3 Sick Yankees in Paradise

Northern Tourism in the Reconstructed South

In August 1889 "Bab," "the Popular Society Correspondent," wrote to her readers in the Springfield *Homestead* direct from her exclusive location at the White Sulphur Springs in West Virginia. Describing the "pretty Southern girls" at this famous southern health resort, Bab wrote, "Somebody, inclined to speak very plainly, said: 'The Lord made the White Sulphur Springs and then the Southern girl, and rested, satisfied with his work.'" The speaker, Bab continued, "was a Northern man who came down here, heart whole and fancy free, and is now given over to the rule of a small woman . . . who thinks, but is not quite 'shuah,' that she's fond of him." After capturing her readers' attention with this tantalizing hint of a North-South love affair, Bab went on to tell her northern audience about the lighthearted, exciting summer at the springs, where life revolved around one enticing romance after another.[1]

In her own way, Bab captured the spirit and the sentiment of southern tourism as it appeared to northern travelers, and to readers of travel literature, in the 1870s and 1880s. No longer preoccupied with wartime anguish and destruction, northerners of the post-Reconstruction years increasingly thought of the South in tourist terms,

as a land of leisure, relaxation, and romance. Bab also implied that tourism and reconciliation went hand in hand, as hands were often literally joined together in much of the literature which promoted an explicitly romantic notion of North-South reunion. Celebrating the wonders of the southern landscape and the leisure and refinement of southern health resorts, northerners in the late nineteenth century learned to appreciate the picturesque, relaxing, and seemingly feminine features of Dixie.

Southern travel, of course, was not an entirely new experience for northerners. Frederick Law Olmsted, traveling through the rice district of Georgia in the 1850s, observed that increasing numbers of Yankees had begun to seek a southern refuge from harsh northern winters. He astutely predicted that as this trend increased it would be necessary to provide "more comfortable accommodations along the line of travel . . . if not by native, then by Northern enterprise." These improvements were slow to materialize, and in the prewar years the southern tourist experience remained fairly limited in scope. For the most part, the resort life of the antebellum South centered on the Virginia springs, where wealthy plantation families made their summertime pilgrimages for relaxation and healthier air. Northerners who traveled South in these years, including men like Olmsted, seldom focused their sights on the tourist potential of the region. Rather, they concerned themselves with southern problems, especially with the political crisis that had begun to pull the nation apart. In the period immediately after the Civil War, journalist-travelers such as John Trowbridge, Sidney Andrews, and Whitelaw Reid continued this tradition by focusing on the new social problems that emerged in the war's aftermath, most notably the South's adjustment to the new demands of the free labor system.[2]

In the 1870s the South became something other than a social problem; it became an accepted sojourn on the tourist's itinerary. In this sense, southern tourism reflected a more general change in American travel. Once an intellectual and adventurous pursuit of the very elite, travel became, in the second half of the nineteenth century, a mass industry predicated on transporting herds of people through strange and unusual scenes in comfortably predictable tours. Tourists, unlike the earlier travelers, were assumed to take a passive approach to their trips, seeking out restful and comfortable accommodations and waiting to be impressed by scenery or entertained by their surroundings. Although extensive travel remained inaccessible for most of the working class, growing numbers of

middle-class people could afford this type of travel by the end of the nineteenth century. As travel itself became more affordable, more Americans also had the time to take trips: after the Civil War, an increasing number of middle-class northerners regularly received a one-week paid vacation.[3]

Several factors encouraged Yankees to look southward for their vacation enjoyment. For many, the objective of a southern trip rested mainly on the question of health. In an age when countless middle-class Americans had begun to fret about the possible signs of "neurasthenia," or the nervous exhaustion to which the fast-paced modern man and woman were said to be susceptible, the southern health appeal was a persuasive one. Doctors often advised their respiratory patients to seek the warmer climate of the "sunny South," especially in Florida. Other wornout victims found their way to the mineral springs of the mountain districts, where they learned that the waters could do wonders for any number of modern ailments. The White Sulphur Springs, explained one correspondent, are "peculiarly suited . . . to the nervous and other diseases resulting from the headlong pace of modern life." Likewise, as another writer explained, "a very considerable area of the South is regarded as a sanitarium by much of the country at large, for diseases of the throat and lungs." Certainly it took significant promotional skills to convince the traveler that a region which had long been known for malaria and yellow fever could offer a miracle cure. Travel writer Charles Cory, for example, believed that northern travelers often exaggerated the benefits of the southern climate. "Some of them," he observed, "crowd the temperature up a little" to impress their friends at home. Still, as Cory suggested, the image of southern healthfulness was a powerful one and may have been enough to convince many travelers that they had found the perfect climatic corrective, even if their southern trip failed to live up to the advertisements.[4]

Aside from the salutary appeal, the southern tour also spoke to the northern tourist's desire for a more exclusive vacation. Resorts like Saratoga had long touted their own healing properties, but by the 1870s a number of travelers craved something different. Saratoga, as well as other northern spas, had simply become too common and too accessible. "The old families" at Saratoga, noted a French visitor as early as 1860, "attempted . . . to reserve the privilege of the Congress House, supposedly the most 'closed' hotel, but nouveaux riches and politicians succeeded in creeping in to the despair of the inhabitants." Hence the "old families" sought the distinction of a new tourist spot, and the middle-class traveler desired the association with a more exclusive crowd. Northern traveler Anthony Keasbey found that the vacationers in Jacksonville, Florida, were "mostly people of more retirement and wealth than are seen at those more accessible places [in the North]." Likewise, travel writers enticed visitors to some of the exclusive southern spas by drawing an explicit comparison with the increasingly ordinary resorts of Yankeedom. The Virginia springs, they explained, had "less of that Northern shoddyism" and none of that "Saratogian route of carriage and drag; no crowded street, with ultra style predominant in every costume." No fanciful display was required, they implied, because only true quality had gained admittance to the southern vacation spot.[5]

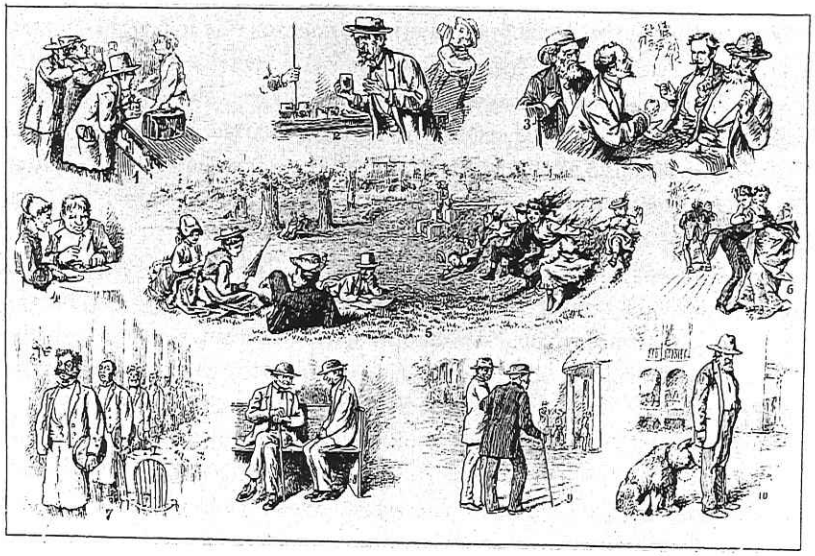
In this regard, the South held a unique class appeal which other tourist spots seemed to lack. Unlike the American West, also a popular tourist destination in the late nineteenth century, the South could offer an association with true aristocracy, even if it often meant the remnants and ruins of an aristocratic past. The South, as opposed to either the West or the North, seemed to have no nouveaux riches, only a bona fide elite, deeply rooted in southern tradition. Consequently, for middle- and upper-class northerners, the South became a land in which the class tensions of their own industrializing and stratified society could evaporate. The South was not a place of frantic scrambling and vying to attain status and prestige; it was certainly not a place where one's class rank was up for grabs. Rather, it was a place that had a time-honored respect for deeply ingrained social positions.

