

Siamese and other oriental metal work, and curious musical instruments from many countries, from the tom-tom to the harpsichord. There is also a room full of ancient pottery of the Mound-builders and the New Mexico Pueblos; a number of life-size Indian groups of various tribes, a long array of stuffed animals, including magnificent buffalo and moose families, geological remains, and reproductions of the extinct mammoth creatures of remote antiquity. On the other side of the Smithsonian building stands the Agricultural Museum, containing exhibits of everything of interest to the agriculturist, including Indian grains and prepared food, with some interesting object-lessons as to the destructive or useful propensities of certain birds or animals. A colony or "town" of prairie dogs is represented, just as they are found at home, as are also the habitats of gophers and their kin. It is worth while to note that the much abused sparrow is here presented as an insectivorous bird, and that a certain mal-odorous black and white Canadian animal of unlovely associations is declared, on the whole, to be useful to agriculture in destroying vermin!

From hence it is a delightful walk towards the Monument nor the White House through the Botanic Gardens, which, charming at all times, were particularly so to any one coming from the bleak surroundings of a Canadian March. Many shrubs were in full bloom, among them hollies and other evergreens, contrasting with the crimson *Pyrus Japonica*, the yellow *Forsythia*, the white *Spiraea*, and the glorious pink and white of the magnolias. Plum and cherry, peach and apple blossoms perfumed the air, mingled with the fragrance from the brilliant beds of many-coloured hyacinths, tulips, crocuses, and daffodils. Among the greening elms and tasselled maples, robins were piping and rooks were cawing, while through the dusky boughs of the spreading pines, one could occasionally catch the brilliant flash of a Golden oriole, looking out for a settlement. This, with the balminess of the air, makes it almost impossible to believe that, instead of the end of May, it is still only the March of this favoured climate!

The grounds of the White House, a little beyond these gardens, are very formal in their plan, but when in them, the formality is disguised by the undulations of the ground and the beauty of the trees and shrubs. The private grounds to the south are generally closed to the public, and form a pleasant play-ground for little Miss Ruth Cleveland and "Baby Esther" in her perambulator. On Easter Monday, however, they are thrown open to the children of the city, and a bright and animated scene they are, filled with merry groups of children assembled to "roll" the bright-coloured eggs they bring in pretty little baskets, playing ball with these or chasing each other round the basin filled with gold fish, and amusing themselves as children always know how to do, when turned out on grass. A part of the White House is always open to visitors, who can admire at leisure the mirrors and chandeliers of the great East Room, in which receptions are generally held, but where no receptions were held this Easter, as the President, bearing the burden of his rheumatic gout and of his state worries, was in retreat, not visible to any one but his intimate friends. Mrs. Cleveland does not take part in public receptions. She is a devoted mother, and the care of her little

children keeps her chiefly in private life. The portraits of Washington and his wife in this room are very interesting, as is also a fine portrait of Miss Dolly Madison, in the picturesque costume of the period. From the windows there is an exquisite view of the winding course of the blue Potomac, with the low hills and purple ridges of woodland lost in the hazy distance. The House, in its quiet, republican simplicity, is a fitting abode for the President of a republic, and its situation is much pleasanter than many royal palaces of Europe. Its central pillared facade is its only ornament, but a long row of hot-houses must be a very agreeable addition to its internal equipment. It gives the impression of a much smaller building than it is, from being dwarfed by the proximity of the great Norman mass of the Army and Navy Building, and of the Greek one of the U. S. Treasury on the other. The most interesting objects in the former are the life-size figures representing soldiers of the old Continental army, in the picturesque uniform of those days. In the Treasury building the visitor is shown the great vault where the Government specie is kept, the finishing process of the "greenbacks," and that by which millions in redeemed banknotes are destroyed, etc., etc. The utmost vigilance is exercised to prevent the abstraction of coinage, for to many a poor employee it must often be tantalizing enough to see the machine knife cut recklessly through a pile of banknotes, which in his or her possession would represent comparative wealth. We were allowed to handle a small packet of American Government bonds, worth three millions of dollars, and we noticed a large package of greenbacks marked *forty millions of dollars!* Of course the strictest watch is kept to prevent any one from preserving a single note. In the Patent Office one can observe and admire the inventive genius of our cousins, to the fullest extent, in all everything from an air-tester to a locomotive; but the attempt to do so is too fatiguing for the ordinary observer, though one is at least always ready to admire the invention of the *elevator*, which, among multitudinous flights of stairs, save so much wear of weary muscles!

