April 17, 1917.—A fine night's sleep—to awake in Paris!

Reporters again, returning to the attack; two soldiers in uniform, the new light blue of the French army that is so chic, came to take my photograph for the Government to use in propaganda.

Blount called. Out for a walk before lunch—and then with Nell to Voisin's, which we found unchanged, thank God, all as before, *le patron* recounting his experiences in 1870! A delicious lunch, of which I ate too heartily. While there the Ruddocks arrived, with the Grews,[2] just in from Vienna, and sticking together like magnetic poles in that close corporation of all American secretaries, who regard all ministers and ambassadors, unless they are hold-over Republicans, as interlopers and intruders....

Everywhere soldiers, the light blue of the new French uniforms and the khaki of the English officers. We might as well be in London as at the Ritz; the English seem to have taken Paris as the Germans have Brussels. In the dining-room one sees the English officers in their khaki, gilt buttons, belts and cross-straps, flannel shirts, fine, hardy-looking fellows (one can't tell their rank; there seem to be no two uniforms alike) at all the little tables with the

[1] Frederic C. Penfield of Connecticut had been appointed Ambassador to Austria-Hungary in 1913.

[2] Mr. Joseph Grew, later Ambassador to Japan.

soft lights. And lovely English women, clear English types, like du Maurier used to draw, bless their sweet, sad faces!

I should prefer them, however, in London; I like Paris to be—Paris, and exclusively French. I don't like to speak English, or to hear English in Paris—and all clerks, waiters, and so on, practice their English on one, their abominable English....

A long visit from Maurois, who had been in Brussels in 1914, then at four to the Embassy.

Sharp at his table—highly ambassadorial. By an unlucky, asinine chance, I happened to mention Herrick, and he went off into a long, detailed explanation and exposé of Herrick's treatment of him when he, Sharp, came here in the summer of 1914, with a complete, minute examination of Herrick's motives. The least he could say of Herrick was that he was a consummate villain, as are all curly haired men, so he said. Herrick had been nasty to him, evidently tried to compromise him and to have him recalled, so he could stay on, for Myron died hard, very hard. But Ribot, Premier of France,[1] was waiting, and Sharp went pompously on, making an argument, like a country lawyer to a country jury piecing his evidence together. "I shall touch on that point later, and so on, that you may see just what a villain he is." Convincing enough, but very wearying, and I on nettles, for I wished to see Ribot, not Sharp. The little clock chimed four and Sharp went on wrapped up in himself, in his own hatred of Herrick, his own troubles. Herrick, he said, had exaggerated about his expenditures, had claimed to spend $8,000 a month, had intimated that Sharp was not rich enough for the post. "I have as much taxes as Herrick does." Herrick had intimated that Sharp didn't know French! But he, Sharp, knew more French than Herrick. (As a matter of fact neither knows two words of French.) And so on, and so on, enough to make one sick. And old Ribot waiting! After awhile I hesitatingly said, "But Ribot is waiting." Then he remembered; at last got started and, in a taxi—after pausing to be photographed—and after Sharp had tried to say *"Affaires Etrangères"* and failed—we were off....

We waited only a moment in the great red antechamber there on the quai d'Orsay, and were shown into a rich, handsome apartment, lofty ceilings, beautiful tapestries—and rising from a hand-

[1] Ribot had succeeded Briand as Premier in March, 1917; he gave way to Painlevé in September of that year.

some Louis XV table, with brass ornaments, a distinguished old man, tall, stooped, all in black, long loose redingote, a flowing black tie, a shock of white hair, and a white beard—Alexandre Ribot, President of the Council, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the Premier of France, in the most tragic epoch of her history—was advancing with a charming smile to meet us. He gave us his left hand and motioned us to seats at his table, speaking French. Sharp was bellowing:

"Musseer Ribot speaks English better than we do."

Musseer Ribot smiled and spoke to me in French. He talked English to Sharp, but to me always in French. He asked me about Belgium, thanked me for what I'd done, and so on—nothing especially important—and then Sharp interrupted him to ask for something concerning the departure of the Austrian consuls from America—some facilities for the sailing of certain ships—which Ribot granted. We talked of the war, of course; he said he had no news of the battle today, only that the Germans were shelling the cathedral at Rheims again, evidently determined to destroy it. After a moment Sharp arose and said he had to go, but that I should stay. It was embarrassing; but he went and I remained only a moment, however, and then left. We had talked about the Germans. "One cannot destroy, one cannot crush a nation, but we ought to destroy their system," said he. An attendant brought in a cup of milk and placed it on a table; evidently the old statesman and intellectual needed careful attention—and I went.

A fine old man, giving the impression now of great age, but no decline in his intellectual forces. Bowed and bent with his years and his cares, his face showed the lines of life—he has had a stormy career. Was he not, with his wife, on the *Bourgogne* when she went down years ago, fighting his way through the excited, panic-stricken sailors for places for himself and his wife in the life-boats? But the face is sweet, serene and kindly. One knows that one faces a cultured, highly organized, experienced man who has lived much and properly....