Even more, the South provided an escape from the distressing uniformity and alienation of the mass consumer society. The South, to use historian Jackson Lear's concept, offered an antimodern refuge, a place of distinctive character and real experiences, where life had not been homogenized by a corporate and commodified culture. In an age which Alan Trachtenberg has described in terms of the incorporation of American culture, northerners found their own society haunted by standardization. Railroads, industry, and department stores were, more and more, homogenizing northern life. The South, in contrast, offered the chance to experience something unique and very different. Occasionally, for the northern tourist, this meant enduring the real experience of drafty old houses and broken-down beds, but it might also mean an up-close encounter with the ruins of an old plantation, a rundown former slave cabin, or an old Confed-

erate soldier. In the tourist's eye, these sites were seldom problematic and they were certainly not political; they only heightened the image of southern distinctiveness which the northern traveler craved. In short, the South became less the subject of sociological or political scrutiny and more the source of entertaining and intriguing travel destinations, a land filled with unique sites and attractions that stood in stark contrast to the commodified uniformity of northern society. In the tourists' eyes, the South ceased to be a sectional problem and became more of a regional antidote to northern distress.[6]

Still, it would be hard to imagine anything further removed from a tourist paradise than the American South in 1865. Sidney Andrews, Whitelaw Reid, and John Trowbridge complained repeatedly of the bad food, poor accommodations, and lack of hospitality which they encountered in their travels. By the 1870s southern accommodations still suffered, but several factors had contributed to the revival of tourism in the reconstructed South. The railroad lines that Sherman's soldiers picked apart were pieced back together in the postwar years, and several new lines were added. This transportation revolution not only made southern travel easier, but, even more important, it put the railroads, financed mainly by northern capital, in a position to control the southern tourist industry. The health resorts and mineral springs in the Virginia mountains quickly came under the close watch of the Chesapeake and Ohio (C&O) Railroad, which extended its lines to the doorstep of West Virginia's White Sulphur Springs as early as 1869. The advent of the railroad, suggested one northern writer in 1880, had made the Virginia springs a popular destination for northerners, so that "the White Sulphur is now less distinctively a Southern resort." Undoubtedly encouraged by this transportation invasion, several spas undertook extensive renovations and enlarged their facilities in the early 1870s. In the 1880s the C&O Railroad purchased three of the Virginia spas—Warm Springs, Hot Springs, and Healing Springs—forming a joint stock company to oversee the management of these resorts. Following these changes and improvements, a writer for *Harper's Weekly* agreed that "a larger proportion of Northern and Western people" now came to these retreats.[7]

Yet, throughout the late nineteenth century, the Virginia and West Virginia spas did an uneven business. The White Sulphur Springs faced financial difficulties even after the railroad line was extended. A letter writer to the *Nation* in 1877 hoped to see "an enterprising and competent



"Sketches at the White Sulphur Springs in West Virginia,"
The New York Daily Graphic, *August 22, 1874.*

proprietor" lift the White "out of its present bankrupt condition." The resort remained economically troubled until it was purchased by the C&O Railroad in the early twentieth century. Other springs, however, especially in the western Carolinas, apparently increased their business as the Virginia springs declined. In 1890 northern writer and traveler Henry Field found that Asheville, North Carolina, was "taken possession of by Northerners" in the winter months. As early as 1874, northern correspondent Anthony Keasbey discovered Aiken, South Carolina, to be a "famous resort for northern invalids." Nor did word of these spas remain confined only to well-to-do northerners. In 1889 a widely read Populist newspaper from Kansas contained an extensive discussion of resort life at the Hot Springs in the North Carolina mountains.[8]

But it was Florida which eventually became the focal point of southern tourism. Northerners poured into this southern state as early as the 1860s, searching out real estate and citrus growing possibilities as well as the healthful climate. By the following decade, Florida's tourist claim was well established. Writing in 1873 from her new Florida home, Harriet Beecher Stowe observed that the state was fast becoming a popular winter retreat for northerners. In the same year, Edward King found that

"fully one-half of the resident population of Jacksonville is Northern, and has settled there since the war." Jacksonville remained an important center for northern tourism, especially after the completion of a luxury hotel in 1880. In the 1870s Jacksonville also provided the jumping-off point for what became the standard Florida vacation: a trip down the St. Johns River, with visits to some of the important landing points, including an essential stopover in St. Augustine. Certainly if there ever was a prototypical southern tour, this was the one. To embark on this trip, northerners traveled by rail or steamboat to Savannah, occasionally stopping in Charleston en route. From Savannah they could continue either by train or by boat to Jacksonville. However they traveled, the route began to swarm with Yankees. Charles Landis, a Philadelphia businessman who took the tour in November 1883, found that the boat on the St. Johns was so crowded with "emigrants, tourists and consumptives" that he could not secure himself a private room and was forced to make do with a cot. Anthony Keasbey, traveling in 1874, discovered that because rooms were scarce on his boat trip, some of the passengers slept under tables. Keasbey was also turned away at hotels along the way for lack of room. Still, the tour remained so popular that books for children even promoted the joys of this standard route to Florida. "People from New England," explained Hezekiah Butterworth, author of the Zig-Zag series of children's books, "find a favorite route to Savannah by the Boston and Savannah Steamship Company's elegant boats." From there, Butterworth explained, it was a quick trip to Jacksonville and the St. Johns River, "thus making for $100 a Southern tour as historic and romantic as it is warm and flowery."[9]

The popularity of the St. Johns tour created a boom in commercial tourism in Florida and in certain select spots along the way. Hotels sprang up throughout the state and in southern Georgia. Northern industrialist Henry Flagler created the Florida tourist industry practically singlehandedly; beginning with the construction of a luxury hotel in St. Augustine in 1885, Flagler proceeded to accumulate Florida railroad lines and build a string of hotels along the Florida coast. In 1870 the federal census listed only forty-six hotel keepers in Florida; by 1890 this number had increased to 208. Even these figures do not tell the complete story, as many tourists boarded with local people in their homes during the busiest points in the travel season.[10]

Although northern investors like Flagler often held a controlling interest in southern tourism, local southern leaders occasionally jumped in to

reap the benefits of the Florida boom before outsiders got the chance. During the early 1870s travelers en route to Jacksonville had begun to stop in Thomasville, Georgia, known and appreciated by many for its dry climate. Conscious of the need to target the growing wave of northern tourists, town leaders urged construction of suitable accommodations. By 1875 the city's first luxury hotel had been built by one of the wealthiest men of the community. Perhaps to insure a northern clientele, he maintained it under northern management through the remainder of the nineteenth century. In 1880 former Georgia governor Joseph E. Brown visited Thomasville and advocated that even more be done for tourism. These northern travelers, Brown explained, "will be numbered by your capacity to entertain them." Residents heeded Brown's appeal so well that by 1886 one Minnesota newspaper estimated that the town had hosted 11,000 tourists that year. One visitor supposedly remarked that the people of Thomasville lived, for the most part, "on sick Yankees." By the 1890s many of those Yankees had built winter homes in the area, thereby encouraging President McKinley to make Thomasville one of his official vacation spots in 1895 and again in 1899.[11]

Thomasville, like other southern resort areas, undertook vigorous campaigns to inform northerners of its attractions. Indeed, by the 1870s the northern reader was bombarded by an abundance of travel and "local color" literature from all over the country, all of which seemed to be directed to the potential tourist. Northern magazines stocked their pages with this descriptive fare, some of it in the form of tourist accounts and some as illustrative landscape literature loosely woven into a fictional plot. Hotel owners in the southern mountains frequently invited local colorists to visit, hoping that these writers would be inspired to advertise the scenic wonders of their particular locale in a new magazine story. Even the literature that examined social and political problems revealed only thinly disguised tourist motivations. Robert Underwood Johnson, editor of *Scribner's Magazine* in the 1870s, recalled the lofty motivations of that journal in the conception of Edward King's massive 1873 series on "The Great South." "It was the first high note of nationalism struck by the magazine," Johnson wrote, "and was conceived in magnanimity and sympathy." Perhaps, but King's series also made frequent mention of the resorts, their facilities, and the railroad routes that one could take to get there. Writing of the Virginia springs, King made sure to note that "the Northerner is especially welcomed at all these watering places." Nor did

the Richmond and Danville Railroad miss the point of King's series when, nine years later, the railroad's travel writers published a tourist brochure which suggested that King had done as good a job as they could in describing the scenic wonders of western North Carolina.[12]

