

MR. ADE CONFESSES HE STARTED OUT TO REFORM CERTAIN ABUSES IN EUROPE

He Begins on Our Consular Service That Is Sadly Out of Repair.

By George Ade

In undertaking a trip to foreign parts I have had two objects in view:

(a) To strengthen and more closely cement our friendly relations with foreign powers—I to furnish the cement.

(b) To reform things in general over here.

I found that there was no opening for a real reformer in the U. S. A., inasmuch as the magazines were up-setting municipal rings, cornering the Beef Trust and camping on the trail of every corporation that seemed to be making money. I said: "If I wish to make a ten-strike as a reformer I must seek new fields."

So I decided to flit through Europe and spend all the time I could spare from dodging table d'hote dinners to bolstering up and regulating the consular service.

In writing today about the happy experiences of an American Consul I am following the advice of a friend, who urged me to send some letters back home.

"Don't put in too much about your travels," he said. "People have read about European travel until they know Munich better than they do Montana. Whenever the opportunity presents itself write something entirely irrelevant—something that has nothing to do with anything particular. The less you say about foreign countries the better you will please your readers, and if you can arrange to write a series of letters in which no reference is made to either Europe or Africa who knows but what you will score a hit?"

With no desire to boast of my accomplishments, I feel that up to date I have followed instructions rather closely. If any dates, statistics or useful information have crept into these communications it is through oversight and not by intention.

In writing from Paris the natural impulse is to describe Napoleon's tomb and tell how the Champs Elysee runs right out to the Arc de Triomphe and then cuts through the Bois de Boulogne. Fearing that this subject matter has been touched upon by other visitors, I shall disregard Paris and go straight to my task of reforming the Consular Service.

To begin with, usually the American Consul is all right in his place, but his place is at home. Overpaid, possibly, but he does his best to earn his \$800 per annum. If he kept all the money that he handled in the course of a year he couldn't be a really successful grafter. He finds himself plumped down in a strange country. About the time that he begins to learn the language and has saved up enough money to buy evening clothes he is recalled and goes back home with a "dress suit" on his hands. Take the case of Mr. Eben Willoughby, of Michigan. It is a simple narrative, but it will give you a line on the shortcomings of our



George Ade

IN...

PASTURES NEW



SAD CASE OF "OLD MAN" WILLOUGHBY OF MICHIGAN, CONSUL AT GALLIVANCIA

Failed Because He Did Not Know the Artificialities of Officialdom.

What Happened to an American Consul

Consular Service, and it will carry its own moral.

"Old Man" Willoughby, as he was known at home, owned and edited a successful daily paper on the outskirts of the Michigan pine belt. He was a wheel-horse in the party and for 40 years had supported the caucus nominees. The aspiring politician who wished to go to Congress had to go and see Willoughby with his hat in his hand. He helped to make and unmake United States Senators and was consulted regarding appointments. But he never had asked anything for himself. His two boys went to college at Ann Arbor, and when the younger came home with his degree and began to take a hand in running the paper Mr. Willoughby found himself, for the first time in his life, relieved of wearing responsibilities. He was well fixed financially and still in the prime of life—not due to retire permanently, but ready to take it easy. For years he had nursed a vague desire to travel beyond the limits of his native land. Mrs. Willoughby, who in the home circle was known as "Ma," was a devotee of the Chautauqua Circle, and she, too, had an ambition born of much reading to pack up and go somewhere. The family doctor said that a visit to some milder climate, far from the rigors of northern winter, would be a positive benefit to her.

So Mr. and Mrs. Willoughby began to study the atlas. One of the sons suggested to "Old Man" Willoughby that he could take a trip to an attractive southern country at the minimum expense, by securing an appointment as Consul. And, of course, apart from the financial advantage, there would be the glory of representing a great nation and hoisting the flag over a benighted foreign population. The suggestion appealed very strongly to Mr. Willoughby. He wrote to the Congressman and the Senator and wanted to know if there was a vacancy—salary no object, but he would like to go into a mild and equable climate where he could pick cocconuts.

His friends at Washington simply overturned the State Department in their eagerness to give him what he wanted. They discovered that there was somewhere on the map a city called Gallivancia. It was down by the southern seas—the abode of perpetual summer and already enjoying a preliminary boom as a resort. The acting Consul had been a British subject. The pay was so small that an enterprising American had wanted the job. "United States Consul at Gallivancia" reverberated pleasantly in the imagination of Mr. Willoughby. He told his friends at Washington to get after the place, and in less than no time his daily paper announced that he had "accepted" the appointment.

