

PORLLAND, OREGON, SUNDAY MORNING, DECEMBER 6, 1908

MUST THE WORLD PAY PARIS AN ADMISSION FEE?

The Greatest Amusement Trust on Earth in Financial Straits

OYEZ! Oyez!
Hear, all you who design to enter Paris and prefer not to leave hope behind!

After you have counted and figured and reckoned every one among the many items of expense for your stay in the city of the Greatest Amusement Trust on Earth, after you have added the "incidentals," which include the tolls of the brigandage that will be levied on you, from the big price you pay for fresh apples to the charge of another dollar or two for the "satisfaction" into which your hotel proprietor is entitled to construe your speechless wrath—then, and not till then, add 2 per cent. on the total.

That will about represent the tax you will have to pay for the privilege of supporting the city of Paris and of relieving the local bandits of their share of taxation. For, strange as it may seem, Paris is planning to increase its undersized revenues by placing a 2 per cent. tax on the hotel bills of all foreigners.

Is there a reason? There is. It is the same reason, expressed in the same words, that actuated the western road agents who were holding up an excursion of tourists.

"Oh, my friends," cried one of the victims, as the leader accepted his pocket-book, "why, why are you engaged in this nefarious calling?"

"Because," responded the road agent, reaching for his watch, "we need the money."

PARIS needs the money. That's all.

Paris indulged itself in a financial revolution, for the benefit of the Parisians, in 1901. It abolished the octroi tax on beer, wine and cider. That helped the Parisians along wonderfully, as individuals.

Unfortunately, it impoverished them correspondingly as a municipality. The city went broke to the extent of \$1,200,000 a year. By this time it is \$9,400,000 shy on the commodity which Parisians love better than anything else in the world.

It was at this nerve-racking juncture, when it seemed as though the good Parisians might actually be called upon to support themselves, that Prefect Deselves announced to the Municipal Council:

"My dear friends, behold, I have a plan, a key to this inexplicable difficulty. We will tax the tourists."

"Observe, there is ample precedent. Many summer and winter resorts impose such a tax on their visitors, in order that the improvements and conveniences which the strangers enjoy may be maintained."

"Does not our beloved Paris impoverish



A Typical Parisian Bid for Popularity—Restaurant Revels After Midnight



It was immediately afterward that the hotel keepers began to breathe hard and acquire crimson countenances. Was it not enough that these wretched Americans should be cutting their stay in Paris down to the period of a swallow's flight for reasons of an unprecedented economy? Was it not more than enough that upon the hotel proprietor already fell the foreigners' execrations as the one bandit who charged them for comforts they neither perceived nor appreciated? And must he now be made the hateful agent of an obnoxious prefecture in the collection of what must be a universally execrated tax?

So the hotel men are making very vigorous objection to the proposed new tax, which, they assert, will injure the business of Paris as the greatest show place, the Greatest Amusement Trust on Earth.

Today most of the "sights" of Paris, apart from those stock exhibits which are embodied in the famous buildings, the collections of art and the historical localities, are planned and exploited as deliberately as the acts of a modern, mammoth-ringed circus.

In fact, the Paris of the sightseer really is nothing more nor less than a show in a ring, to which it is now proposed to charge an admission. The ring, which circumscribes "Gay Paris" as a parallelogram would be required to bound the Tenderloin of New York, is, at most, a mile in diameter.



Dancing in the Street—always Interesting to Foreigners

Within that charmed circle, around which it would need no Marathon winner to walk in an hour, the stranger will find, in circus slang as accurate as it is picturesque, "the whole show and the main squeeze." There are plenty of "lemons."

You can dine, or wine, or both, at the most picturesque restaurant in the world, where you can see the most mysterious fortune tellers reading palms, an entrancing Spanish dancer prouetting impulsively on some table to which she has bounded in her gay frivolity, and a chimpanzee that condescends to imbibe a glass of champagne with any human who has failed to secure entree to the select circle at Newport.

If the sightseer be only young enough to be foolish, or old enough to be childish, the illusion may be reveled in for as much as half an hour. It is, indeed, to be here as wicked as the Dickens.

LIKE AMERICAN "FAKERS"

But to any one who has ever heard the raucous notes of the barker at the American sideshow, there comes the native instinct to look around for the snake-charmer, Ho-Eats-Em-Alive, and the pink lemonade.

They have, too, poetical cabarets where, in the midst of the steins and the cigarettes that proclaim bohemia, and while you are drinking in artistic atmosphere and German lager, some long-haired rhapsodist suddenly arises and, flinging back his romantic locks, permeates the interior with the sad cadence of an impromptu sonnet on "Death, in Memoriam for Two Fried Eggs."

