

May 27, 1920.—At five, took Gorgas to the Palace to present him to the King. Gorgas is going to the Congo to stamp out yellow fever. . . . The audience was an event because of Gorgas's complete lack of manner and because of his provincial ignorance. To begin with, he speaks with an ugly Southern drawl, swallows half his words, and mumbles abominably, so that the king could not understand what he was saying, and was constantly appealing to me, with an expression of pain: "What did he say?" It was only with great difficulty that I could understand Gorgas's Alabama English myself. At the end of a quarter of an hour, Gorgas turned to me and said:

"Well, Mr. Ambassador, I reckon that we'd better be going."

I nudged him viciously, said, "Sh! His Majesty will indicate when it is time for us to go," and somehow saved the situation.

There we sat, Gorgas with one leg cocked on his knee, presenting the sole of a large boot to the King, and the time dragged by. The king asked him very intelligent questions about yellow fever, and Gorgas replied well enough. His Majesty was very much interested when Gorgas said that he thought that tropical Africa could be made habitable for white folks by proper sanitary measures, and asked Gorgas to give him a report on the subject after his visit to East Africa.

His Majesty arose after half an hour, and we left, and outside Gorgas laughed at what he considered the ceremony, though it had all been very simple. My own judgment of Gorgas, aside from his evident and incurable provincialism, is that he is an overrated man. He was very dull, though among germs and microbes he may cut more of a figure.

The papers are full of ridicule for poor Deschanel,² because he

² President of the French Republic.

fell out of his sleeper. A President has no right to be sick, or to be the subject of a minor accident. His career is doubtless finished by this stupid accident.

One of Renkin's men in to see me about the transfer of the American Red Cross fund and equipment in Flanders to the Belgian Government. Oddly enough, in talking with the King this afternoon I mentioned the fact that an American was here with \$60,000 to give to charity; and that I had suggested using it for the relief of destitution in the devastated regions. The King had smiled, and suggested Epstein, of the American Red Cross as the one to advise, saying that Epstein knew more about the subject than any one....

J. P. Morgan, the press dispatches say, has offered his London residence to the Government as a gift, the house to be used as an American Embassy. Lodge told me in Washington last October that Morgan had offered to give his London house for this purpose, but that the prejudice in America was so strong against our making any sort of adequate showing in foreign relations that he, Lodge, did not dare even to bring the matter before the Senate.

The matter interests me because I have been trying to induce the Government to buy this house, which we occupy from month to month as tenants at sufferance, liable to be turned into the street any morning, and not a house to be had in all Brussels. An item in a general revenue act for \$200,000 or \$250,000 was passed by the Senate, and in House Committee cut to \$125,000, and there it rests. The provincialism in America, compounded with arrant demagoguery, and Anti-Saloon League puerility, is simply nauseating and there is no hope; the country will never change, never grow up. There is a kind of perverted snobbishness in America that is hopeless; as Englishmen are proud of being seen in the company of a Duke, so Americans are proud of being seen in the company of a ragamuffin, because they think that that proves to the world that they are not snobbish.

² President of the French Republic.