

FOR RULES A WORLD AS HOSTESS

To Her London House in St. James's Square Come Visitors From Every Land and With Every Interest

the state of Virginia. As she remarked, she represents Plymouth and Plymouth is apparently satisfied. Although the British political parties have had many ups and downs in the past decade, Lady Astor has not once been seriously challenged since she was first elected in 1919. The seats of many important members have been in the balance on several occasions, but in each election this daughter of the "Mother of Presidents" has been returned to the "Mother of Parliaments."

If in the House of Commons Lady Astor represents Plymouth, in her own house she represents neither Plymouth, nor England nor America, nor any other place under the sun. The house itself is one of those gloomy London dwellings that in spite of their homelike interior exude a certain forbidding formality. Tucked in a corner of St. James's Square, and enlarged by the addition of a building in the rear it is a labyrinthian maze to a visitor. Through its rambling halls one expects to meet the ghosts of the dead members of the Reform Club, which is but a few steps away, and one wonders as he steps into the tessellated marble-floored entrance hall whose feet in years gone by trod its hard surface.

In a sense, surrounded by this atmosphere, Nancy Langhorne Astor is rather incongruous; her voice is louder than the reserved whisperings to which these old walls are accustomed; her manner is less formal and her gestures more natural than those that the gold-framed mirrors had been wont to reflect before her coming.

THE dead owners of this old house might stir uneasily in their graves if they could see this lithe, active woman dressed in a smock, with her hair fluttering carelessly about her temples, rush out on the balcony of her boudoir, and hear her call across the courtyard filled with stately old trees: "Is the Viscount in?" That is a kind of humor to which they are not accustomed.

Or again, their sensibilities would be shocked at the sight of Lady Astor sitting on the floor of that same room with the diagram of her dining table before her, trying to arrange the seating of her guests at a large dinner. Her language, could they but hear it, would seem almost like a foreign tongue. Imagine one of those dead dowagers saying to her secretary: "Go call up Lord Blank, tell him that some one has disappointed me for tonight's dinner, that he has to come and if he won't, he need not expect that I'll ever ask him again. Tell him that I am not waiting for an answer, that his name is down, that's all."

Strange as these things may seem in such a formal setting, nevertheless they are the very things that give a feeling of hospitality. They, as much as the flowers that are in evidence in every room, dispel the austerity of the house.

In a typically American manner her interests extend from teeming India to the slums of London.

In her home you may meet an old lady of the Victorian age, white-capped and white-haired, with a soft voice and a kindly

atlook upon all folk. You may turn from her to greet a Parsee from Bombay, clad as she would be if she were wandering slowly to the beach at sunset to breathe the stimulating sea air from Malabar Hill. Again you turn to greet an Ambassador or a member of Parliament or some man connected with the League of Nations. Who is that unusual-looking person chatting with J. L. Garvin? Some one engaged in the suppression of opium traffic or a Moham-medan who knows the secrets of the All-Moslem conclave held at

and the next she is slipping into her coat and off for Parliament to vote on some measure. Then, before you realize that she has had time to motor to Parliament and return, she comes into the room and exclaims: "We are going ice skating, and the rink is not nearly so crowded at this hour as later, and you are whisked off. She can put in more hours of work and still have more hours to play than any one I have ever known. But that is because she is never idle."

In spite of her vivacity and her spontaneity, mention to Lady Astor

With her slender figure it might be supposed that imitating a fat German would be hopelessly beyond her. Not so. You can almost see her expand into the dimensions required, while her voice is that of a Teuton speaking broken English.

Her unconscious acting, however, is what interests the many visitors who pass through her doors. She is always the moving figure. Her luncheon guests will be assembled in a drawing room, lackadaisically, whiling away the time waiting for her, asking polite and very discreet questions and

and his wife were seated. Lady Astor was squatted on the floor facing them, oblivious of the rest of the company.

Doing the unexpected seems a part of Lady Astor. One must look for the unexpected in her unless one wishes to be continually surprised. An instance was when the Filipino Mayor of Manila and his young son were at dinner at her house a few months ago. It so chanced that it was the twentieth birthday of the Mayor's son, and during dinner a guest spoke of it. Lady Astor excused herself for a moment and returned with six pairs of silk socks, which she handed the young Filipino in honor of the day. Whether she had purloined six pairs of Lord Astor's new socks or whether she keeps an assortment of presents on hand for such occasions was not disclosed.