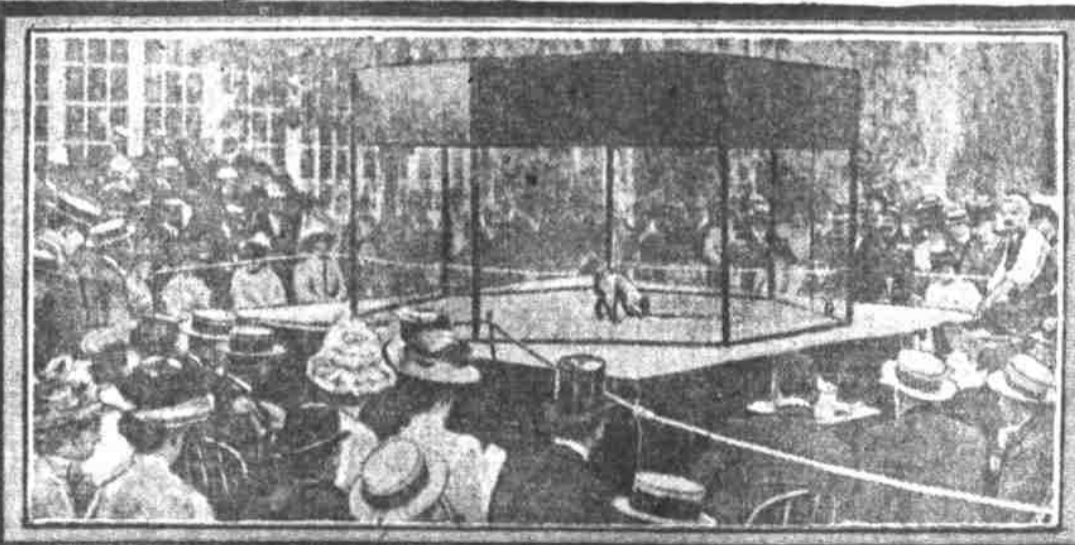
How thrilling! He must be the modern Rodolphe, adding a post-mortem chapter to the "Vie de Boheme." He has emerged from the bleakness of Montmartre's studios—from the despairing hunger of the Quartier Latin—to sing the swan song of his hopes, to fling a last defiance at the crass, material world, to lay his laurel wreath upon the cold corpse of his ambitions.

He mustn't be anything of the kind. He is Louis Ganache doing a private radeville stunt at 6 francs and four beers per night, in the restoration of some verses ground out by Emil Buche, last spring, at the request of the cabaret proprietor, for recitation by any cheap actor

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There is Always Variety in a Paris Street Scene. Showing One of the Largest Retail Shops.



One of the Latest Amusements—Tart-catching Tournery at the Moulin Rouge

The council saw that it had a financial genius to think for it. It agreed, joyfully, that M. Deselves was emitting noises that were distinctly agreeable, although they sounded more poetical than practical. Could the distinguished prefect vouchsafe some hints as to ways and means of connecting with the 2 per cent. without having the American battleship fleet hustle forth on another trip around the world, via Paris?

Certement, rejoined M. Deselves. Did the honorable councilors imagine he would present himself before them with the dream of a pipe!

Behold, then: Was not the city of Paris equipped with the most reliable strong-arm men since the days when the publican was indicted in the gospels and the money changers were scourged out of the temple? Where could be found such experts as the Paris hotel keepers?

Let the prefecture supply to every hotel and furnished apartment house a book, in which must be entered the charges for the room or the apartments, the period of occupancy, and the

total of the bill. To that total should be added the visitor's tax of 2 francs for every 100 francs or fraction thereof in the legitimate bill.

That, the tax might not be too onerous—or too difficult of collection—there should be certain exemptions. Thus, any stranger occupying a room that cost less than 2 francs a day should be immune; so should those who maintain a permanent residence in Paris, and foreigners who, renting apartments, install their own furniture and thus qualify as permanent residents of the city.

The proprietors of all hotels and furnished apartments being directly responsible to the prefecture, and all visitors, with few exceptions, necessarily seeking their roofs for shelter over night, the system would serve as a net from which no foreigner with money might hope to escape. The tax rate being no more than 2 per cent, he would be a niggard indeed who should grudge so small an extra charge for the pleasure of being admitted to the delights of the greatest show on earth.

itself for the support of its parks, avenues and museums? Who are they who derive from those splendors the most intense enjoyment? We Parisians! Never! The strangers are the beneficiaries.

"Well, then," declared the great Deselves, "let the strangers pay. Millions of them draw upon our hospitality every year. An additional

2 per cent. upon their living expenses while they are using our boulevards, gazing upon our paintings, motoring through our parks, would instantly relieve us of this haunting deficit; and our illustrious fellow-citizens would be free to pursue, with no harrowing care as to taxation, their favorite methods of taking away the rest of the money."