Of course, there were many for whom the promotional literature offered only a vicarious journey through the South. Not everyone could heed the advice of the travel promoter and catch the next train to Charleston or Savannah. The cost of the trip—$24 to travel by rail from Philadelphia to Charleston in 1869—impeded many who might have had the urge to travel. Nor were southern hotels inexpensive. In 1871 Sarah Putnam, daughter of a wealthy New England family, commented on the relatively high cost of southern accommodations—usually about $4 per person per night. In New Orleans in 1884, Charles Landis found that many travelers had cut their visits short, "as charges for all kinds of service are too high." Apparently, even for the expanding group of middle-class vacationers, the costs of a southern tour may have been somewhat prohibitive, a fact which might have enhanced the sense of exclusiveness for others. Moreover, although travel to the South might have become more accessible for some New Yorkers and New Englanders, midwesterners do not seem to have been as affected by the urge to visit Dixie. "We of Kansas," observed one journalist in 1881, "do not go South."[13]

Even for those who made the trip, there were times when the actual experience never really lived up to the promotional enticements. "The trip up the St. Johns," observed New Hampshire traveler Charles Washburn, was "not as pleasant as where we were last summer on the Winnipisiogee . . . but considerably like it in many places only more monotonous." Chicago traveler Erastus Hill also expressed disappointment during his 1877 sojourn. "I haven't found Florida," he noted during February, "to be a land of flowers at this season of the year anymore than Illinois." More often, travelers enjoyed the scenery but were unhappy with their accommodations, especially if they traveled in the wake of postwar chaos. Charles Cory found that "in Florida 'to bed' and 'to sleep' are not synonymous terms; 'mattresses' and 'stock farms' may be." As another northern travel writer put it, "The recognized standard of comfort is lower at the South than it is at the North." William Lloyd Garrison, Jr., traveling through the South in 1875, would have agreed. The southern hotels, he wrote to his wife, "make no provisions for heating, and a cold dampness pervades them." Nonetheless, and somewhat to his amazement, "crowds

continue to pour down here from the North. The cars and steamboats are loaded and the hotels are reaping a harvest."[14]

As Garrison suggested, the southern tour remained popular despite the inconveniences. Indeed, there were some who even found the primitive conditions appealing. For them, the southern tour offered the chance to live simply and without the abundance of fashions and material objects found up North. The rooms at the Old Sweet Springs, explained northern travel writer Mary Dodge, were seldom "lavishly supplied in respect of carpets or other unnecessary furniture. Yet the fact that we can be so very comfortable with only the necessaries for material enjoyment is something worth learning in a Virginia trip by the pampered daughters of metropolitan success." Writing of the Arkansas Hot Springs, another travel writer likewise appreciated the simpler style of southern fashions. "There is very little dressing done by the ladies," he observed, "and the gentlemen lounge about dressed solely with regard to comfort." Northerners were apparently drawn to what they saw as a more genuine and personal feeling which characterized southern resort life, a condition now rarely found up North. Many northerners had come to find their own personal interactions to be less than genuine and direct; consumerism and materialism seemed, more and more, to mediate human relationships. In contrast, the southern resorts offered a more dynamic and individual quality. "In the midst of the fast and somewhat pretentious and 'shoddy' existence of the present time," wrote Virginian John Esten Cooke of the White Sulphur Springs, "you find here the same air of high-breeding and rational relaxation . . . which characterized the White Sulphur during the ancient regime, before the modern spirit of democracy had levelled everything to so distressing a uniformity." Cooke called it democracy, but, to a great extent, he was speaking of the alienation experienced by many northerners in a society increasingly characterized by mass consumption and industrial conformity.[15]

In the end, people often were prepared to overlook some of the personal discomforts if their travel experience afforded them some type of distinctive personal interaction, one that rose above the mundane middle-class conventionalism of the North. Hence many relished the social interactions they had with southern residents just as much as the chance to take the healing waters or breathe the soothing air. One *Nation* writer encouraged his northern readers to vacation in Dixie, noting that they would be pleasantly surprised to find that southern manners possessed an "ineffable

charm . . . indicating a recognition of the fact that even if you are no better than any other man, you are different, and that your peculiarities are respectable." In contrast, Yankee manners apparently revealed the same blandness and anonymity that had fallen upon northern society, a tendency "to avoid anything which is likely to lead you to forget that you are simply a human male."[16]

Northern travelers also demanded that the South convey its distinctive and more intimate qualities in the scenery and the landscape which they saw. Ultimately, what was appreciated in a southern journey was its unplanned and unregulated quality, its lack of northern conformity and standardization. As many observed, the South might lose its special tourist appeal if it adopted too many northern features. Edward King thus fretted about the damage which the railroad might do to southern scenery. He objected, for example, to the construction of a railroad between Jacksonville and St. Augustine, claiming it "would rob good old St. Augustine of its romance." And in Texas, a land "of beautiful rivers and strange foliage," King again warned that "the railroad will yet subdue you! Then there will be no more mystery in your plains."[17]

Every tourist seemed to yearn for an encounter with something that was distinctively southern, with something that would awaken in them a sense of life and drama that had been lost amidst the morass of Yankee conformity. Inevitably, this quest encouraged a tendency to stereotype the old South, to highlight the familiar features of the antebellum legend such as the sweeping plantations, the columned mansions, and the beautiful belles. In the 1870s and 1880s the quest for the distinctive South also encouraged travelers to overlook the social and political problems of the region, to see the vestiges of the slave system or even the monuments to the lost cause as touching and charming sites. These things spoke to a dramatic, sometimes tragic past, one which could not always be admired, but which offered a sense of history that now seemed absent from the northern landscape.

Not surprisingly, Yankee travelers yearned to see the old plantations and planter estates. New Englander Caroline Barrett White traveled with her husband in 1880 on the Mississippi River and was thrilled when Mrs. Barrow, "a charming . . . very ladylike and intelligent" fellow passenger invited her ashore to visit the family plantation. "I would like so much," replied White, "to see something of the old plantation style." Other northern travelers were especially moved by the image of plantation ruins. Charleston, explained travel writer Albert Webster, "is full of picturesque surprises and unique architectural combinations, and the disasters that have overtaken it have left their traces in ruins that are, in some cases, wonderfully beautiful." Following the European tourist's compulsion to seek out charming and decrepit ruins, the traveler in Dixie often did the same. In fact, the sight of decay and ruination in the South frequently encouraged northern travelers to compare those sites with the fashionable tourist vistas of Europe. Sarah Putnam, for example, believed that Charleston, "with its ancient looking, moss covered walls . . . might pass for some old Italian town." But perhaps more important than the comparison with Europe was simply the presence of ruins, which again offered that distinctive contrast to Yankee blandness. Ruins indicated the absence of anything modern and industrial and typically northern. The South, in other words, had room for ruins while the North did not. Such was the image which came to Constance Woolson's mind in her description of Charleston. "The neighborhood," she wrote, ". . . is rich in colonial memories and Revolutionary legends, verified and emphasized by the old houses and gardens which still remain, not having been swept away by the crowding population, the manufactories, the haste and bustle, of the busy North."[18]

Ruins, even of a slave market or a plantation estate, appealed to the tourist's aesthetic demands and thus became devoid of political content. In the same vein, even Confederate history could make for pleasant sightseeing. Because the relics of the lost cause again spoke to something that was old, historic, and distinctively southern, northern travelers often made a point of seeing, and even enjoying, these images. In Augusta, Georgia, New York attorney William Davies stopped to see the Confederate monument. "The whole work," he wrote in his 1882 travel diary, "is in perfect taste and admirably executed." Charles Washburn was bored by the St. Johns excursion but was impressed with the Confederate sculptures in Savannah. The city, he found, was "quite Southern" and "got up in good style," an effect that was apparently enhanced by the statues of "distinguished heros" of "the 'Lost Cause.'" It was not long before the old and traditional features of the South became the objects of northern commercialization. By 1888 one promotional account was using the lost cause to advertise the charms of Richmond. Here, it was said, "the spirit of the Lost Cause might almost be supposed to haunt Capitol Hill."[19]

Perhaps most important, the joys of southern tourism and the beauty of

the southern landscape had the power to obliterate one of the thorniest, and most sectionally divisive, problems in this postwar society. In their endless and enthusiastic descriptions of southern scenery, northerners frequently lauded the contribution which the freedpeople made. At a time when many northerners continued to concern themselves with the plight of southern blacks and when some still raised a cry against southern abuses of African American rights, travel writers—from both the North and the South—helped to soften and sentimentalize the "negro problem" amidst an abundance of flowery prose. In the eyes of the northern traveler, blacks became less of a problem and more of a "picturesque" element on the southern scene.

