



BOOKED FOR TRAVEL

The Paris of Mr. Clean

THE visitor who has not taken an intensive turn at Paris recently will find among the people a certain unfamiliar sense of order and a sense of pliability, equally unfamiliar. The cab drivers, assuming you can find an empty cab when you want one, don't appear to be quite as dyspeptic as they were in years gone by, and in the days I have been here not one refused the address, cursed at the tip, or thundered off without giving me the proper change. In my old days in Paris, this might have been entered as a new record. No waiters were brusque, no porters impolite, and nobody was out on strike. The cleaning of the Paris monuments and other buildings seems to have given the city a new lift, and it imparts a sense of authority to a city in which the proper proportion of anarchy was as important as the proper amount of yeast in the bread.

The old exaggerated sense of individualism doesn't show itself these Gaullist days until one gets into a car and pulls away from the curb. Then, as in joyous days of yore, it is every man for himself. The edict against horn-blowing proved a temporary restraint and a case of interlocking bumpers on the Place de la Concorde is liable to snarl traffic clear up

to the Etoile, to have ramifications as far as Chartres, and to cause a burst of cacophony that sounds like a German band tuning up after too many beers.

That aggressive, determined, almost fanatic mien that all Frenchmen assume upon getting behind the wheel makes a mad carousel of the Arch of Triumph and its twelve converging avenues. And while it is enormously convenient to let Hertz put you in the driver's seat, you will also get, for no extra charge, a Frenchman on your bumper for the duration of your sojourn.

Walking in peace under the leafy streets, it is as if the old arrogance and the independent attitudes were suffocated, or at least subdued, perhaps by the successions of political debacles that reach from Indo-China to Algeria, perhaps by the authoritarian attitude of the government. But while the traveler who comes back to France may rejoice in the new-found amity of the man in the street, he is not likely to enjoy the current attitudes of the government. No one who made the pilgrimage back to Normandy for the twentieth anniversary of the landings there, or who read Drew Middleton's dispatches in the European edition of the *New York Times*, is likely

ever to forget or to forgive the remarks by de Gaulle's delegate, Jean Sainteny. A former minister for tourism, and a man who only a few years ago was eager to attract Americans to France, he is now French minister for foreign affairs. With his new portfolio Mr. Sainteny came to St. Lô, the scene of the bitterest and bloodiest American action in the Normandy campaign, and told how the work of the French resistance gave "the maximum chance of success" to Allied landings. He recalled the death of thirty-three members of the resistance at St. Lô, without ever mentioning the battle that took place there.

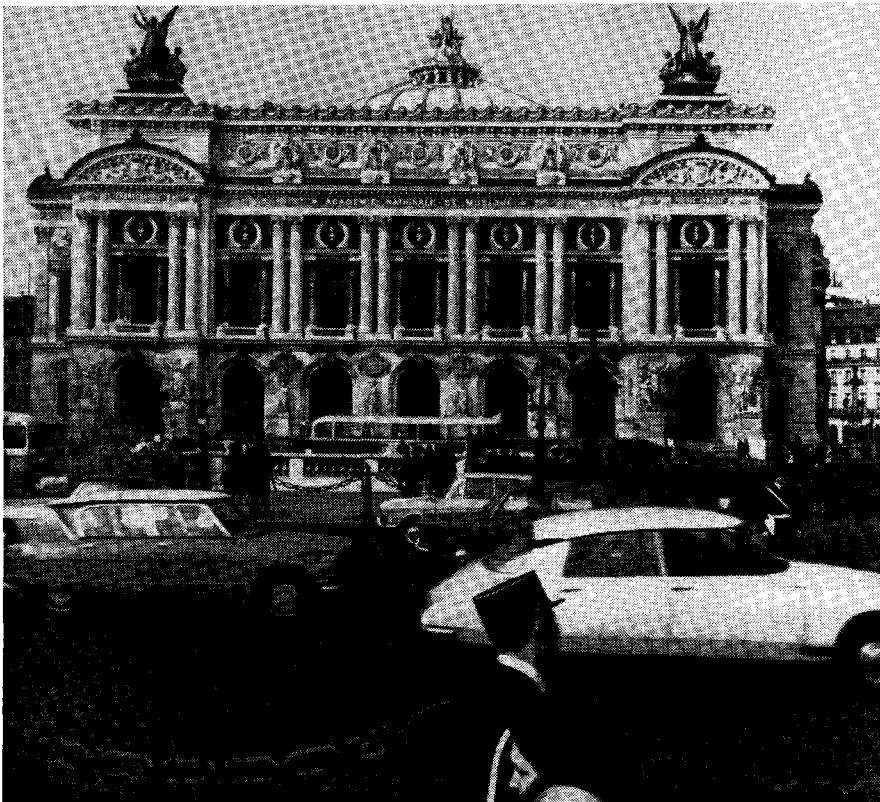
The previous day Mr. Sainteny was at Bayeux scoring the Allies for "underestimating and underarming" the resistance and using it too late. Although the Allies had provided arms for only 1,000 of the alleged 30,000 members of the resistance, he said, the underground had tied up ten German divisions. The minister, while finding little save criticism for the Allies, did manage to pursue the present amity line with Germany by praising the great courage and fighting ability of the Nazi army.