The young Filipino was quite equal to the occasion. He gallantly informed his hostess that he was going to frame one pair and keep them always. He was convinced, however, that when he returned home to the Philippines and showed his new finery, his friends would consider him something of a Baron Munchausen.

LADY ASTOR ignores the useless trimmings of conversation and goes straight to the point. Questions follow one another. She shows a distinct antipathy to verbal parsley and thyme when the meat is there and may be had. She turns to the Mayor of Manila and asks bluntly: "Are you for the continuance of Wood's policy in your country? Are your people qualified for self-government? Will your people and the Moros ever live amicably together?" The surprising thing about Lady Astor, when she asks questions is not their number, but their pertinency, and she leaves you wondering what secret well of information she has tapped.

Lady Astor is a paradox. She is a leader of the new woman movement, and she is a reactionary when it comes to many of the changes that woman's emergence have fostered. No bobbed or shingled hair for her. She is unacquainted with face lotions and lipsticks. A bachelor girl—one of the type who would decry marriage and the rearing of children—would be anathema to her. When a member of Parliament excuses his bachelorhood by making the pretty speech that in his youth he was not so fortunate as to know Lady Astor, she shouted, "shame!" at him and gave him to understand that it was a man's business to marry and raise a family.

She is, at once, conventional and unconventional. In many ways she is the most modern of women. In others she is very old-fashioned. In the large rooms of her house, where hang pictures by Romney and Turner and the more recent ones by Sargent and De Laszlo, she seems a part of what many think is a prettier age. Her own portrait by Sargent is charming and dignified, yet not more so than is the original today. She is so distinctly of the present out of the past and looking into the future that it is difficult to appraise her in terms of a woman of today.

The elements are so mixed in Nancy Astor that she is a distinct type—a type not to be found elsewhere. She seems not to care a rap what people say of her. Those that know her and love her find her sympathetic with all the world, and especially that part of the world that needs help to lighten its burdens and raise its standards.

Lady Astor's adopted country has no stancher patriot or harder worker. And it is fair to say that the country of her birth has never sent an emissary to another land who has done more lasting good for the friendship of two peoples than has this Virginia woman.



Lady Astor.

Drawn From Life by S. J. Woolf.

Mecca. All the world, it seems, is welcome at the house, and much of the world takes advantage of that welcome.

A woman is speaking softly near you. The voice does not seem either English or American. It is a Virginian—perhaps a girlhood friend of Nancy Astor's. Your conjecture is almost immediately proved to be correct.

"Come here and meet a Virginian," exclaims Lady Astor, as if she divined your thoughts and would set at rest your doubts. And before you have finished greeting the Virginian, Lady Astor is off again to make some one else feel at home.

"Being the house guest of Nancy Astor is like being tied to the tail of a comet," says Miss Virginia. "I have never supposed such continuous activity possible in a human being. She is with you one moment

one of the subjects in which she is interested and it is her whole-hearted sincerity that impresses one. Housing plans for the poor, the improvement of labor conditions, the advisability of prohibition in England—these are matters in which she is deeply interested, and, unlike many other American-born British subjects, she has never hesitated to hold up the actions of the land of her birth when she has felt that they could serve as a model for England. As a British subject she has never hidden her Americanism, and, while she has fore sworn allegiance to the United States, she still retains her love for it, and Virginia, not St. James's Square, is Home, Sweet Home.

Lady Astor is a born actress, or perhaps it is better to say she is an excellent mimic. In her lighter moments she can imitate any one and keep a roomful of people laughing.

growing more and more bored, when suddenly, something will seem to have happened in the hall outside. The butler opening the front door, one will imagine, has been half bowled over by an avalanche of questions and directions; the guests in the drawing room will begin to bob into life. Then the whole scene will become bustling and active, as the slim little hostess bolts into the room.