I came away and out on to the quai. No taxi, and I knew that my old friend T. P. O'Connor, who had sent me a note from the Crillon early in the afternoon, was waiting for me at the Ritz—I had asked him to tea. I was anxious to see him; I hadn't seen him since January, 1914, when we had tea in the House of Commons, with Francis Neilson, John Burns, and a lot of others. It was dry, the sun had come out; I walked across the bridge of

Alexander III—plain Nicholas Romanoff now!—to the Champs Elysées; no taxi; walked to the place de la Concorde, there found a taxi—and at the Ritz, good old T. P., Mme. Allard, Mlle. Allard, and the Comtesse de Lesseps were there, Nell entertaining them. We all had tea. T. P. had much to say of English and Irish affairs; the Revolution—the sad Revolution, another big British blunder; in the British manner of handling it a blunder. The Revolution was nothing, but the executions made it a mighty blunder. He had gone to Asquith to save Casement, not because of sympathy with Casement but to save the British nation from a mistake. Asquith did not dare interfere, was much troubled.... Casement clearly insane; a dreadful person; worst of all, bad morals; had left a diary, an awful thing, with minute descriptions. ... T. P. had seen it. Asquith knew of it; "thank God I haven't read it!" but couldn't find two independent physicians in the Empire to declare Sir Roger insane. Asquith had been growing stronger since his fall. Lloyd George had come to power by methods that one couldn't approve; is ambitious, but by no means corrupt or desirous of Tory honours. Afraid, however, of the Tories, afraid to offend Carson—a man now at the head of the Admiralty who a few years ago was heading a rebellion!—and so somewhat paralyzed. Could make no decision regarding Ireland. T. P. thought perhaps there would be another failure and that afterwards Ireland would be freed. More bigotry, more stupidity in Ireland now than in all the thirty-seven years he had been in Parliament; the Irish Party had taken the position that Ulster counties could not be included against their will, and that, *per contra,* no other counties could be excluded against their will. But Lloyd George can not see this elementary principle—the whole trouble, the great defect of Lloyd George being that he has no principles—which is precisely what Richard McGhee said to me one day long years ago, in that dim past before the war, as we sat in the House of Commons. That is, Lloyd George has no idea, no intellectual conception of democracy. Is a kind of natural democrat, is poor, simple, miserably dressed, never has his hair cut, and so on, cares nothing for rank or title, but that is all—is eager for power.

He did not see how the Government could long endure; Lloyd George's fears of Sir Edward Carson and the Tories generally having caused him to make a great blunder with regard to Ireland.... T. P. stayed until seven o'clock, until long after the others had gone; then he said, referring to the Comtesse de Lesseps,

whose blonde loveliness was most striking in her widow's garb—black with the white border in her cap—praising her beautiful placid face: "When I see a woman like that—she must be Catholic and devout—I think on the wonders of the church and marvel; but when I see the priests— Och! it's all otherwise. My father always voted against the priests. The priests are our greatest danger! They are ruining Ireland. In their hearts they are against home rule, against liberty everywhere. And protest as they may, on that day when we are free, they will come out against us. They are for privilege everywhere—in their secret hearts they are for it in this war."

Nell and I ran off to dine at the Café de Paris—one of the few places left unchanged in this world, though that is changed too since there are always groups of English officers, sturdy, handsome chaps, sitting about everywhere; now and then the new blue uniforms of the French, or the showy uniforms of their officers. We had our seats side by side against the wall on the long divan (why can't we have such cozy, intimate arrangements in New York?) and sat there, over a delicious dinner, with that ever-interesting world of Paris before our eyes, under the haze of cigarette smoke. They have no music now, which is a blessing—Oh! the suffering caused by the chronic din of those braying, beating savage bands in New York, with their thundering tom-toms!—and there is less drinking than before; indeed the war has made people temperate. The people are serious, too, but not depressed. There is nowhere to be seen in the faces of the soldiers on this side of the line that dumb, supine, heavy and docile, homesick look of endurance one sees on the faces of the German soldiers; temperamental, partly, I suppose, but then these are more intelligent, more individual, less like oxen than the Germans; and then here there is the encouragement of America's entry into the war and of the victories in Champagne.... On our divan, two very pretty cocottes; next them an English boy in khaki, fresh, clean, wholesome. One of the cocottes tried to attract him, finally spoke to him; he deliberately turned his back on her.... Across the room, a woman in mourning, weeping, her escort with his arm around her, trying evidently to console her; she, not to be consoled, wept steadily, now and then wringing her hands. What was that little drama? The war—some one killed lately at the front? Ah well! The world goes on! The chary English boy stalks out—the cocotte draws out a little mirror, a little powder puff, powders her face, takes a

pencil and reddens her lips, adjusting their outline, lights another cigarette.