The political atmosphere is rather disappointing at present. The House of Representatives certainly does not impress one by its decorum, as the members chat and laugh, lounge on sofas or sit with their feet on their desks while debates or a division is going on. The main object of the republicans seems to be to delay and obstruct business as much as possible. They demand the calling of the roll for a mere motion of adjournment, this process occupying *fifteen minutes*; and then though present, they will refuse to vote, that thereby they have the pretext of "no quorum." The House seems to sit only from twelve to four or five; and very seldom in the evening, though, singularly enough, they sat on both Good Friday afternoon and evening, when they were occupied with a dreary pension report; some very doubtful cases being strongly pushed, doubtless for party purposes. There is no lack of illustration of the evils of party government. It seems odd to a stranger to hear members spoken of as "the gentleman from Texas," "the gentleman from Missouri," it being too cumbersome to give them the designation of the congressional district represented. The hall is too large for hearing well, especially through the confused hum of conversation, and impresses one with a strong sense of the already unwieldy

size of this great nation, and with no very favourable impression of its present political machinery. The Senate seems little inclined to burden itself with work; and the only opportunity we had of seeing the U. S. Senate was afforded by a Senator's funeral. Neither House seemed to be a young House for a young nation, even the House of Representatives having only a few youthful-looking men in it. Its Speaker, Mr. Crisp, has no light task in preserving order and pushing through the business; but he seems a man of firmness and ability, and was evidently not to be spared from his post for the comparative ease of the Senate, which it was to his honour that he declined, for public reasons.

One of the most interesting institutions in Washington is the Young Women's Christian Home, affording a pleasant and comfortable abode for about fifty wage-earning young women, at almost nominal rates, a matter of the utmost importance in a city where so many women come to secure employment in Government offices and elsewhere; and where it is often difficult to procure any respectable quarters for the sum they can afford to pay. Here, through the munificence of a Washington lady, who presented the house, and the energy and liberality of other ladies, they have all the advantages of a Christian home for about two dollars and a half per week. It also contains a guest-chamber most comfortably furnished, where a lady visiting Washington alone may, when it is not already occupied, be satisfactorily lodged and boarded at the moderate rate of one dollar a day. There is also a large building, belonging to the Women's Christian Association, in which women of a different class can find shelter, even with children, and whence also there is a good deal of outdoor relief supplied, the Government granting them a yearly allowance of \$3,000. Like other places, Washington has had a great deal of poverty and want to relieve during the past winter.

The noble emancipation statue erected in honour of Abraham Lincoln stands in Lincoln Square, about a mile north of the Capitol, looking towards the open country. It is a fine bronze statue, cast at Munich and designed by Thomas Ball, and gives a life-like presentation of President Lincoln, with a gesture and expression of benignant, fatherly compassion, breaking the fetters of the slave, and, by the posture of his left hand stretched out in benediction, encouraging him to arise and take his place among men. The figures are admirably conceived and treated and the group is the gift of the freedmen themselves, the first subscription of five dollars being the first free earnings of a poor negro woman, offered the day after Lincoln's death.

Between Washington and Richmond one travels through a long stretch of country which impresses one as desolate and only partially inhabited, covered in part with pine woods and marshes, alternating with long tracts of monotonous level plain, much of which lies waste. This region has never yet recovered from the effects of the desolating civil war, of which it was the chief battleground—Bull Run, Fredericksburg, the Rappahannock, and the Wilderness all lying within its range. Only a few of the old plantation homes still remain, and look like sad survivals of a former age. Even the little towns through which the line passes have a shabby and depressed look, very different from the fast-growing towns of the North. Richmond itself is a most attractive city, built on low hills at the point