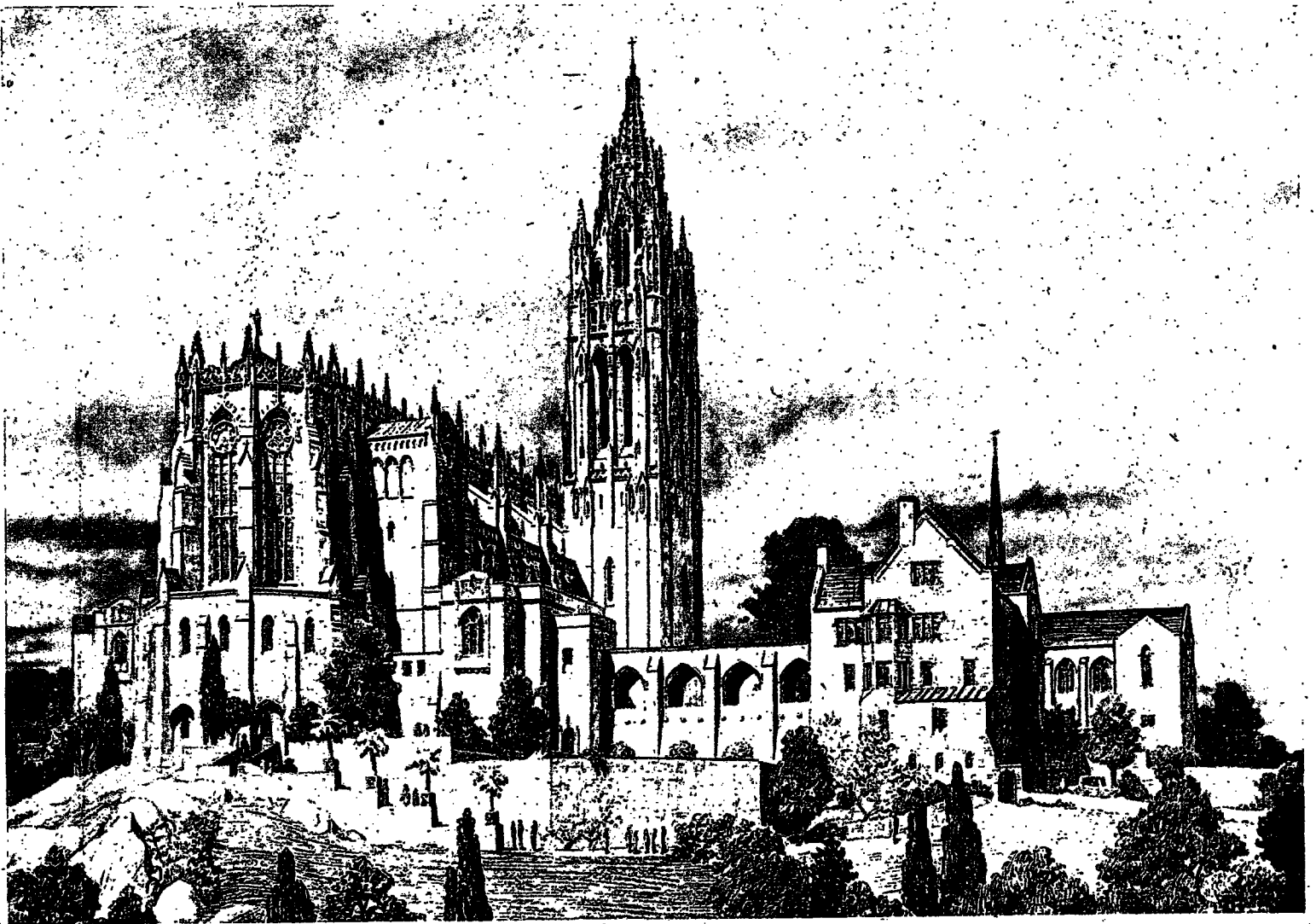
Or, if it be an evening reception, and well started, she will leave it to run of its own momentum and have a private conversation. Once, when she was holding a reception for some American students, and the Lord Bishop of London and his Lady were among the guests, it began to occur to a person here and there that nothing had been seen for some time of the vivacious hostess. She was over in a corner of the big room where the Bishop

religion much of beauty and poetry. These two qualities will be exemplified in the memorial. The Catholics have set \$25,000,000 as its ultimate cost.

It is the ambition of Bishop Shanahan and the Rev. Dr. McKenna, the directors of the shrine, to build a church that will be one of the greatest edifices in America and will rank with the eight great Catholic temples of the world, the basilica of St. Peter's at Rome, and the cathedrals of Notre Dame, Chartres, Rheims, Seville, Strasbourg, Florence and Milan. When the church is completed, every Catholic in the United States, Canada and Mexico, it is said, will have contributed in some measure to the cost of construction.

The main edifice will extend 485 feet. Its main transept will reach the width of 238 feet. Its great dome, 90 feet in diameter, will tower 254 feet. The bell tower will soar 332 feet. The church will hold 7,000 people. The general type of architecture will be Romanesque. In the main church there will be no pews to obstruct the view or minimize the vastness of the interior. The sanctuary, which will itself cost over \$1,000,000, will accommodate the entire Catholic Hierarchy of the United States and several hundred additional priests.