The politicians represented to the State Department that Mr. Willoughby was a sturdy patriot of unimpeachable character and great ability—all of which was true. They might have added that he would be just as much at home in Gallivancia as a

polar bear would be on India's coral strand.

The news of his appointment gave one section of Michigan the trembles for several days, and the Willoughby family was bathed in a new importance. Mrs. Willoughby was given a formal farewell by the ladies of the congregation assembled in the church parlors. Mr. Willoughby was presented with a jeweled badge by the

bona fide titles to back them up and give the glamour.

Into this nest of pretentious, ceremonious, strutting little mortals came "Old Man" Willoughby and "Ma" Willoughby, of Michigan. Of the outward form and artificialities of a Europeanized aristocratic society they were most profoundly ignorant. Mr. Willoughby did not even own a "dress suit." When he got a clean shave and put on a string tie and

books and a letterpress, all being the property of the United States of America.

Mr. Willoughby had rented a house on the hill overlooking the town and decided to plant the Consulate in the front room of his residence. Inasmuch as the Consul had a business caller about once a month, there was no need of maintaining two establishments. Already he had taken into his employ and his warmest personal friend-

blew off. For days afterward the official set, the men at the little club and the women pouring tea at each other, talked of nothing else. Many would not believe when they first heard it, but there were witnesses—reliable witnesses—who saw the whole thing and were called upon time and time again to testify regarding the most extraordinary performance of the United States Consul. Other Consuls may come and go and the years spin their weary lengths and the obliterating drift of time may hide some of the lesser events in the history of Gallivancia, but until time shall be no more the residents of that city will tell the story of "Old Man" Willoughby, of Michigan.

What do you suppose he did? No effort of the imagination can carry you within hailing distance of the horrible truth, so let the suspense be ended. Mr. Willoughby, with his own hands, helped to move the furniture from the old Consulate up to his new residence. He put the table on top of his head and balanced it carefully and carried it through the open streets of Gallivancia. An official, a representative of a great power, performing cheap manual labor.

Words are altogether inadequate to describe the degree of obloquy which Mr. Willoughby earned for himself by this unheard-of exhibition. In Gallivancia it was not considered quite the thing to indulge in mental effort, and for anyone except a menial of the lowest social order to perform physical labor was almost inconceivable. The new Consul was set down as either a harmless imbecile or an altogether new specimen of barbarian. In either case he was not a fit associate for well-bred gentlemen, and Gallivancia proceeded to ignore him and "Ma." That is, they pretended to ignore them, but as a matter of fact they watched them at a distance and heard daily reports of their familiarities with servants, their fondness for outlandish American cookery and other eccentricities. It was all vastly diverting to the tiny aristocrats of Gallivancia, but it was pretty hard on Mr. and Mrs. Willoughby—homesick, hungry for Spring chicken and garden truck, and yet ashamed to pick up and go home so soon after all those elaborate good-byes.

One morning Mr. Willoughby walked out on the veranda of his hillside cottage and looked across the harbor and saw something that smote him with an overpowering joy. A white cruiser, flying the Stars and Stripes, had steamed through the narrow entrance and was bearing down to an anchorage.

"Come here, mother!" he shouted. "Come here, if you want to see something that's good for sore eyes!"

Mrs. Willoughby came running and nearly careened with happiness. There it was, an American war vessel, with real Yankees on board—boys who had been brought up to believe that a man's character and his abilities give him worth which cannot be altered by putting a mere handle to his