Many travelers chose to view African Americans as simply another feature of the landscape. One northern visitor described her scenic journey down the Mississippi, noting "the beautiful plantations that lined both sides of the river, the numerous boats passing . . . the singing of the negroes as they discharged and took on cargo." Southern blacks became the objects of the tourist adventure, the "attraction" that no visitor to the sunny Southland should miss. The vision of black people, spotted from the train as it headed southward, heralded a traveler's arrival in the true South. "The negro huts along the way, with a grinning, turbaned colored woman standing in each doorway," one travel guide explained, "apprises the Northerner that he is certainly 'right smart down South.'" Likewise, in order to prove their adherence to the tourist regimen, northern visitors sought out pictures of these genuine southern articles. In one fictional travel piece, a northern girl "found opportunity to use her camera, and obtained a number of new Florida types,—negroes busily lading the boat or lazily looking on, too well-to-do for active exertion." And, as an early-twentieth-century article explained in regard to northern visitors of an earlier period, "It used to be the fashion in Thomasville to go out in the country to the cabin of an old 'mammy' who was a famous cook." In this way, the more adventurous tourist could have an up-close encounter with a part of the southern scene.[20]

A number of tourists believed that one of the most distinctive interactions with African Americans could be had by attending a black church service. Especially during the 1870s, and perhaps influenced by some of the concerns of the Reconstruction period, many travelers made this a regular stop on their tourist itinerary. In 1870 Amory Lawrence, then a student at Harvard College, made a tour of Richmond, Virginia, and

visited "a negro church in [the] afternoon; a very impressive service, an occasion of a funeral." Sarah Putnam, traveling as a young woman through Florida in 1871, attended a black service in Magnolia. She vividly described the energetic ritual she witnessed, the singing and foot stamping which "was enough to make you laugh, yet it was all done in such an earnest, kindly way, you ought respect it too." For many northern tourists, this experience may have provided the type of personal encounter which they craved while it also confirmed their ideas about black spirituality. Little else that they would see could offer such a point of contrast with Yankee blandness and conformity. "We went to Zion Church with Br'er Brown," wrote northern industrialist Edward Atkinson while traveling in Chattanooga in 1880. "The service was regular African and the singing genuine. . . . one cannot help being moved by it all."[21]

Most tourists, however, especially after about 1880, preferred to meet the "negro element" in less direct encounters. After years of reading travel literature which had objectified southern blacks as features of the scenery, most northerners became convinced that they needed only to "see" black people, not interact with them, in order to have the tourist experience which they craved. What became more important was how the black presence enhanced the southern scene and made it more unusual. Consequently, writers and travelers seldom restrained themselves from declaring a gathering of black people, or even a lone black worker, to be "picturesque." No adjective was used more often in the descriptive literature than this one, indicating that American travel writers had become thoroughly imbued with European aesthetic standards. Widely used by European artists and writers as early as the seventeenth century, the concept of the picturesque had offered observers the chance to appreciate the ordinary scenes of daily life, including dilapidated ruins or simple peasant folk, in the context of this new aesthetic standard. By the late nineteenth century, both Europeans and Americans used the picturesque formula to render possibly threatening features of society—such as poverty and the underclass—safe and amusing. Not surprisingly, travel writers in the American South found potentially troublesome blacks to be prime targets for picturesque descriptions.[22]

Indeed, travel writers could hardly mention the "negro" without attaching a picturesque adjective. Celebrating the "romance" of one "remote and isolated plantation," Edward King focused on "the tall and stalwart women, with their luxuriant wool carefully wrapped in gayly colored

handkerchiefs; the picturesque and tattered children . . . the groups of venerable darkeys." Referring to all southern blacks, Charles Dudley Warner found that "these people somehow never fail to be picturesque, whatever attitude they take, and they are not at all self-conscious." Mark Twain, who relished the chance to ridicule the most banal and hackneyed descriptions of the South, pounced on this racial use of "picturesque." Pinpointing two of the most frequently noted sights in the tourist litany, Twain described a New Orleans canal where one could see "an occasional alligator" and "an occasional picturesque colored person on the bank, flinging his statue-rigid reflection upon the still water and watching for a bite." Twain may have borrowed his setting from a travelogue written the same year as his own in which this very sight prompted a more serious and bucolic treatment. Watching New Orleans blacks fish from the open sewers, this author wrote, "The scenery becomes picturesque, and the sewers turn poetical."[23]

Despite the increasing recourse to this uninspired expression, it frequently insinuated itself into very specific settings. Since the urge to seek out European-style "ruins" could be satisfied in the search for the extremely modest (if not impoverished) architectural relics in the southern landscape, homages to the picturesque often appeared in connection with the shabby, dilapidated "huts" in which the freedpeople lived. In this way, the poverty and hardship of the southern black experience became a scenic delight in the eyes of the northern traveler. Edward King commented on the "picturesque grouping of coarsely thatched roofs [which] marked negro 'quarters'" as he passed the setting of a former Louisiana plantation. Describing a gathering of black corn-shuckers, another travel writer set the scene with the appropriate aesthetic elements: "Some ten or twelve roughly-constructed yet picturesque [black] cabins were nestled at the foot of the hill, under the wide-spreading branches of a group of noble trees." Emphasizing that a truly picturesque scene had been discovered, he thought it "worthy the pencil of a master-artist." And a traveler in Richmond marveled at the artist's ability to capture the picturesque. Regarding an illustration of black dwellings, he wrote, "One cannot help recognizing in this sketch how much more effective in the hands of the artist is dilapidation than tidiness, and a ruin than a perfect structure. The ramshackle porches of the negro tenements here have a higher effect than would a neat row of white-painted houses with green blinds in a well-kept New England village." Again, northerners had found the distinctive qualities of southern life, even black impoverishment, worthier of description than Yankee homogeneity.[24]

Black people at work apparently assumed especially picturesque qualities. As one writer explained, "There is something picturesque in a field of darkeys at mid-day; their women work, and work furiously too; the men wear flaunting hats of yellow straw, and the other sex bright bandana handkerchiefs bound high upon their heads." At a time when most northerners had begun to surrender many elements of the free labor ideology, especially in regard to black people's ability to advance by the formula of hard work and middle-class success, these images suggested that grueling, physical labor was the African American's natural lot in life, indeed, that such work was picturesque. Although he refrained from using that adjective in his description, Edward King experienced a similar scenic excitement from the cotton fields, where he saw workers and cotton blend together in panoramic pleasure. "Nothing can be more beautiful than the appearance of a cotton-field . . . when the snowy globes of wool are ready for picking, and the swart laborers, with sacks suspended from their shoulders, wander between the rows of plants, culling the fleeces."[25]

But southern blacks did not need to be hard at work in order to be picturesque. Following the European prescription, Americans' appreciation of this aesthetic standard allowed them to relish the sight of an idle, nonindustrious work force. Combined with a minstrel stereotype that had long made fun of black people as lazy, the worship of the picturesque in the 1870s and 1880s reinforced northern whites' image of indolent African Americans. Numerous travelers thus joyfully observed idle black workers, described by John Muir during his 1867 trip as "easy-going and merry, making a great deal of noise and doing little work." Photographer Rudolf Eickmeyer offered pictorial endorsements of this view in his scenes of southern black life taken in the 1880s and 1890s. In countless photos he portrayed his subjects, frequently in the fields, but seldom at work. Rather, he captured them in happy and carefree moments, when they were thought to be shirking their responsibilities. Once more, the aesthetic standard placed African Americans' claims to the free labor ideology in jeopardy. As many northerners undoubtedly concluded, these apparently lackadaisical workers could never hope to ascend the ladder of economic progress.[26]