THE beginnings of the National Episcopal Cathedral are already attracting thousands of visitors to Washington. Not only are journeys made to see the completed apse of the great structure



Above—Another Projected Edifice—The National Presbyterian Church.

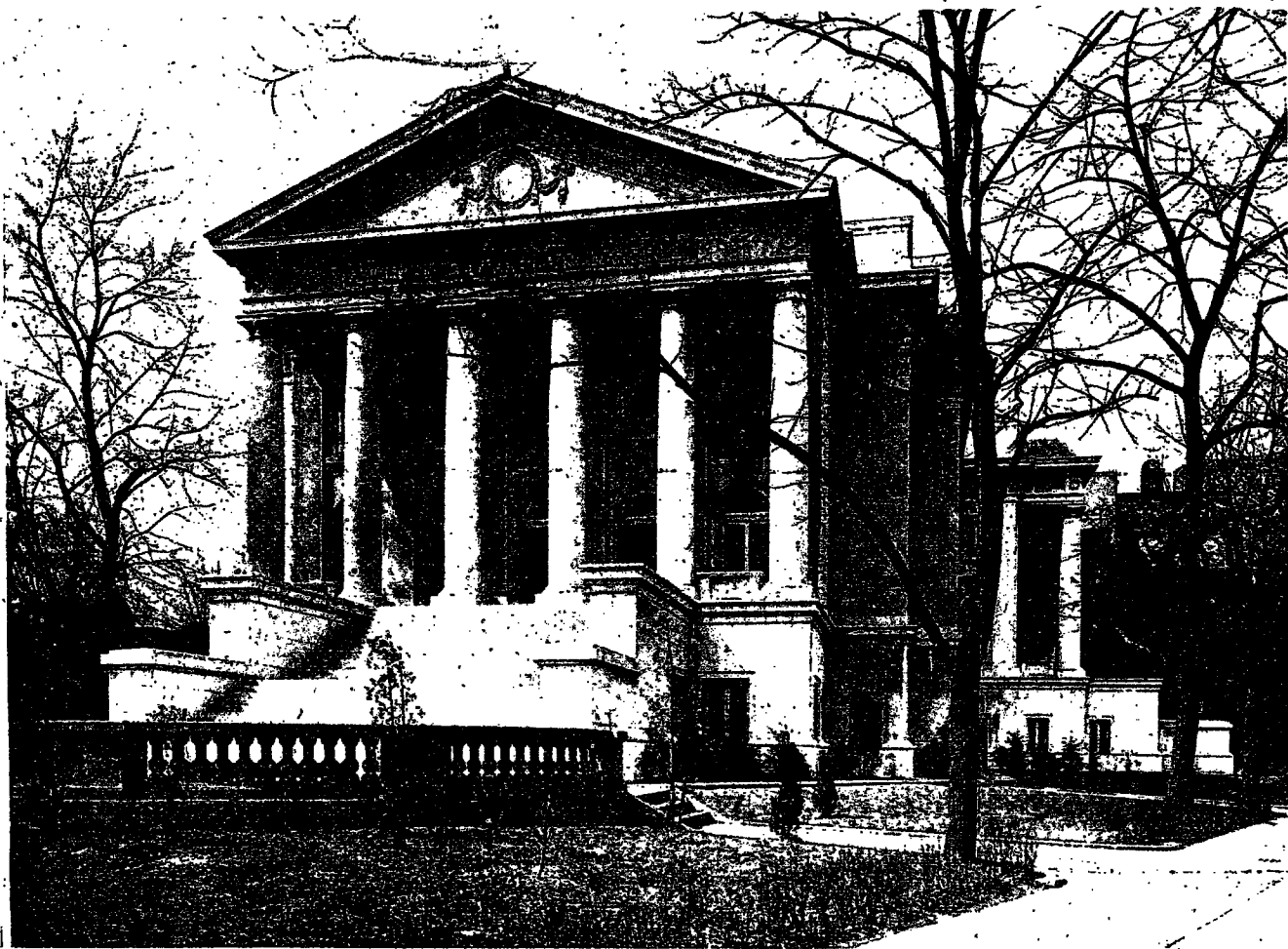
Michigan may await the arrival of a friend from Florida in a pleasant, centrally located clubhouse. After all, is not a church a haven of rest? "I want people to write to one another, 'When you go to Washington next Summer be sure and meet me at the church,'" says Dr. Wilfey. "In this way religion will be filling a modern need."

