Bessenyey, George Sep 26 1953

OLLIE ATKINS

Mrs. Parker shows pupils of her Parker School of Personality and Speech how to pour tea properly. No hostess in Washington today fully meets her standards.

She Teaches Washington to Put On Airs

By JOHN KOBLER

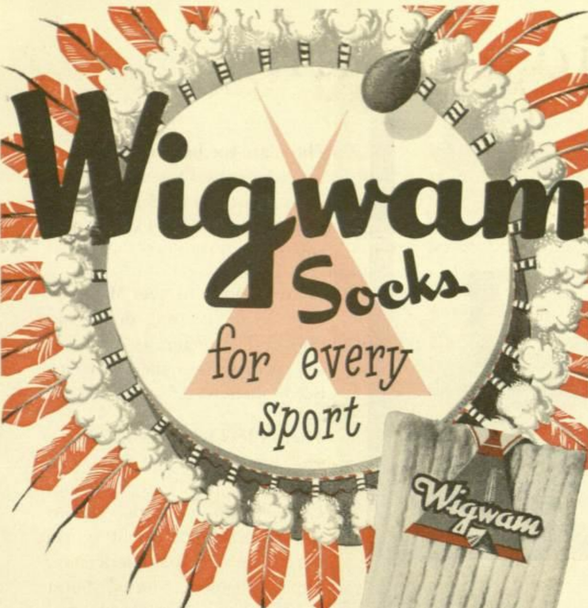
"An uncouth gesture may wreck a Washington career," says a supergenteel lady called Agnes Parker. And this curious fact has enabled her to live a life of luxury and elegance while she teaches high-society manners to Congressmen, Government girls, social climbers and surly Russians from the Soviet Embassy.

IN the Soviet Army there are today twelve high-ranking officers who speak English with the accents of Kelvinside, a residential district of Glasgow, Scotland, noted for its ultragenteel diction. The responsibility for this linguistic anomaly, as incongruous as a commissar in kilts, falls squarely upon the elegantly draped shoulders of one Mrs. Agnes McCall Parker, a native of Kelvinside, who runs the Parker School of Personality and Speech in Washington, D.C. During most of 1950, Mrs. Parker—a trim, erect woman in her fifties, with a seamless complexion and hair tinted jonquil yellow—visited the Soviet Embassy twice a week to teach the twelve officers, military attachés, refined English diction, an accouterment which she considers indispensable to a well-developed personality.

For the last twenty years, Mrs. Parker, whose own refinement of personality and diction no stage duchess in a Mayfair comedy of manners ever surpassed, has striven to elevate to the same lofty plane more than 13,000 people whom circumstances thrust upon the Washington scene. Assisted at present by a faculty of nine men, she offers a curriculum designed to smooth the climb up the sociopolitical ladder of the nation's capital. "Parkerization," the process is sometimes called by those who have gone through it. "An uncouth gesture, a *gauche* remark," says Mrs. Parker, her tone glacial with disdain, "may wreck a Washington career at the start."

In addition to such orthodox courses as public speaking, parliamentary procedure, English grammar and dress fashions, the curriculum of the Parker School, as described in its latest prospectus, includes Potomac Routine, or How to Create and Hold a Social Position in Washington; and The International Salon, Dealing with the Subtle Forces that Influence Statesmanship and High Finance.

These courses were introduced last year, following the Republican victory, with what Mrs. Parker terms "the Powerful New People" in mind. A Republican herself, she announced at the time: "With social reformers and leftist lawyers in power, the Old Guard drew back into their shells. With an administration of business executives and a supporting cast from the Social Register, the social life of the capital will come back to normalcy. The time is now propitious to develop the hostess of the century—the hostess who will (Continued on Page 156)



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SHE TEACHES WASHINGTON TO PUT ON AIRS

(Continued from Page 27)

go down in history, just as certain hostesses of the recent era went down in burlesque."

To encourage newcomers of modest background, she added: "Some of our most successful residents have been recently self-developed. Several of our most impressive legislators arrived as cowboys. One of our most lavish hosts started here as a butcher."

Attendance at the Parker School, she pointed out, casts no reflection upon the student's standing in the environment he came from. "But life in the hub is different from that along the spokes. An initial mistake takes years to live down. The Parker School is here to apply a stitch in time."