The official French version of D-Day, an anniversary elaborately ignored by de Gaulle, was reminiscent, in its self-serving way, of the editorial comment of *Red Star*, which said that "the Soviet Union had shown it was able to defeat Germany alone. . . . Through delaying the opening of the second front, the imperialists expected that in the deadly struggle the Soviet Union and Fascist Germany would bleed themselves white and would not be able to recover, while the United States and Britain would dominate the world."

To travelers from the United States who have always viewed France as a second homeland, the party line from Paris seems hardly less distorted than the one from Moscow. Yet, except for a few isolated cases, it seems to stop at the rim of official circles. Only occasionally, in the course of a pleasant promenade with a Frenchman, did I find myself being warned, as Washington had been warned, that since France had been licked in Southeast Asia my country would be wise not to engage in the fight itself. It is almost as if there was fear that France would lose face if we were successful.

All these attitudes need not spoil planned pilgrimages to Normandy or to the rest of France, for they hardly reflect the general feeling of the press or the public. The French newspapers gave heavy play to the anniversary of the landings, and *Paris-Match*, a sort of French version of *Life* and *Look*, produced an anniversary issue that will surely become a collector's item.

It is only when leaving the country that the tourist will once more run afoul



—French Government Tourist Office.

The Paris Opera, freshly cleaned—old city, new ways.

of the government. One of the ministries has succeeded in raising the French airport tax to a whopping \$5 per person, levied on passengers departing for America. The previous tax, better than \$3, was already the highest in Europe, and second only to that of Peru and to the French island of Tahiti, which charges over \$4. To top off the offense, and that's what it is, passengers must also pay taxes for traveling from one airport to another inside France. Thus a passenger departing from Nice to New York by way of Paris must pay a tax of nearly \$1 for the privilege of departing by the Nice airport for the capital, and then another \$5 for the privilege of transferring out of Orly. With a few people in the family, the bill can become a major item, and were I Air France I would immediately raise a monumental hullabaloo. It will not take people long to fashion their itineraries so that they will leave the Continent by way of Brussels, Geneva, or London, where a more modest levy exists.

Air France's beleaguered counter personnel, charged with extracting the tax from the passengers, are quick to point out that the tax is not their doing, and they openly admit that their government is wrong. Yet it has proven to be a government that is singularly unconcerned with what anybody else thinks. It is a strange pose indeed to see France's tourist people in the United States striving so hard to perpetuate the image of low-cost tourism in their country while another branch of the government creates an offensive barrier that will surely turn people toward other countries.

Despite its problems, Air France does have some singular attributes, and not the least of them is a definite French air that it exudes in perfumed gobs. The hostesses are stylish whether they are in their dress clothes or their pale blue serving smocks; the cuisine, as can be expected, is more than one can comfortably entertain, and to while away the short hours that exist between New York and Paris, there is the unmistakable essence of style that comes from French magazines or from the pictures of the Louvre that can be examined through viewers supplied by the purser.

Orly has turned into a modern airport with all the improvements (shopping carts for baggage when you can find them) and most of the disadvantages (enormous walks from the plane to the terminal) of the world's jet-age depots. The road to town is fast and new, but, except for the new façades, there is little that is new, really, about Paris. There are few cities in the world that have resisted change so successfully, and perhaps there is an advantage to it, for Paris imparts a feeling of permanence and age that is rare among modernizing metropolises. There is still



—Dolores Flatex, Monkmeyer.
Gargoyle's-eye view of Paris.

not a new hotel of importance in Paris—the local hoteliers have done a masterful job of fending off any heresy like that—and the Plaza Athenée has that same look—shall I call it matured elegance?—that I always remembered. Governor Lacerda had taken up residence with a posse of fashionable Brazilians, and they came and went from the Brazilian embassy up the street under the more or less watchful eye of a pair of agents permanently stationed at the hotel's entrance.