There was, of course, no happy and carefree work force up North, nor a picturesque urban slum. But the South, caught in a premodern and pre-

industrial era, had the ability to turn what would be an urban eyesore in a northern setting into something charming and appealing. In this way, the South seemed to offer a refuge from northern social tensions. While the North represented industrialism and class conflict, the South seemed of a different time and place—if such a time and place ever existed—when life was simpler and more leisurely and when class differences seemed to be more natural and acceptable. In other ways, too, the South offered a welcome retreat from northern modernity. Especially in the 1870s and 1880s, when the northern middle class increasingly voiced concerns about their frenetic work pace and sought the benefits of relaxation and play, the South seemed the ideal refuge from the grind of hard work. It was, in effect, the perfect place for leisure. Yet, as historian Daniel Rodgers has explained, northerners never felt completely comfortable about abandoning their ethic of hard work in what seemed to be a perpetually depression-prone economy. By regionalizing leisure and relaxation in the southern states, northern vacationers seemed to solve some of their problems, applying themselves avidly to their work life in the North and unwinding peacefully in their vacation life in the South. As they created this dichotomy between northern work and southern leisure, middle-class northerners also assigned to the South a set of attributes which further divided the regions on a whole range of issues, mirroring the nineteenth-century split between public and private, work and home, and, ultimately, between masculine and feminine spheres. In effect, northerners imposed a traditional, Victorian dichotomy on the two sections, finding in the South a haven for those feminine and domestic ideals which seemed to be disappearing from Yankee society.[27]

By viewing the South as a leisurely retreat from the northern workplace, northern travelers created an image of the southern vacation which conformed to classic, Victorian notions of domesticity. Only one year after the end of the Civil War, *Appleton's* tour guide suggested some of what made the southern sphere so distinct. Describing the "old Dominion" style of life on Virginia's Eastern Shore, replete with "manorial homesteads" and "lordly acres," this guide urged "the business man, careworn and wearied, [to] slip down from New York, Philadelphia, or Baltimore . . . [to] land lazily at ancient Accomac, or thereabouts, and forget for a little while the wrinkling perplexities of cabinets and commerce, in the quiet pleasures of simple domestic life within doors." Here, emulating the life of aristocratic southern planters, northern businessmen and professionals could discover the perfect formula for rest and relaxation in the South's unique domestic setting. The southern health resorts, in particular, offered this feeling of relaxed domesticity in an atmosphere of historical romance and refinement. Like the idealized middle-class home of the nineteenth century, they offered the busy northerner an escape from the workplace, something which the northern home no longer seemed to provide. If anything, the northern middle-class home had become more like a showplace of consumerist excess, hardly a place of refuge from economic worries. In contrast, the southern vacation spot, often lacking in furniture and creature comforts, could be even better than home. Travel writer Mary Dodge, for example, wrote approvingly of the lack of lavish furnishings in the Virginia hotels. She found this to be indicative of the slow, deliberate pace of life at the resorts and of the unique quality of the southern vacation experience. "At first," she wrote, this lethargy "frets one who may be tuned up to Northern speed, as though the last trump were sounded . . . but you grow rapidly used to this unhurried life." According to another travel writer, the "flavor of domesticity, so rare in hotel life, the White Sulphur Springs has never lost." As numerous observers suggested, the antebellum aristocrats of the South had mastered the art of domestic relaxation, a skill unknown among the unwashed masses or the nouveaux riches of the North. Fortunately, the overworked (but presumably well-bred) northerner could still find this refined relaxation at the nearby southern spas.[28]

It was, of course, more than just age or distance which made the southern resort a unique Victorian refuge. These resorts maintained an image of domestic comfort, largely due to a distinctively southern orientation toward leisure. As a writer for the *Nation* explained, "The traditions of the old [southern] system are . . . unquestionably a better basis for good hotel-keeping than anything we have at the North. . . . To be well cared for you must expect it and be used to it, and this condition the Southerners fulfill in a much higher degree than we do." Significantly, the aristocratic South had known true domestic comfort under slavery, the remnants of which could still be seen in the service rendered at the southern resorts. One visitor to the Warm Springs was thrilled at the attention she received from "the stately old Dinah who bore our burden of shawls and bags with the step of a queen as she ushered us into the old-time parlor." In describing the Arkansas Hot Springs, another writer made certain to mention that vacationers could enter the mineral baths "with the help of the negro

"Diven Rowing Us up Peter's Creek, Wed., April 26th, Fla.," by Sarah G. Putnam. Reprinted from Sarah G. Putnam Journal, vol. 11, April 1871–March 1873, courtesy of the Massachusetts Historical Society.

bath-man." And the *Nation*'s writer concluded that, in the South, "the waiter world, partly from habit, and partly, no doubt, from race temperament, render [their service] with a cheerfulness we are not familiar with here [in the North]." Clearly, what the South lacked in domestic furnishings, they made up for in domestic service.[29]

This emphasis on the domestic side of southern tourism suggested only one component of the region's feminine appeal, a quality travel writers made more explicit in their descriptions of both the scenery and the resorts. In this respect, the tourist in the South seemed to share the sentiments of the western tourist who demanded that his vacation spot "correspond closely to standards that were . . . generally feminine rather than masculine." But, perhaps even more in the South than in the West, the lush, wild, and relaxed qualities of the landscape, as well as the romance of its history and domestic setting, called up an excess of feminine adjectives in the descriptions of travel writers and local colorists. The historic rivalry between North and South may have also encouraged postwar travelers to continue to make stark and explicit comparisons

between the two regions, the southern setting offering a feminine contrast to the North's more masculine way of life. Charles Dudley Warner, for example, found New Orleans to be unabashedly seductive and possessed of an apparently feminine sensuality that more northern-style cities seemed to lack. "I suppose we are all wrongly made up," he explained, "and have a fallen nature; else why is it that while the most thrifty and neat and orderly city only wins our approval . . . such a thriftless, battered and stained, and lazy old place as the French quarter of New Orleans takes our hearts?" Most travel writers found this feminine romance not in urban settings, but in the gardens or the country, where nature lay in sensual abundance. Describing the gardens of Savannah, Georgia, Edward King wrote, "There is nothing that reminds one of the North in the deliciously embowered [*sic*] chief city of Georgia, surrounded with its romantic moss-hung oaks, its rich lowlands, and its luxuriant gardens, where the magnolia, the bay and the palmetto vie with one another in the exquisite inexplicable charm of their voluptuous beauty." Likewise, a turn-of-the-century travel guide stressed the feminine qualities of the Virginia springs. "There is a feminine grace in all such beautiful scenes," this pamphlet explained. "The exquisite forms of the waving current, the crystal depths of the silent pools, . . . the snowy purity of the descending torrent, the freshness of the living foliage, the happy life of birds and flowers, all made glad by the presence of the stream, suggest the feminine idea, which ever gives life and grace and beauty to that which without it would be but a barren wilderness."[30]

The natural opulence of the South prompted numerous writers to see the woman's touch in the southern landscape. More often, however, writers employed feminine descriptions to suggest the languid and idle qualities of the region. Indeed, the whole notion of southern leisure suggested a more feminine style of life. To Edward King, a group of beautiful, "dusky" women in Florida embodied the feminine and idle spirit of Dixie. This gathering, explained King, was "the South, slumbrous, voluptuous, round and graceful." And King frequently called up the image of "Eve" and "Eden" to feminize the South's less industrious side. Contrasting the garden South to the factory North, King wrote, "If you wish once again to find the lost gate of Eden, if you wish to gain the promised land, if you wish to see in this rude, practical America of ours an 'earthly paradise,' where life is good, because Nature has invested it with everything that is delicious and fairest . . . seek the Teche country [of Louisiana]." If Louisiana

suggested Eden, the proof of this metaphor could be found in visions not of Adam, but of Eve. "Sometimes," King wrote during his stay in New Orleans, "through a portal opened by a slender, dark-haired, bright-eyed Creole girl in black, you catch a glimpse of a garden, delicious with daintiest blossoms . . . a mass of bloom which laps the senses in slumbrous delight. Suddenly the door closes, and your paradise is lost, while Eve remains inside the gate!"[31]