Tuition is $2.50 per hour for courses held in open classroom, and most courses consume at least thirty-six hours; for private instruction, which about a third of the students prefer, ten dollars an hour.

Though the bulk of the student body is usually composed of minor Government employees and foreign-embassy underlings, it has from time to time numbered heads of Government agencies, congressmen and senators of both parties—Mrs. Parker does not permit her political sympathies to stand in the way of her proffering guidance wherever it may be needed—Army and Navy officers and officials of almost every embassy and legation in Washington.

The Chinese ambassador, Wellington Koo, though otherwise a paragon of the social graces, felt he could do with a refresher in English speech, and studied privately with Mrs. Parker. To vanquish her shyness, Madame Ispahani, wife of the former Pakistani ambassador, took an extensive personality course, also privately. Frank J. Wilson, ex-chief of the Secret Service and the man who arrested Al Capone, took public speaking. "He needed more self-confidence," Mrs. Parker says. Congressman Victor Wickersham, Dem., Oklahoma, recently completed the same course, and at last reports was thinking of signing up for the entire curriculum.

Among the alumni whom Mrs. Parker regards as her greatest successes is still another Democratic legislator, Sen. John L. McClellan, of Arkansas, who came to her complaining that he had never felt comfortable in a drawing room. According to Mrs. Parker, the senator now not only feels comfortable in a drawing room but positively scintillates there.

Upon hearing a Jackson Day speech by Harry Truman, Mrs. Parker once deemed it her patriotic duty to let him know through his aide, General Vaughan, that his delivery sorely needed, as she expresses it, "rehabilitation." The general replied, thanking Mrs. Parker and intimating that the President might send for her. But Truman's term expired before he got around to it, and probably he will now retain his Missouri speech undiluted to the end of his days.

It was the patronage of the Soviet diplomats, a group not normally prone to seeking instruction from capitalist instructors, which provided the ultimate proof that the reputation of the Parker School had traveled far. Mrs. Parker still quivers with mingled pride and horror at memory of the telephone call she received that morning in 1950.

"Berezny here," said a basso-profundo voice with a Slav accent thick as blintzes, "military and naval attachés' office." It was desired, he explained, that Mrs. Parker personally give diction lessons on the premises to a number of English-speaking officers.

"Alone with the Reds—I was appalled!" Mrs. Parker relates. "I told him I never gave lessons outside the school."

But curiosity got the upper hand, and after determining from various investigative agencies, including the FBI, that she could proceed with a clear conscience, she repaired to the Soviet Embassy annex at 2552 Belmont Road.

Berezny turned out to be squat, bald and totally deficient in those little amenities so dearly prized by Mrs. Parker. With scarcely a greeting, he waved her into a sparsely furnished antechamber.

"I go now get the people," he said. "There is something you wish?"

It was late November and the heat had not been turned on. "Isn't it a trifle chilly in here?" Mrs. Parker ventured.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Many an old-fashioned clinging vine now has a granddaughter who is a rambler. —DAN BENNETT.

* * * * * * * * * * *

"Next time I bring electric heater," Berezny promised. "Now I get the people."

He ducked out, reappearing almost immediately, followed by twelve enormous officers in full regalia and encrusted with medals, two of whom, Mrs. Parker learned later, were generals by the names of Kuvinov and Sizov. They filed up to her in parade formation, bowed curtly and took seats facing her on a bench against the wall. Berezny nodded as if to say, "You can begin now."

"Repeat after me, gentlemen," said Mrs. Parker in her flutiest Kelvinside tones, "'Good morning, Mrs. Parker. How are you this morning?'"

"Good morning, Mrs. Parker," they chanted in unison.