THE Luther Place Memorial Church, of which the Rev. G. M. Diffenderfer is pastor, is about to be officially designated the National Church of the Lutherans. The fine original structure will be enlarged and rebuilt. Social and administrative offices will be added. It is planned to spend about \$400,000 for improvements, so that the entire plant will represent an outpouring of \$1,400,000.

Of the national churches already completed, the Metropolitan Methodist is the oldest. Among the original trustees of this historic building were President Grant and Chief Justice Chase. The Southern Methodists have in the Mount Vernon Church a beautiful building of white Georgia marble; classical in design and spirit, "the representative church" of their denomination.

The Northern and the Southern Baptists united in one national temple which, recently completed, is called the National Baptist Memorial to Religious Liberty. In the same broad thoroughfare and just a block distant from the Baptist Church is the national Unitarian Church, patterned after the typical New England meeting house. Also on Sixteenth Street is the national memorial of the Swedenborgians. It is called the Church of the New Jerusalem and is fashioned of white sandstone in the style of early English-Gothic. The Southern Presbyterians have already bought the land for their national church and are now engaged with plans.

Such are the results of the National Church movement that is now sweeping over the country. The effect on Washington is apparent to any one who has an eye for beauty and dignity in architecture and a thought for spiritual values amid the materialistic hurly-burly of the day. At the national capital religion is not forgotten. Here some of its noblest shrines constantly exert their uplifting influence on affairs of State and on the life of the nation as a whole. Washington may yet be more famous than Brooklyn as a city of churches.



Left—The Mount Vernon Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

Photograph Copyright by Harris & Ewing.

of St. Peter and St. Paul by day, but at night strangers and Washingtonians, too, love to glimpse its buttresses and pinnacles, silhouetted by illumination against the blackness of the sky.

The Episcopal Cathedral has the most ideal location in all the District of Columbia. Mount St. Alban, purchased at the close of the Spanish-American War, rises 400 feet above the City of Washington. This natural height will make the great central tower of the cathedral rise 107 feet further above the Potomac River than the Washington Monument.

Fourteenth century Gothic in design, the edifice will be larger than any English cathedral of similar type. Foundations, crypt, chapels and apse are completed, and work has begun on choir walls and crossing. The crypt known as the Bethlehem Chapel contains the tombs of Woodrow Wilson, Admiral George Dewey, Bishop Satterlee, Bishop Harding and other famous Americans.

Within the completed edifice will be room for 27,000 persons standing and a seated congregation of 7,500. Stone for the high altar was brought from Jerusalem—indeed, from the quarries of King Solomon and the ledge of rock in which the sepulchre of Christ was hewn. Pebbles were brought from the River Jordan for the Jordan font.

The Presbyterians, as long ago as when Thomas Jefferson was President, considered a national church. Washington was then little more than a crossroads hamlet, and the first religious service in the clumsy capital of the nation was conducted by a Presbyterian minister in a carpenter shop that sheltered the workers who were building the White House.

Soon now, not far from where the carpenter shop once stood, ground will be broken for the finest Presbyterian church in this country, a structure in Spanish Gothic style. Already an agreeably large sum of money has been raised for the undertaking and the project has

gained good headway. Those interested hope to make the church worthy of its place and able to withstand comparison in beauty with the older shrines of Presbyterianism: St. Mungo's at Glasgow, St. Giles's at Edinburgh and the Cathedral of St. Machar at Aberdeen.

THE ten-acre tract of land allows room for the church, a parish house, a manse and an open-air auditorium. The style of architecture selected is regarded as less massive and more decorative and inspirational than the pure Gothic of early English or French churches. The nave will be wide, giving fine floor space. Near the chancel will be low chapels. The exterior will not be in elaborate detail but will be distinguished by a single great tower placed at the left of the nave, special purposes.

Another religious vision soon to be translated into enduring stone is that of the Rev. Dr. Earle Wilfey of the Disciples of Christ. This

denomination has long hoped for a central church that will be a worthy part of the great national power that is Washington. When Dr. Wilfey was serving as Chairman of a committee authorized to work among the soldiers and sailors in the World War, he realized that this central church, if it is to be a real help in the lives of people who need it most, must have a practical as well as a religious purpose. When recently the National City Christian Church, a corporation organized to erect a National Church of the Disciples of Christ in Washington, agreed upon the purchase of a lot in Thomas Circle, Dr. Wilfey began to see the realization of his ambition.

The new church will cost \$1,500,000 and will have a threefold purpose. There will be an auditorium for preaching, an educational plant equipped with assembly rooms, libraries and reading rooms, and a recreational centre where visitors from afar may gather for social purposes. Here a tourist from