As they had done with the black population, travel writers in the 1870s and 1880s sang the praises of the South's feminine inhabitants as if they had become part of the regional landscape. Several authors exploited the feminine names of southern states to make the analogy between femininity and southern geography explicit. There was "Virginia of Virginia" or, as seen on the stage, *The Heart of Maryland*. Other writers chose favorite states which, so they claimed, excelled in their production of feminine loveliness; the women of the region were described along with the flora and fauna of the land. "I think the women of the Alabama valley," wrote traveler Stephen Powers, "especially at Selma and on the great plantations west of it, are the best type of American beauty." Edward King agreed that Alabama was "a land of beautiful women," but Charles Warner seemed to prefer Kentucky. He found women there to be "attractive in another way from the intelligent New England women" and believed "it would be no disadvantage to anybody if the graciousness, the simplicity of manner, the refined hospitality" of Kentucky's women spread to the women of other states. Another travel writer made the scenic implications of southern femininity even more explicit. Comparing the women in one Savannah garden with the delicate vegetation, he described "the beauteous maidens, the bloom on whose fair cheeks would shame the blushing rose, and in whose bright eyes are deeper, tenderer things than ever artist limned or poet sang." Lovely as flowers and soft as dew, southern women, in the language of travel writers, epitomized the southern landscape.[32]

Some writers and tourists went so far as to suggest that, under the influence of the South's unique domestic and romantic heritage, a superior strain of femininity had been created. Certainly by the 1880s northern women seemed far removed from some of the stricter Victorian standards of womanliness. Found with increasing frequency in the ranks of college students, laborers, and political activists, women in the North were yet a further indication of the distressing modernity that had befallen Yankee culture. As many feared, there now seemed to be little demarcation between the male and female spheres, at least among middle-class northerners. In contrast, southern women retained distinctive feminine charms. A northern editor, for example, found the superior femininity of southern women revealed in their physical beauty. "The young ladies of the South," he noted, "are, with very few exceptions, beautiful, and we see no sickly, ugly or consumptive-looking females, such as are to be found in all similar gatherings in the North." *Cosmopolitan* writer Marion Baker worried about "the masculinity and independence of too many Northern women" and found them "less charming, less womanly" than their southern counterparts. Yankee modernity had apparently homogenized the northern population, robbing women of their distinctively feminine attributes. In the South, however, a sharper line had always divided the masculine and feminine spheres, thus making the traveler more aware of the region's unique femininity. The women of antebellum Savannah, explained I. W. Avery, "were pure, luxurious, modest, and thoroughly feminine. They were absolutely helpless, so far as the practical world was concerned, and wholly dependent upon father, husband, brother, or son." Stressing the superiority of this strict Victorian division of gender, he noted that "there has never been a finer strain of ladies."[33]

Ultimately, the finest strain of southern womanhood could be seen—in full flower and glory—at southern resorts and hotels. In their bombastic broadcasts for the health resorts, tourism promoters seldom neglected to mention one of the spas' principal attractions—the incomparably lovely southern belles. Just as no tour of the South could be complete without viewing a picturesque grouping of blacks, no visitor to the resorts could feel satisfied until those beautiful belles had been seen in all their magnificence. Comparing the southern resort belle to her colder northern sister, Mary Dodge wrote of the White Sulphur Springs, "It is a paradise indeed for unmarried belles, who rule there with a sway undivided by their Benedictine sisters, such as queen it at Saratoga or Newport." Impressed by the feminine allure of both the scenery and the springs, Edward King compared the two while visiting the Greenbrier. "In early autumn," he wrote, "the leaves of the maple, the hickory, the oak, the chestnut, the sweet gum, and the pine, vie in color with the gay toilets in which the Southern belles clothe themselves." Overwhelmed by this bevy of beauty, King described the dinner scene at this resort, where "hundreds of beautiful girls from every part of the South, clad in ballroom costume, are seated at the round tables in the long hall." The resident physician at the White

Sulphur Springs also advocated the feminine charms of the spa, hoping perhaps that what the waters failed to cure might be healed with the feminine touch. "Here congregate the fairest of the fair from every state," explained the doctor, "and one can gaze, and gaze on beauty until the heart reels in its very fullness."[34]

In the antebellum period men had generally outnumbered women at the southern spas, but in the late nineteenth century women predominated among the tourist crowd and were well-represented at the southern resorts. One travel writer in the 1890s found that at the Florida hotels "there were more often three than two women to a man." Civil War deaths had significantly reduced the male population, a fact which placed single women in the majority at numerous southern gatherings. "It is nigh about the death of a fellow to go to a party," one southern man told Russell Conwell. "There never fails to be three girls to one fellow, and such a squirming, kissing, hugging as we do get!" Moreover, women came in especially large numbers to the health resorts, drawn by the well-advertised medicinal features that made special promises for female clients. The springs in Arkansas, for example, were apparently "in great repute among the fair sex, who fancy that it improves their complexions." As the increasingly hectic pace of life led many to fear for even southern women's susceptibility to the prevalent nervous diseases, the mineral springs were quick to advertise their curative powers for the nervous constitution of the modern woman. The publicist for the Red Sulphur Springs thus noted the water's healing effect on "female diseases," which lately seemed to be "increasing in frequency and severity." Coinciding with a general call in the society to improve women's physical well-being (and not to tax their mental capacities), the southern springs promised a healthier and livelier womanhood, a point to which many women seemed to respond.[35]

Still, as most travelers and guidebooks revealed, the women turned out at the springs more for mingling than for medicine. Edward King found two separate groups of women and invalids monopolizing the scene at the Greenbrier springs. "At the early morning," he wrote, "the parlor is filled with ladies who make their engagements for the day, and with the customary rows of invalids who chat cheerily." As Bab of the Springfield *Homestead* explained, "There are three things which the girl of the White Sulphur Springs must do," and none of them had much to do with improving her health. "She must dance well, she must be even-tempered, and she must understand the coquetry of the thimble." Once a woman had mastered these arts, she had a good chance to become the belle of the season, an implicit competition which, if the publicists are to be believed, held every female vacationer in its grip. Indeed, the reigning belle of the Virginia resorts received publicity throughout the land. The New York *World* thus promoted Mary Triplett, the resort belle from 1868 to 1874, as the South's "unrivalled beauty." Through the 1870s and 1880s, a succession of reigning belles captured Triplett's title. Irene Langhorne went from resort belle in the 1880s to become the famous "Gibson Girl" in the 1890s, after marrying the artist Charles Dana Gibson. Prominent northern families entered the fray as well, attempting to mold their daughters into the part of the southern belle. Rhapsodizing over the romance of the White Sulphur Springs, one tour guide found that belles from both North and South could be found at this resort because "a girl is scarcely equipped for a social campaign until she has had her season at 'the White.'" As this brochure suggested, the life of the belle—especially the reigning belle at the Virginia resorts—offered a model of charming and sociable femininity to which all American women could aspire.[36]

Apparently the rivalry among the belles, especially between the representatives of the North and the South, could be fierce. The undue attention which newspapers and tourist promoters paid to the reigning belle undoubtedly contributed to an intense competition among the women from opposing sections. Moreover, the growing tendency to rank southern women more highly in regard to feminine charms may have made the northern female traveler even more combative. Col. James Walton of New Orleans, a visitor to the White Sulphur Springs in the summer of 1883, found the bout between the women one of the main events of the season. "The line of demarcation between the Boston, New York and Philadelphia ladies and those aristocrats of the South was thoroughly marked and defined," he wrote to his family. "I thought the War was over until my experience at the White." Colonel Walton then reported his conversation with one New York woman who proclaimed of the opposing feminine set, "We are a different race, the difference is as marked as between a Parisian and an Egyptian! She said, 'we are not one people,' and there was malice in her rude speech." Julia Newberry, a young Chicago socialite of the 1870s, was also extremely conscious of the implicit competition that had sprung up between the sections. "I was not edified," she observed after attending a Savannah ball, "with either the Southern beauty or chivalry of which one reads and hears so much." While several writers promoted the

sectional harmony that supposedly reigned at the resorts, apparently it did not include feminine concerns. Some, however, may have consoled themselves with this image, even viewing this feminine competition as a sign of the progress of reunion, as an indication that sectionalism was now little more than a sparring among women.[37]