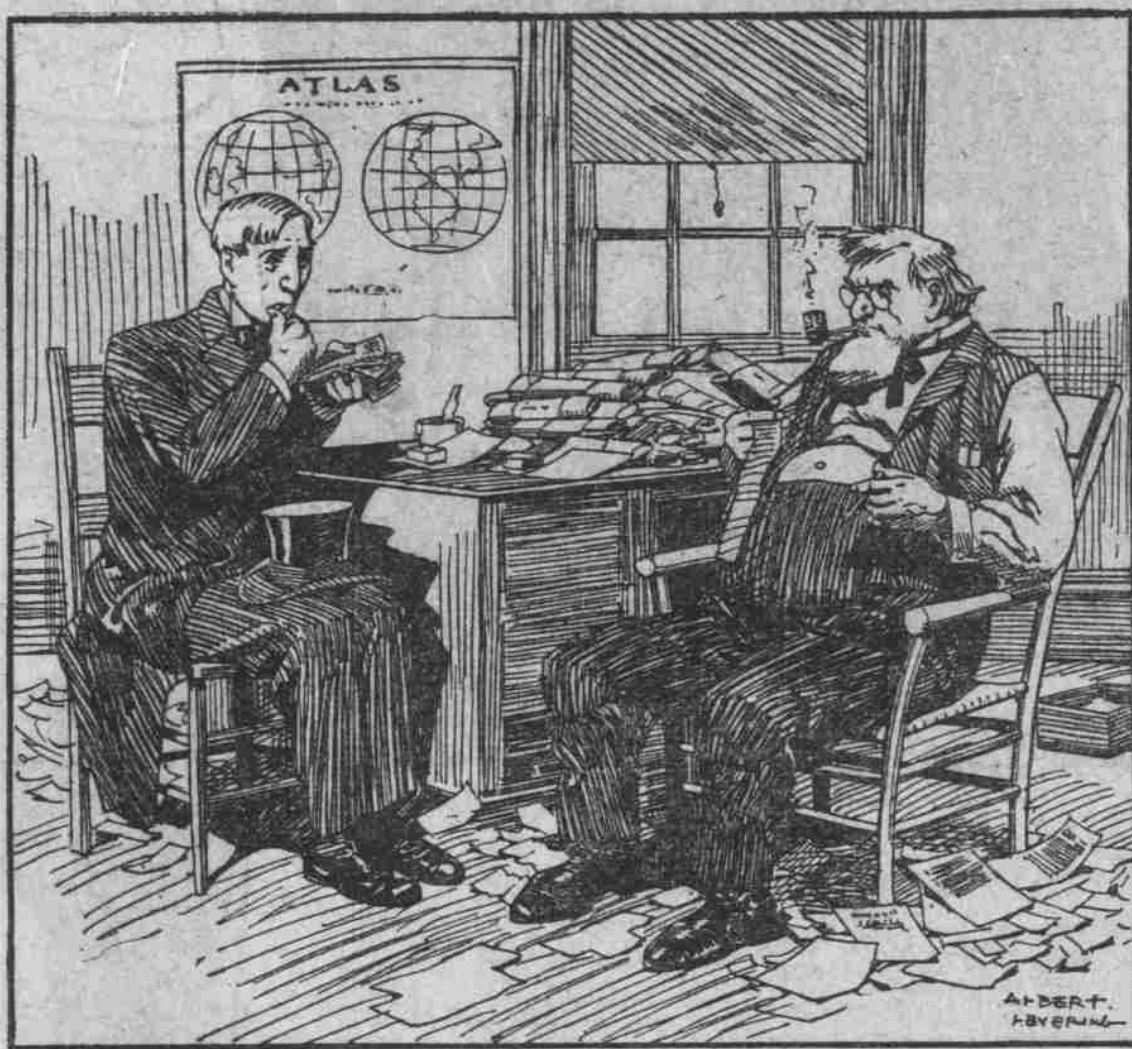
name. Mr. and Mrs. Willoughby were eager to go down and call on the "folks from home." After the prolonged boycott which had been hanging over them they were pining for white society.

Mr. Willoughby put on his long black coat and Mrs. Willoughby got out her flowered bonnet and together they went down to the water front—walked instead of going as they should have gone, in one of the decrepit local hacks. Before they could charter a humble rowboat and go out to the ship the Governor-General and the Lord High Commander of the Seow and the Imperial Collector of Customs and all the other residents of real importance had gone out in a launch and taken charge of the naval officers. Dinner parties and a ball at the "palace" were arranged at once. The servant at the club hurried out and got another bottle of Scotch whisky, and the town band began to mobilize at a cafe. Gallivancia had no use for a humble American of the Willoughby type, but it gave a hysterical welcome to the splendid war vessel and the natty men in uniform. Over the first drink the Americans were told the remarkable story of the new Consul and were assured that he was a "queer sort." And the naval officers, being accustomed to hearing United States Consuls maligned, took no further interest in their Government's representative; they merely shook hands with him when he came aboard, told him to make himself at home, and then flocked away to the high lights and the gaiety which had been provided for them by the court circles of Gallivancia.

Mr. and Mrs. Willoughby found themselves sidetracked, and they went back home not daring to talk about what had happened. But that was the day which caused them to decide to go back to Michigan. Mr. Willoughby wrote to the State Department and said that the climate did not agree with him. And when they sailed away "Jim" was the only person who came to the dock to bid them goodby.

As the "ex-Consul to Gallivancia" Mr. Willoughby is more than ever an honored figure in his own town. Doubtless he has more gray matter, more Christian charity and more horse sense than could be collectively assembled by all the petty officials at Gallivancia. And yet Gallivancia regarded him as a very poor excuse for a Consul. The naval officers saw in him a well-meaning "jay" who was bringing discredit on their native land because of his ignorance of social forms.