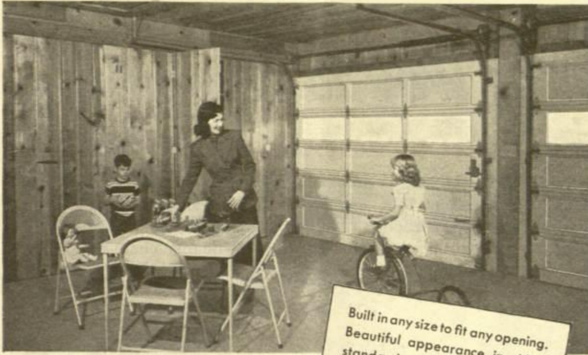
Berezny was always present thereafter, occasionally taking part in the lessons, but mostly keeping his eyes and ears peeled. The officers learned fast. They had to. Berezny demanded a weekly progress report from Mrs. Parker on every pupil. He would then pay for the lessons in cash—at his insistence Mrs. Parker had spotted the embassy a 10 per cent discount—and present twelve receipts for her signature.

Midway through the course, Berezny suddenly shot at Mrs. Parker, "Enough of the cultural English. You teach us now how they talk on the docks."

"I gasped," declares that monumentally ladylike person. "I looked the little man straight in the eye and I said to him, 'My good sir, if that is the sort of English you prefer, I suggest you go down to the docks. Certainly, you shall not hear it from me.'"

Looking back on her experience with the Russians, Mrs. Parker regrets that no opportunity arose to administer the full personality treatment, for it is her conviction that the dangers threatening mankind would be greatly reduced

(Continued on Page 158)



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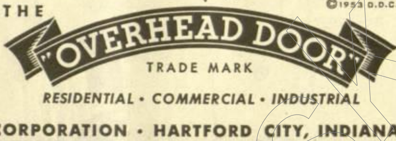

RESIDENTIAL · COMMERCIAL · INDUSTRIAL

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(Continued from Page 156)

if only the diplomats of all nations would cultivate tact, poise and charm.

The institution which seeks to instill those qualities in its pupils inhabits a large house in fashionable Phelps Place, from whose history Mrs. Parker derives infinite gratification. That dazzling Washington hostess, the late Evalyn Walsh McLean, once lived there. In fact, it was the first property that her father, Thomas F. Walsh, bought after striking it rich in the gold fields of Colorado and coming to Washington. A hulking, three-story, yellow-brick structure with eighteen rooms, it combines several ornate styles of architecture and *décor*, notably Italian Gothic, Georgian and Victorian. Hand-carved paneling and brocade cover the massive walls; painted cherubs cavort on the ceilings.

The house, which Mrs. Parker refers to simply as "the Mansion," is a recent acquisition. She moved in last summer from more modest quarters. She paid $47,500 for it, which was $10,629.91 less than Walsh paid in 1899. It probably could not be duplicated today under $500,000.

Before transferring the school there, however, Mrs. Parker had to win a stiff fight before the Zoning Commission against some of her neighbors, who protested that if a commercial school were to be tolerated in Phelps Place, then why not a boardinghouse? At this comparison Mrs. Parker's demeanor was, according to those who witnessed it, a majestic and awesome sight. She carried the day by the sheer weight of her dignity. As a parting shot, she fired at the socially prominent attorney who represented the dissenters, "You, sir, could do very nicely with a few diction lessons yourself."

Whether a student chooses private or classroom training, the initial step is a two-hour personality analysis conducted behind closed doors by Mrs. Parker. It takes place in what is formally called the Agnes McCall Parker Room, a velvety retreat, under flights of cherubs bearing garlands of roses. The student is ushered thither by Mrs. Parker's secretary, Marie Annette McLean—no kin of Evalyn Walsh McLean—a pretty, auburn-haired young woman who formerly sang with a Navy band.

Be the student male or female, Mrs. Parker rises from behind her bric-a-brac-laden desk and advances, shoulders back, diaphragm pulled in and flat as a board. She attributes this posture to a stretching exercise which she performs at odd intervals throughout the day and which she prescribes for every student. She claims to receive spiritual as well as physical benefit from it. "Imagine," she tells the student, "that you are reaching upward, ever upward."

To describe a recent personality analysis, in which only the name of the analysand has been altered, Miss McLean announced, articulating clearly as she had been carefully trained to do, "This is Mrs. Parker. Mrs. Parker, this is Congressman Doe."

"How very nice to see you, Congressman Doe," said Mrs. Parker, lightly gripping his hand. "Won't you sit down?"—gesturing toward an easy chair in front of the desk. "Stifling today, is it not? But perhaps you don't mind the heat, is that it?"