If the women did not openly embrace each other, there was still an opportunity for the northern man to become better acquainted with the southern belle. Enticed by the mystique of southern womanhood, northern men were encouraged to head for the springs in search of their own Dixie bride. Travel writers gushed over the marital matches, usually pairing a northern man with a southern belle, that had been and could be made at the spas. Indeed, the springs had long been known for their romantic potential, but, as several writers suggested, the absence of young southern men in the postwar years created an unforeseen demand for eligible bachelors. "The Springs . . . became very early, and are now, a great marrying-place," a writer in the *Nation* explained. "The 'desireable young men . . .' go there in search of wives, and are pretty sure to find there all the marriageable young women of the South. . . . Widows abound at the Springs just now—by which I mean widows who would not object to trying the chance of matrimony again." By the 1880s northern men were being urged to make romantic conquests at Dixie's spas. In the Springfield *Homestead*, Bab described the agony of the northern man, hopelessly in love with some delightful southern woman, but unsure if his love was reciprocated. Still, explained Bab, he "will go back to his home fettered with rose chains and swearing that when a man wants a wife this is the only place to go and get the right kind."[38]

Thus, Bab suggested, the northern man could return home upholding the image of romantic conqueror. Indeed, this notion of marriageable southern women offered northern men the chance to play out a role with numerous symbolic implications. For the younger men of the 1880s and 1890s, here was a chance to live out the image of crusading hero, to become the victors in a regional contest, not unlike their forebears who had fought the Civil War. In short, they could cling to the title of regional dominance through this conquest of Dixie's females. Moreover, here was also a chance to exercise power and control, which many northern men felt they had lost in their own society. Lacking any sense of control over their careers and economic futures, and feeling increasingly like useless clerks in a massive and mysterious system, many middle-class northern men

"A Reminiscence of the White Sulphur Springs," by C. S. Reinhart, Harper's Weekly, *August 4, 1888.*

chafed at their new powerlessness. If nothing else, at least now they could conquer the southern belle. In "A Reminiscence of the White Sulphur Springs," *Harper's Weekly* presented a picture of one northern man gazing at his lovely southern bride, gently swaying in her hammock while delicately strumming a banjo. Here again, a romantic regional alliance had been formed. But, despite the coquettish charms of the belle, the northern man clearly emerged as victor, a point which the *Harper's* writer emphasized by noting the Yankee husband's "assured look of possession." Some years later, the conquering image was made even more explicit in the description of a trip made by the Illinois National Guard to Charleston, South Carolina. "Every chap," observed the Chicago *Daily Tribune* reporter, "has made a conquest among the young ladies of Charleston, judging from the sights one sees on the streets and in the hotels."[39]

Thus, while the women of the North and South may have bickered amongst themselves, romantic reconciliation reigned at the resorts of the South, or so the travel writers would have their readers believe. In 1883 Georgia journalist and orator John Temple Graves penned a tourist brochure for the Savannah, Florida, and Western Railway Company. Clearly aimed at northern travelers, Graves's work contained the usual travel

descriptions but wove them into a fictional account of a northern family's southern vacation. Like so many other promotional pieces, this one began with discussions of the superior health conditions in the South and mentioned the possibilities for economic investment that the financially inclined tourist might find. But, in the end, it was romance that characterized the Revere family's southern vacation, as every member of the clan—including the old, widowed father—became embroiled in a southern love affair. Not surprisingly, the practical, money-conscious Roland was captivated by the most romantic figure of all, "the high-bred Southern belle" with "deeply, darkly, dangerously brown eyes."[40]

Through the tourist literature and experience, the northern upper and middle classes thus came to view the South and reconciliation through a romantic and depoliticized prism. Influenced by European aesthetic standards, American travelers and travel writers discovered the picturesque side of the South, one in which blacks, their poverty, and, indeed, many of the region's political problems disappeared in an abundance of romantic description. Northerners also became increasingly aware of the South's femininity, which alluringly flitted across the landscape and emerged in full romantic glory at the springs and spas. In the 1870s and 1880s tourism became one of the principal roads to romantic reconciliation, helping to shape a formula for sectional harmony that dominated the American cultural scene in the years between Reconstruction and the Spanish-American War.

4 The Culture of Conciliation

A Moral Alternative in the Gilded Age

Born in 1857, Augustus Thomas came into a world that seethed with political conflict. His family was staunchly Republican in St. Louis, a city with strong pro-South sympathies. During the war Thomas's father led a Union regiment which fought the guerrilla rebels in Missouri, and he later served as a Republican representative in the state legislature. The young Augustus, however, did not have vivid political recollections of the sectional conflict. Instead, he recalled the war through the eyes of a child and clung to vague and romantic images in which lives were sacrificed for unknown and mysterious causes. He was awed by the soldiers and by the lively campaigns of the period, and he was much impressed by the stories of the "border romances," the tales of northern and southern fighting men who became smitten with the charms of girls from the opposing side.[1]

By the 1880s Augustus Thomas had become an aspiring actor. Like many actors of the period, he toured the South, and, like many tourists of the period, he was struck by the distinctive, premodern legacy which the region seemed to possess. He was moved by the appearance of the old plantation estates and charmed by the ruins of the old society. "The sight of a razed gateway to one old

Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause, and the Emergence of the New South, 1865–1913 (New York, 1987), 42–45.

37. Worcester *Daily Spy*, May 31, 1869; Horace Binney Sargent, *Address Delivered May 30, 1872 before Grand Army Post No. 11 at Charlestown, Mass.* (Boston, 1872), 9.

38. Hartford *Courant*, May 31, 1871; Illinois *State Journal*, May 30, 1871.

39. Grand Army of the Republic, *Memorial Ceremonies at Monument Cemetery, Philadelphia, Under the Auspices of Post No. 2, Department of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1877), 5; John Logan "Decoration Day Speech," n.d., John Alexander Logan Papers, Box 47; Worcester *Daily Spy*, May 30, 1868.

40. John Vanderslice quoted in Grand Army of the Republic, *Memorial Ceremonies at Monument Cemetery, Philadelphia, Under the Auspices of Post No. 2, Department of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1872), 17; Cincinnati *Daily Enquirer*, May 30, 1875; Worcester *Daily Spy*, May 31, 1875.

41. Providence *Daily Journal*, May 26, 1876; Worcester *Daily Spy*, May 28, 1877.

42. *New York Times*, January 27, 1878; speech of John O'Byrne, July 4, 1876, quoted in Saunders, *Our National Centennial Jubilee*, 90.

43. David Blight, "'For Something beyond the Battlefield': Frederick Douglass and the Struggle for the Memory of the Civil War," *Journal of American History* 75 (March 1989): 1172.

44. George Forgie, *Patricide in the House Divided: A Psychological Interpretation of Lincoln and His Age* (New York, 1979), discusses the significance of domestic and family imagery in the prewar period. Stevens quoted in Robert W. Rydell, *All the World's a Fair: Visions of Empire at American International Expositions, 1876–1916* (Chicago, 1984), 19.

45. Conwell, *Magnolia Journey*, 48–53, 130–31; letter of Mary Easterly, July 10, 1871, Branner Easterly Papers, Special Collections Library, Duke University; Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 29–30, also notes incidents of postwar romance that sprang up between Union soldiers and southern women.

46. "Editor's Easy Chair," *Harper's Monthly* 57 (November 1878): 936; Buck, *Road to Reunion*, 146; the version of Hayne's poem cited here appears in the John Greenleaf Whittier Papers, Special Collections Library, Duke University.