The walls of the Plaza enclose a charming garden set with the bright mushrooms of umbrella-topped tables, but it seemed never to be in use, neither for lunch nor for cocktails, and certainly not for breakfast. If you descend from the fastness of your room for breakfast, the French waiters will do little more than endure your presence. But the view from the front door of the hotel with the familiar shape of the Eiffel Tower, decorated for its anniversary this year, was unfailingly uplifting. And for women there is the proximity of Guy LaRouche, and virtually across the street there is the hallowed *maison* of Christian Dior.

THE night I arrived I fell into the Relais-Plaza, a fashionable short-order restaurant in a corner of the hotel. I hadn't been there for years, but it hardly seemed to have changed. The customers continue to be rather chic, and well they might, for a supper will run six or eight dollars per diner. The last time I was there Sagan was the rage, and she had obliged my curiosity by occupying a table in the corner. I must say, considering the timeless quality of the place, that I somehow expected her still to be sitting there.

Up the first morning, a warm Saturday, I was bundled off by friends to the Bois for lunch at La Grande Cascade, which seems to have been doing business at the same green corner since

Marie Antoinette was chatelaine at Versailles. The food was not particularly distinguished, but the setting is lovely, with orange umbrellas hanging over banks of hydrangeas and, as usual, a wedding party looking hectic and scrubbed, bustling about inside the glass doors.

Lunch at La Grande Cascade costs a flat six dollars and is probably more at Pré Catalan, also in the Bois. The restaurants in the Bois are not for the poor people, with the exception, perhaps, of places like the snack bar in the Bagatelle, a charming enclave where we strolled after lunch. The red and yellow straw chairs were scattered under the sycamores, and a serpentine hedge held together the park with its weeping willows, its blue spruces and wall-climbing roses. Up on the knoll stands the fussy little pergola with its gingerbread arches, the elaborate shelter that the Count d'Arbois, Marie Antoinette's brother-in-law, occupied while watching his son ride horses around the rose garden. Down another pebbled walk we came upon the small trip chateau, the *folie* of Bagatelle, with its lovely shade trees in the sunken well that formed its garden. "Considering the crowd," my friend said in that ironic logic that only the French can fashion, "it's your own park."

We got back into the car and drove over to the Parc de Camping, where anyone with the proper equipment can pitch a tent in Paris. A summer campsite operated by the Touring Club of France, it provided a nesting place for 90,000 people last year. 80,000 of them foreigners, including a few from Greenland, India, and Japan. Thirty-five cents per person covers the night, plus another fourteen cents for the car. Cars and buses pull up along the river bank, and soon tenting that is bright blue or shocking yellow sprouts under the trees. Some carry washing machines and freezers, and there are hookups for sewage disposal, electricity, and even television. The campgrounds also have a snack bar for those too tired to cook, and a snappy glass-walled supermarket that sells everything from camp stoves to Quaker's sugar pops. The bus to Neuilly leaves every fifteen minutes, and from there it's a fast subway ride into town. Indeed, the whole arrangement is so inviting that the management has had to make it quite explicit that they do not entertain residents, and stays must be limited to one month.

—HORACE SUTTON.

The New England Guide
The only Complete guide to all New England

160 pages, full magazine size. Details on all attractions, over 450 lodgings & shops, 8 maps, features, Yankee lore. 7th year.

Send 50¢ plus 5¢ stamp to: Box 108-G, Concord, N. H.



People's Choice

NOTHING brings out the best in a theater audience like the opportunity to participate in the rags-to-riches triumph of an understudy who is suddenly called upon to take over and succeeds in being better than the more famous star he is replacing. Usually such a miracle is witnessed by audiences whose appreciation is not publicized. For, since the star almost always returns, it would be foolish of the producer to advertise the fact that customers will then be seeing a "second-best" performance.

But in the case of Joseph Papp's New York Shakespeare Festival production of *Hamlet*, in which its star, Alfred Ryder, developed severe laryngitis in Shakespeare's longest and most demanding role, there is no box-office revenue. Therefore it can be happily reported that a virtually unknown forty-two-year-old actor named Robert Burr has taken over the part with re-

markably good results, and that the audience is cheering him on every line of the way.