"No, I don't mind too much," said the congressman.

"I thought not. . . . Thank you, Miss McLean, dear. You may leave us now."

She studied the congressman a moment in silence. "You're looking extremely well," she commented finally.

She then began to read off questions from a list. There were forty-seven of them, such as "Do you like flowers?"; "When were you last deeply hurt by someone?"; "Had you a happy childhood?"

No matter what the congressman replied, even to the most routine questions, Mrs. Parker found some cheery observation to make. His Christian name, for example, happened to be William. "Ah, my favorite name!" she cried. Of his home state: "So beautiful, so like England, with all those undulating hills!" When it emerged that he was happily married, she beamed upon him and trilled: "That's quite, quite wonderful! So very few people are."

Presently, having thus fortified the congressman's ego, she launched into the analysis proper. ("I always analyze the student at the first meeting," she says. "I'm afraid if I wait until I know him well, I may lose my detachment.")

"To relieve your mind," she said, "I may assure you that there is nothing serious amiss. However, there are a few things which are not quite perfect. None of us is perfect, of course, are we, congressman? One little point—the

(Continued on Page 160)

"the only thing I like about shaving is...

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THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

Somogyi Könyvtár SZEGED

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(Continued from Page 158)

way you walk. You slump. It makes you look years older than you are. You're a very nice-looking man, you know. I shall recommend a few exercises. Then at times you seem a wee bit uninterested in what the other person is saying. I'm sure you're not. You have far too alert a mind. It just seems so. A show of lively, unselfish interest would be most helpful."

She concluded, "I suggest you let us have you two hours a week for our regular personality-development class—that is, unless you insist on private consultation. And, by the way, your diction is a little run-down. Could you spare us an hour a week on that?"

Approximately 350 people a year take Mrs. Parker's advice. Among the courses she may prescribe for them is The Art of Thinking. A series of lectures designed to stimulate the brain cells and furnish the student with conversational ammunition, it was conducted last year by a retired newspaper reporter and ghost writer named Hayden Talbot, who proudly proclaims himself a radical. "I believe that schools should be closed to all children and made compulsory for adults," he says.

Under Talbot, the course bore the subtitle, The Fi-Vaze—Affirmative Altruists Association (American Affiliates), and adhered to what he maintains was the true Socratic method of teaching. By this he means never uttering a direct statement. The entire series of twenty-eight lectures, each lasting an hour, is composed exclusively of questions. "Is anything more worthless than that which costs nothing?" he asked, for example, in Lecture No. 8. "Is the beauty of the female form an inspiring force that kindles the sculptor's flame of genius? Do you think these things are accidental or are they the result of that ceaseless struggle whose other name is—Life?"

Most of the classes are held at night. An exception is Psychology for Leadership, which takes place Sunday afternoons—the only time the teacher, a lay psychologist from Missouri named Frederick Indorf, can get away long enough from his public and private mental-hygiene activities. Indorf has also dabbled in politics. In his native state, during the last primaries, he was defeated as a Republican nominee for Congress. He is a vigorous speaker in the evangelist tradition ("Very Midwest, very breezy," Mrs. Parker says of him. "Oh, so different from me!") who transmits a smattering of the Freudian ABC's through many an earthy image and homely parable.

Mrs. Parker pays her faculty either a salary, from twenty-five to fifty dollars a week, or a commission. Indorf, who is in the latter category, retains 50 per cent of the regular classroom tuition fees and 60 per cent of any private-counseling fees.

Next to Mrs. Parker, the most compelling presence on the faculty is Gabor de Bessenyey—pronounced "Bessenay"—a towering figure of Hungarian birth, who claims kinship to the noblest Magyar families. Standing six-feet-four and weighing 195 pounds, totally hairless above the eyebrows, De Bessenyey suggests a professional wrestler of the Stanley Zbyszko era. Before he became an American citizen twenty-five years ago he bore the title of baron, and a few of the Washington hostesses who entertain him still address him so. Mrs. Parker calls him Doctor De Bessenyey in public—he left the University of Budapest in 1925 with doctorates in philosophy and law—and "Brian" in private. "Brian," she says, "means 'manly' in Celtic."

