

*April 16, 1917.*—Paris again, after so long a time, but Paris still and always, smiling under a bright sun, gay with flags, the American flag most conspicuous of all, entwining its folds with the tricolour—Paris, the charming, the capital of the human mind!

At the station—the Gare de Lyon—met by Sharp,<sup>1</sup> Bliss, Frazer, Blount, Maurice Carré, second in command of the Protocol Service, who welcomed me on behalf of the President of France, reporters, photographers, cinematograph men. Drove with Nell, Sharp and Carré to the Ritz—and the joy to see again the rue de Rivoli and the Louvre, and the Tuileries, and the Castiglione and the place Vendôme! . . .

I was never so tired, or so soiled with travel; a long wait for the trunks, then luncheon, and awhile afterwards the trunks. Then a bath, and so forth, clothed again and in my right mind. I had told all the reporters to come at three—and they came, all there are in Paris and in the world, a great horde of them, French and American. No interview to give, but they stood and baited me, cross-examined me after the manner of reporters—especially American reporters—who seem to feel themselves authorized to interpellate public men impudently, and grow angry when one will not commit indiscretions and make a fool of oneself to create an American holiday. French more polite. At the conclusion of the séance, one of the Americans exclaimed pettishly, “Well, I guess the photographers are the only ones to get anything out of this,” and stalked out. I had prepared a little statement for them in writing. . . .

At five to the Embassy, for tea—special invitation. Cold salon, with small fire. Mme. Sharp and Mother Sharp—mother of the Ambassador—with two women callers, huddled over a tiny fire at one end of the room, with two long rows of empty chairs trailing

<sup>1</sup> William Graves Sharp of Ohio was American Ambassador to France in 1914-1918.

down the empty salon; whole house had bald, barren, cold aspect, not as nice as the Herricks' place in rue François I. But the salon filled up after awhile—many Americans—types of the idle who live abroad, for the most part, barren, useless, aimless lives, their patriotism a thing of flags and bunting. . . . Penfield<sup>1</sup> came, arrived, rather, ostentatiously, after awhile; rather good-looking man, bristling little moustache, long frock coat, something like Theodore Burton, went teetering about, placing the tips of his fingers together—highly ambassadorial, pompous and important, like Sharp himself, who came in after awhile, also on his tip-toes most of the time, very heavy, impressed, keeping up appearances, consciously reassuring himself, "I am the American Ambassador." Empty men, both. . . .

The one bright spot in the afternoon was Edith Wharton, whom I met just as we were leaving. Charming, and still pretty, and nicely groomed, and highly intelligent. Talked with her about Romain Rolland, whom of course she appreciates highly.