Mr. Burr, who in his long period of understudying the current Broadway *Hamlet* appears to have acquired many of Richard Burton's vocal characteristics, here offers us a warm, gentle, and democratic prince. Unlike most *Hamlets*, he is a man readily identifiable with every member of a plebeian audience and seems to be responding sensibly and unaffectedly to each situation as it occurs. Mr. Burr's best moments are the joshing ones—the tender jollity with his father's ghost as it burrows underground on its way back to Purgatory, and his merrily scornful "Oh, here they come" as he faces the pursuing courtiers. Rarely does he try to raise the voltage to the thrilling peaks we expect in the *Hamlets* of great actors. Indeed, when he does turn up the volume for "Ah, vengeance!" the strain is notice-

able. But reasonable anger, reasonable scorn, and reasonable sorrow suit him well, and the total production benefits from the credibility of his interpretation.

For a sane *Hamlet* in a mad world justifies Mr. Papp's directorial inventions. The opening silent funeral procession, in which Gertrude flings herself remorsefully on her late husband's coffin and is pulled away by Claudius, puts the focus on the corrupt court around *Hamlet* rather than on the prince's inner state. In his scene with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern *Hamlet* simultaneously shakes the hands of his hypocritical friends, so that knowing "a hawk from a handsaw" now seems to mean that he has discovered the way of a despicable world.

The cast is the most distinguished of any in the Central Park productions to date. Julie Harris, a disappointingly average Ophelia in the early scenes, becomes quite touching and lovely in her first mad scene. Nan Martin, a rather sad and quiet Gertrude, bursts into eloquence as she describes Ophelia's death. Howard Da Silva makes a lighthearted Claudius, and it is hard to believe that Gertrude would have married him, except that the ghost, as played by Lou Polan, seems a bit of a cutthroat, too. Mr. Da Silva also uses a strangely casual style of speaking, so that after he has read the letter from *Hamlet*, he turns to Laertes and seems to say, "There's a postscript here; he says 'hello.'"

The rest of the cast provides solid support. Staats Cotsworth's class-conscious Polonius, Clifford David's self-centered Laertes, John Randolph's know-it-all grave-digger, and Tom Klunis's attractive Horatio all contribute to a smooth production. And Stacy Keach, Jr., who sprang into prominence with a dynamic Henry V at last summer's festival in Ashland, Oregon, makes an impressive New York debut in the roles of Marcellus and the Player King.

While the dramatic effectiveness of this *Hamlet* has been overshadowed by the success story of Robert Burr, the critic should try to put this aside and find the significance of this happy accident. Certainly it is not that understudies are always more talented than stars. Rather, I suspect, it is that, as the Royal Shakespeare Company so recently demonstrated, we have reached a time when the old star solos of great virtuosity has become too unreal. Therefore we may be turning to a kind of Shakespeare performance that will represent his great characters as less superhuman, less exotic, and less sure of themselves than before. If so, a star's colorful personality and volatility may prove less beneficial to a production than simpler qualities and mastery of technique.

—HENRY HEWES.

Your Literary I. Q.

Conducted by John T. Winterich

FRANGLAIS OR ENGLISH?

With "all France" debating the perfidious infiltration into their language of English and American words, Elinor Kamath, an American now residing in Paris, France, has come up with a bilingual teaser. All words in all three columns below can be used in English as English words. However, for the purpose of this quiz, those in Column One are French, Column Two, bilingual, and Column Three, English. None of the French words require accents. You are asked to key Columns One and Three on Column Two by matching French words in Column One to their English synonyms in Column Two, and then matching English words in Column Three to their French equivalents in Column Two. (Example: verse, POUR, for.) Denouement on page 23.

- | | | |
|----------------|-------------------|---------------|
| () charge | (1) ACTION | () race |
| () coin | (2) BOND | () edition |
| () complexion | (3) CAP | () wrong |
| () lien | (4) CHAT | () share |
| () trace | (5) COMPACT | () pull |
| () foyer | (6) CORNER | () cat |
| () four | (7) COURSE | () pantry |
| () fatigue | (8) COURT | () sincerity |
| () billet | (9) DISPOSITION | () justify |
| () combat | (10) DISTINCT | () statement |
| () parent | (11) FRANCHISE | () head |
| () stage | (12) GRIEF | () service |
| () suffrage | (13) IMPRESSION | () account |
| () chagrin | (14) MOTIVE | () separate |
| () tribunal | (15) NOTE | () dense |
| () bonnet | (16) OFFICE | () fountain |
| () convention | (17) RANGE | () blare |
| () net | (18) RELATION | () short |
| () mobile | (19) SOURCE | () spring |
| () cause | (20) TIRE | () marshal |