CHAPTER THREE

1. Typescript of clipping from Springfield *Homestead*, August 31, 1889, Greenbrier Archives, White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia. Thanks to Greenbrier archivist Robert Conte for making this clipping and other materials from the Greenbrier Archives available to me. Although no state is indicated for the location of the Springfield *Homestead*, the tone of Bab's article suggests that she is writing to a northern audience.

2. Frederick Law Olmsted, *The Cotton Kingdom: A Traveller's Observations on Cotton and Slavery in the American Slave States*, edited and with an introduction by Arthur M. Schlesinger (New York, 1953; reprint, New York, 1969), 177.

3. Daniel Boorstin, *The Image; or, What Happened to the American Dream* (New York, 1962), 77–117; Daniel Rodgers, *The Work Ethic in Industrial America, 1850–1920* (Chicago, 1974), 105.

4. John Esten Cooke, "The White Sulphur Springs," *Harper's Monthly* 57 (August 1878): 338; M. B. Hillyard, *The New South* (Baltimore, 1887), 45; Charles Barney Cory, *Southern Rambles* (Boston, 1881), 49.

5. Earl Pomeroy, *In Search of the Golden West: The Tourist in Western America* (New York, 1957), 4; Robert LaCour-Cayet quoted in Hugh De Santis, "The Democratization of Travel: The Travel Agent in American History," *Journal of American Culture* 1 (Spring 1978): 6; Anthony Q. Keasbey, *From the Hudson to the St. Johns* (Newark, N.J., 1874), 98; Edward A. Pollard, "The Virginia Tourist," *Lippincott's Magazine* 5 (May 1870): 494; Edward King, *The Great South* (Baton Rouge, 1972), 568.

6. T. J. Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880–1920* (New York, 1981); Alan Trachtenberg, *The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age* (New York, 1982). Henry D. Shapiro in *Appalachia on Our Mind: The Southern Mountains and Mountaineers in the American Consciousness, 1870–1920* (Chapel Hill, 1978), 3–5, notes a similar change from informative to entertaining in the Appalachian travel literature that appeared in the 1870s.

7. C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South, 1877–1913* (Baton Rouge, 1971), 120–22, discusses the boom in southern railroad building that began in 1879 and the New York domination of this process. William Olcott, *The Greenbrier Heritage* (Greenbrier, W.Va., 1967), 42; Robert S. Conte, "The Celebrated White Sulphur Springs of Greenbrier," *West Virginia History* 42 (Spring–Summer 1981): 213; John Jennings Moorman, *Mineral Springs of North America* (Philadelphia, 1873), 156; Fay Ingalls, *The Valley Road* (Cleveland, 1949), 43; Charles Pilsbury, "The Southern Watering Place," *Potters' American Monthly* (October 1880): 263; "Virginia Summer Resorts," *Harper's Weekly* 29 (October 3, 1885): 647.

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27. Rodgers, *Work Ethic*, 94–124. Rodgers also notes the frequent connections drawn between women and leisure (see pp. 183–84).

28. *Appleton's Handbook of American Travel, Southern Tour* (New York, 1866), 9; Dodge, "Virginia in Water Colors," 86; "Virginia Summer Resorts," 647.

29. "The Virginia Springs," 178; F. F. A., "Invalid Life in the South," 293–94; "The Virginia Springs," 179; Cooke, "White Sulphur Springs," 357; Dodge, "Virginia in Water Colors," 83; Van Cleef, "Hot Springs of Arkansas," 199; "The Virginia Springs," 179.

30. Pomeroy, *In Search of the Golden West*, 73. My reading of gender in the landscape literature has also been influenced by Annette Kolodny, *The Lay of the Land* (Chapel Hill, 1975). Warner, *Studies in the South*, 40; King, *Great South*, 350; J. Harris Knowles, *From Summer Land to Summer; A Journey from Thomasville, Georgia to New York During April and May, 1899* (New York, 1899), 114–16.

31. King, *Great South*, 380, 85, 28. King's emphasis on the sensuality of the South was influenced by his view of the racial characteristics of the region. Like many white people in the nineteenth century, King saw blacks, especially black women, as more sensual and sexual.

32. Stephen Powers, *Afoot and Alone; a Walk from Sea to Sea by the Southern Route* (Hartford, Conn., 1872), 77; King, *Great South*, 340; Warner, *Studies in the South*, 372–73; John Temple Graves, *The Winter Resorts of Florida, South Georgia, Louisiana, Texas, California, Mexico, and Cuba* (New York, 1883), 13.

33. Marion A. Baker, "The New North," *Cosmopolitan* 2 (September 1886): 55; N. J. Watkins, ed., *The Pine and the Palm Greeting* (Baltimore, 1873), 24.

34. Dodge, "Virginia in Water Colors," 87; King, *Great South*, 670–71, 673–74; John Jennings Moorman, *Virginia White Sulphur Springs* (Baltimore, 1869), 27.

35. Catherine Clinton, *The Plantation Mistress: Woman's World in the Old South* (New York, 1982), 149–50; Ralph, *Dixie*, 169–70; Russell Conwell, *Magnolia Journey: A Union Veteran Revisits the Former Confederate States* (Boston, 1869; reprint, University, Ala., 1974), 128–29; Van Cleef, "Hot Springs of Arkansas," 196; *The Red Sulphur Springs, Monroe County, West Virginia* (Baltimore, 1870), 24.

36. King, *Great South*, 673; clipping from Springfield *Homestead*, August 31, 1889, Greenbrier Archives; New York *World* quoted in Perceval Reniers, *The Springs of Virginia: "Life, Love, and Death at the Waters, 1775–1900"* (Chapel Hill, 1941), 253; Cleveland Amory, *In the Last Resorts* (New York, 1948), 465–66. Influenced by the romantic legacy of these southern resorts, Amory wrote that "the greatest contribution of the Virginia Springs to resort life was by all odds its belles" (p. 455). Reniers, *Springs of Virginia*, 268; Chesapeake and Ohio Railway Company, *Virginia in Black and White* (Washington, D.C., 1893), 25.

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40. Graves, *Winter Resorts*.

CHAPTER FOUR

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2. Ibid., 187.

3. For more on the plantation image in nineteenth-century theater, see Francis Pendleton Gaines, *The Southern Plantation: A Study in the Development and Accuracy of a Tradition* (New York, 1924), 95–127, and Paul Buck, *The Road to Reunion* (New York, 1937; reprint, New York, 1959), 241–42. Undated clipping, Robinson Locke Collection of Dramatic Scrapbooks, 39:87–88, and souvenir card, *Alabama* clippings file, both in NYPLPA, Theater Collection.

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6. Biographical background on Edward Atkinson can be obtained from Harold Francis Williamson, *Edward Atkinson: The Biography of an American Liberal, 1827–1905* (Boston, 1934). Also see Edward Atkinson, "Significant Aspects of the Atlanta Cotton Exposition," *Century Magazine* 23 (February 1882); letter of Edward Atkinson, May 18, 1881, Letterbook #12, and letter of Edward Atkinson, September 16, 1881, Letterbook #12, both in Edward Atkinson Papers, MHS. On Higginson's postwar odyssey, see letter of Thomas W. Higginson to John D. Long, May 14, 1881, MHS, and Thomas W. Higginson, "Some War Scenes Revisited," *Atlantic Monthly* 42 (July 1878): 1–9. On Emerson's visit to Virginia, see Hubert H. Hoeltje, "Emerson in Virginia," *New England Quarterly* 5 (October 1932): 753–68.

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9. *National Tribune*, June 23, 1887, June 30, 1887; other accounts of the flag incident can be found in Buck, *Road to Reunion*, 284–86, and Wallace Evans Davies, *Patriotism on Parade: The Story of Veterans' and Hereditary Organizations in America, 1783–1900* (Cambridge, Mass., 1955), 250–60.

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11. See, for example, "The Bloody Shirt Again," *National Economist*, November 21, 1891.

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Gary W. Gallagher,

editor

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Nina Silber

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To my parents,

Irwin and Sylvia,

and to the memory of

Frances Hutchins