 4, A. D. 30  
PLACE—On the Mount of Olives, overlooking Jerusalem, on his way to Bethany.

**Suggestion and Practical Thought.**  
This is one of the most beautiful and touching of the parables. Poetry, painting and the drama have combined to give it an exceptional hold on the Christian imagination. The weird pathos of the story is unspeakable. The occasion is so happy, the agents so interesting, the issue so tragic. The story is a picture of an oriental wedding. Among those friends of the bride who waited to join the procession were ten virgins. While they were waiting, the time of the procession being ever unknown, they became drowsy and slept in peace, knowing that the shouts and cries of the coming crowd would awaken them in time. They had no anxiety; the wise, because they had faith and were prepared; the foolish, by false security and by ignoring the future.

The ten virgins had to wait till about midnight, when through the still air came shrill and clear "those peculiar shrill, quavering cries of joy, called Zugarest, which are heard throughout the east on occasions of special rejoicing. (See Rev. 19:6-9.)" And they heard the cry: Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.

The wise virgins trimmed and replenished their lamps with the oil which they had the forethought to bring with them. The foolish found their lamps burned out, but they had been too careless to bring extra oil with them. They begged oil of the wise, but they had none left; and advised the foolish to go to the source of supply where they should have gone earlier. While they were gone, the procession reached its destination; those who were ready went in to the marriage festival. And the door was shut. Like Esau the foolish virgins came too late for the blessing. They had thrown away their opportunity.

The Lord was soon to depart by the way of the cross. But he promised to return. He came back in the resurrection. He came at the destruction of Jerusalem. He is coming in glory at the last day, when his kingdom shall come and his will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Every crisis of our lives, every opening of opportunity, every crisis of the world or the church may be called in its degree a coming of the Lord whose providence is over all. (1) The coming is something of the greatest value and blessing. It is like the wedding festival, full of the best of life. Even in the subordinate comings and crises of our lives, there is always a door, an invitation, to something better than we have had. Even death is a gate to heaven. (2) The time of the coming is always unknown, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of a cometh.

**In What Way Are We to Watch?**  
The company of watchers was divided into two classes, the wise and the foolish. The equality of numbers has no bearing on the proportion of persons in real life who are wise or foolish.

The lamps signify the outward profession, and the possibilities. All had some light, they had religious feelings, they were moved by the influences of the Holy Spirit.

The oil is the spiritual life, the heart, which is the source of the flame, the visible manifestations of the Christian spirit. "But this significance was shown only by the burning lamp.

Those who took vessels of oil, a permanent supply, were those who had the living reality of that which they professed, who put into practise, into character, that which shone forth from their lamps.

Those who took no supply of oil had a surface feeling, like the seed sown on rocky soil, which sprang up quickly, and endured till persecution or trouble arose (Matt. 13:5, 6, 20, 21).

Watchfulness consists in being prepared for every emergency, and every duty, as the wise virgins watched by having their lamps continually burning, and a full supply of oil to keep them burning.

**And the Door Was Shut.**—The opportunity came, and the gift in its hand was gained or lost. There came a time when it was too late to change. This is a fact of nature, as well as a truth of the Word. There is a tendency to fix the character, so that one will not change. In the misuse of the body there comes a time when it is impossible to ward off disease. We shut the door against ourselves. No one but ourselves is to blame for our not entering. We shut the door by negligence to be prepared to enter.

Congressman Wise of Virginia, in his address on Lincoln, said: "Abraham Lincoln had neither the learning, the experience in public life, nor the social advantages of William H. Seward. Nor had he the political training, the polish, or the skilled weapons of debate possessed by his great antagonist, Stephen A. Douglas. What he had was a faith which knew no variability nor shadow of turning, and a purpose that he boldly announced at the outset and never abandoned under any discouragement. "It is a mistake to say he was an unlearned man."

## WISE BOY.



Teacher—Procrastination is the thief of time.  
Scholar—Yes, but there are other watch lifters.

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Fuffon Wratz—W'en a woman hands out a slab o' lemon pie you make a long speech o' thanks. Wat's that fur?  
Saymold Storey—I'm fittin' myself for the Chawtaiquay lecturer' platform. I thought I told ye 'bout it long 'go.

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