Mrs. Parker met De Bessenyey for the first time last December, when he approached her in his capacity of publicist for educational institutions. Previously he had worked as a free-lance correspondent and a lecturer on international affairs. He not only got Mrs. Parker's account but remained to create and teach Potomac Routine and the International Salon. "I have always been fascinated by protocol, precedence and diplomatic usage," he says by way of stating his qualifications, and he mentions among the famous salons where he has been a guest those of Evalyn Walsh McLean; Eleanor ("Cissy") Patterson, the late publisher of the Washington Times-Herald; and the formidable Philadelphia dowager, the late Mrs. Edward T. Stotesbury. "In 1942," he recalls blissfully, harking back to what must have been his social apotheosis, "Mrs. Stotesbury invited me to dinner at her estate, and when it came time to enter the dining room, she bade me offer her my arm."

The ex-baron opens his Potomac Routine course with an illustration from Washington social annals of what disasters can befall the uninitiated. He

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

A long Sunday drive can be a pleasure—if the ball stays on the fairway. —PAUL McELANEY.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

cites the early experience of another favorite hostess of his, Mrs. A. Mitchell Palmer, the widow of Woodrow Wilson's Attorney General. "There was an unwritten agreement in those days," he says, "whereby the wife of a senator who wished to hold a big reception would do so on, let us say, a Monday, the wife of a Cabinet member on a Tuesday, and so on through all the branches of the Government. I believe the practice will come back. Mrs. Palmer, in her innocence, had the misfortune to give her first reception on a day reserved for judiciary wives. Naturally, many of the most important people she had invited declined."

Recently, Mrs. Palmer, who, despite this *faux pas*, rose high in the ranks of Washington society, has signed a contract with Mrs. Parker to teach a special orientation course for the Powerful New People.

"To succeed socially in Washington," De Bessenyey tells his Potomac Routine class, with baronial flourishes which leave many of them openmouthed, "you must have at least one of six things in excess plus a pinch of some of the others. They are, first, money—at least fifty million dollars. The days are gone when one could say, as James Gerard, the former ambassador to Germany, did, 'A man with a million can live as if he were really rich.' Next comes political power. A Republican senator can scarcely miss at present. Then hereditary social distinction. A title is still a priceless social asset in Washington. Then personality, culture and talent—in that order."

In the International Salon, a course concerned more specifically with diplomatic usage, the students learn: "One does not entertain communist diplomats nowadays, unless one happens to be a communist oneself. An occasional exception may be made for the Yugoslavs, provided no representatives of the Catholic countries are present.

(Continued on Page 162)

Somogyi Könyvtár Szeged 10

(Continued from Page 160)

"When seating diplomats at the dinner table, seniority of tenure determines who shall occupy the place of honor—that is, the hostess's right. At the same time the relative importance of the diplomats' governments cannot be ignored. Thus, an extremely delicate situation would arise should one invite both the British and the Haitian ambassador. The British represents the more important government, but the Haitian has been in Washington longer. The only way to avoid such a dilemma, of course, is to entertain each ambassador separately."

Of all the courses offered by the Parker School none approaches in popularity those taught by Mrs. Parker herself, regardless of what subjects she chooses—diction, table manners or, her great specialty, personality development. The frequent talks she gives at social clubs, before church and civic groups and on the radio fetch equally enthusiastic response. The secret of her success, however, does not reside in the intellectual content of her lectures and writings. To quote a few typical excerpts:

"Life is a game, the biggest, greatest of all. . . .

"How do you look when you go to bed? Does the charm of your daytime appearance disappear? Real charm is constantly on duty. Going to bed should be as much of a 'parade' as going to the dinner table. . . .

"When women, and men, too, are not getting along so well where they work, and waking up in the morning depressed at the thought of having to go through another day, there's something wrong somewhere."