Therefore let us send out Consuls who can put up a "front." Have each Consul wear the uniform of a drum major. Make sure that he can dance all night, play bridge and keep up with the naval crowd when it comes to drinking. Let him be haughty with the serving classes, but jovial with the military. Make sure that he is averse to all forms of labor. Such a Consul will shed glory upon our beloved country, and will never suffer the unhappy fate of "Old Man" Willoughby.



HAD TO GO AND SEE WILLOUGHBY

members of his lodge and the band serenaded him the night before he went away.

He and "Ma" stood on the back platform and gazed with misty eyes at the flutter of handkerchiefs on the station platform until the train swung around a curve and they found themselves headed straight for Gallivancia and glory. Both of them felt a little heart-achy and dubious, but it was too late to back out. At New York they boarded a ship and after several days of unalloyed misery they landed at Gallivancia.

Now, Gallivancia is the make-believe capital of a runt of an island having no commercial or other importance. No matter where an island may be dropped down, some nation must grab it and hold it for fear that some other nation will take charge of it and pay the expenses. That is why Gallivancia had a Governor-General and a Colonel in command, and the Right Honorable Skipper of the gunboat and a Judge and a cluster of foreign Consuls. The men had a club at which whisky and water could be obtained, unless the bottle happened to be empty. The women exchanged calls and gave formal dinners and drove about in rickety little victorias with terrified natives in livery perched upon the box. The lines of social precedence were closely drawn. At a dinner party the wife of the Governor preceded the wife of the military commandant, who, in turn, queued it over the wife of the gunboat, who looked down upon the wife of the magistrate, and so on. The women smoked cigarettes and gambled at bridge, while every man who had won a medal at a shooting match pinned it on his coat when he went to a ball. It was a third-rate copy of court life, but these small dignitaries went through the motions and got a lot of fun out of it in one way and another. If we cannot afford a social position that is real ivory the next best thing is to get one that is celluloid. It had all the intricate

backed into a "Prince Albert" coat he felt that he had made a very large concession to the mere frumpieries of life. And "Ma" had her own ideas about low-necked gowns.

Can you see Mr. and Mrs. Willoughby in Gallivancia? Can you understand what must have been the attitude of these gold-braid peewees toward an old-fashioned apple pie couple from the tall timber?

Mind you, I am not poking fun at the Willoughbys. In the opinion of every real American a man of the Willoughby type is worth a ten-acre lot full of these two-by-four titles. The Willoughbys were good people—the kind of people one likes to meet in Michigan. But when the ladies of the foreign colony came to call on "Ma" and said "Dyuh me!" and looked at her through their lognettes, she was like a staid old Plymouth Rock hen who suddenly finds herself among the birds of paradise. She told Mr. Willoughby that it was the queerest lot of "women folks" she had ever seen, and although she didn't like to talk about people until she knew her ground, some of them did not seem any more respectable than the law allowed. Poor Mrs. Willoughby! She did not know it was good form for a woman to smoke and drink, but had form for her to be interested in her husband. She tried to apply a Michigan training to Gallivancia conditions, and the two didn't seem to jibe.

If Mrs. Willoughby amused the women Mr. Willoughby more than amused the men. He upset them and left them gasping.

The Acting Consul had used a small office adjoining his own place of business on the water front. Mr. Willoughby called on the former Consul and found him to be a dignified Britisher of the gloomy and retiring sort, with a mustache shaped like a horseshoe. The dethroned official was courteous, but not cordial. He was saying good bye to some easy money, and the situation was not one calculated to promote good cheer. Mrs. Willoughby's action in coming down and pulling the Consulate from underneath him seemed to him almost unfriendly. However, he formally turned over to Mr. Willoughby a table, four chairs, several account

ship a native named Franciotto. This name seemed formal and hard to remember, so Mr. Willoughby rechristened him "Jim." He liked this native in spite of his color because he was the only man in Gallivancia who seemed to be pervaded by the simple spirit of democracy. Mr. Willoughby said that the others put on too many "damnlugs"—whatever that may mean.

If U. S. Consul Willoughby's social standing in Gallivancia was at all subject to doubt that doubt vanished on the day when he and "Jim" came down to move the office effects to the house on the hill.

Mr. Willoughby did something that day which convulsed Gallivancia as it never had been convulsed before—not even when a neighboring volcano



WHAT DO YOU SUPPOSE HE DID?



HE WAS COURTEOUS—