But what Mrs. Parker says is of minor importance compared to her manner of saying it. The majority of her listeners would probably be enthralled if she simply recited the alphabet, for hers is a triumph of, appropriately enough, personality, one of the greatest performances to be seen today off the stage and screen. Moreover, she exerts upon many people an emotional and mystical appeal similar to that which Aimee Semple McPherson had upon her flock. Students and employees alike continually address her by such endearments as "little angel," "dearest angel," "angelita" and "light of my life." Wrote one graduate: "You are all that is beautiful, one of God's rare jewels, your life always scattering beautiful rays of sunshine thru the gloom." Mrs. Harley Kilgore, the wife of the Democratic senator from West Virginia, who attended the Parker School to acquire self-confidence, testifies: "With my eyes closed, I'd know if Agnes Parker was passing"; while Mrs. Wilbur Carr, whose late husband was once United States minister to Czechoslovakia, found Mrs. Parker's lectures to be "not only interesting and instructive, but spiritually uplifting." Another student was moved to compose the following poem:

God bless you, gentle Agnes
For so many, many things.
For love and charm and happiness
And social teething rings.
For beauty visioned in the mess
Of people dancing "swings."
God bless you, gentle Agnes,
When you hit, the jack pot rings.

Not long ago a group of students and graduates formed the Agnes McCall Parker Association. The members, who pay a membership fee of five dollars, meet once a month in the Mansion, ostensibly for a dance, dinner or bingo game. A good deal of the evening, however, consists of a love feast, at which Mrs. Parker bestrews each AMPA with praise ("You've never looked lovelier, my dear," she will assure the plainest of them. "You deserve the highest credit for the way you've improved"), and they express passionate devotion to their "little angel."

The object of all this veneration was born, the youngest of three daughters, to eminently respectable Glaswegians named Ludhope. "Scottish gentry, they were," says Mrs. Parker. The year of her birth she shrinks from disclosing. "One's age is so immensely personal," she says. "My grandmother always told my mother it was an excellent idea to keep people guessing." Her father, a businessman, never sent Agnes to school, preferring to tutor her himself at home. For a time she yearned to become an actress, but the mere thought of it shocked her parents, and she resigned herself to frustration. Part of the Parker School training in diction consists of listening to a recording of Mrs. Parker reciting a melancholy passage from Maxwell Anderson's play, *Mary of Scotland*. The repressed actress frequently listens to it herself, and with the first syllable tears begin to fill her eyes, an expression of unutterable ecstasy transfigures her face.

"I inherited a good mind," Mrs. Parker says, adding modestly, "for which one takes no credit. I also came naturally by almost perfect speech. It was the first thing Bertie noticed about me." Bertie was Lt.—later Capt.—Albert Horace Parker, of the Royal Field Artillery, a Yorkshireman seventeen years her senior, whom she met at a tea party when she was eighteen. Soon after, they were married and went to live near his barracks in Lancashire.

In 1925 Captain Parker obtained a discharge from the army and the couple migrated to the United States, settling in Washington. He successively tackled half a dozen different jobs, including that of superintendent of the Animal Rescue League. None brought in much money. Following the birth of a daughter, Gwendoline, Mrs. Parker decided that she must try to earn money too. Her maiden effort was selling an encyclopedia, door to door.

The idea of teaching speech and developing people's personalities burst upon her in 1933. "It occurred to me that I had a natural gift for helping others," she says. She placed an ad in the Washington Evening Star: "Personality and Speech constitute 50% of success. Are yours in need of improvement?" It attracted her first pupil, an Army doctor's wife with numerous personality problems. "Her husband was always nagging her," Mrs. Parker recollects. "I advised her to avoid doing the things he nagged her about. She did, and he stopped."

In the beginning, Mrs. Parker received pupils in her home. But she soon needed more space. She rented a two-room suite in the National Press Building and hired the first of many assistant instructors. Captain Parker died in 1940, leaving no estate, but by then Mrs. Parker had a sizable clientele and was able to support herself and Gwendoline in decent comfort.

Cissy Patterson was so impressed by a talk Mrs. Parker gave at a clubwomen's luncheon that she engaged her to write a daily column on charm. "Friday is fish day," ran a representative specimen of the series, which lasted a year, "and we must watch our fishy manners. I suppose all of us have to struggle with a fishbone at times. The removal is not a pleasant sight, and a few suggestions may help. . . ."

For four years she dispensed *savoir-faire* over Washington's Station WOL. ("Hello, everybody! It's delightful to start out again with you on one of our little journeys toward more effective, gracious living. . . .")

But neither journalism nor radio ever yielded Mrs. Parker the satisfaction she gets out of personal contact with individuals. Among her happiest memories are those of pupils she has been able to rescue from social catastrophe, like the wife of the State Department economist from Iowa who couldn't understand why her dinner invitations were not being returned. "A little gentle probing," says Mrs. Parker, "revealed that she was serving red wine with the fish."

For a woman who devotes so much time to helping other Washingtonians achieve a full social life, Mrs. Parker leads a remarkably inconspicuous one. Neither the Social Register, the Blue Book nor The Social List of Washington lists her name. Rarely is she to be seen at embassy receptions or in the homes of the city's elite. "I do not care to gad about," she says primly.

On the other hand, she is a Daughter of the British Empire and a member of the National League of American Penwomen. In 1947 the Penwomen chose her to be Hospitality Chairman of their Washington convention. Mrs. Truman agreed to receive the delegates in the White House, and what ensued left Mrs. Parker with a glowing opinion of the former first lady. "A Secret Service man came out and said, 'Mrs. Truman is ready for you,'" Mrs. Parker recounts. "I thought she meant all of us, but not at all. She wanted just me alone at first. She took both my hands and said, 'I want you to receive with me, my dear.' My heart stopped, as she indicated that I was to stand at her right. Though an extremely shy person, she gave a magnificent performance. Even the most difficult names she pronounced correctly, like 'Mrs. Tryphosa Bates-Batchellor.' I award her full marks."

Mrs. Roosevelt, whom she met at a Penwomen's luncheon, got a lower score. "She has a blanket smile for everybody," Mrs. Parker says, "but you feel she hasn't noticed you personally. She gives a good performance, however, even when she hasn't much to say."

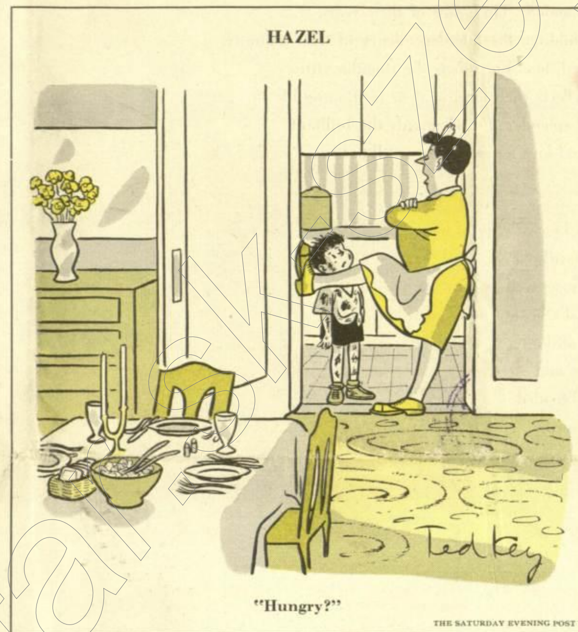
After lecturing at the Army & Navy Club in Arlington some years ago on The Things That Make a Woman Charming, Mrs. Parker received with Mrs. Dwight Eisenhower. "I think Mrs. Eisenhower has *become* a charming and vivacious lady," she says somewhat cryptically.

At mention of the woman who was Washington's leading party-giver before Truman appointed her minister to Luxembourg, Mrs. Perle Mesta, Mrs. Parker tends to freeze. "She nearly knocked me over once, pushing past me at Elizabeth Arden's," she says. "I expect her tour of duty abroad has probably done her a lot of good."

There is no hostess in Washington today who fully meets Mrs. Parker's high standards. Her beau ideal, and one whom she constantly holds up as a model to her pupils, has long since faded into retirement. She is Mrs. Grace Coolidge, wife of the thirtieth President. "Gay, but not giddy," is the way Mrs. Parker remembers her.

Washington abounds in self-help schools of various sorts, but Mrs. Parker considers none of them a competitor. "We are," she insists, "unique." She refuses to concern herself even about the local branch of the Dale Carnegie Institute, which in its last fiscal year taught 800 students "how to make friends and influence people" at $135 each. "I suppose the Carnegie people accomplish some good," she concedes, "but, really, they are quite, quite different from us—so commercial."

THE END



"Hungry?"

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