

# **THE SPIRIT OF AMERICA**

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The Spirit of America by Henry Van Dyke

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**HENRY VAN DYKE**

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OF AMERICA**



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BY

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TO MADAME

ELISABETH SAINTE-MARIE PERRIN, *NÉE* BAZIN

To inscribe your name upon this volume, dear Madame, is to recall delightful memories of my year in France. Your sympathy encouraged me in the adventurous choice of a subject so large and simple for a course of lectures at the Sorbonne. While they were in the making, you acted as an audience of one, in the long music-room at Hostel and in the forest of St. Gervais, and gave gentle counsels of wisdom in regard to the points likely to interest and retain a larger audience of Parisians in the *Amphithéâtre Richelieu*. Then, the university adventure being ended without mishap, your skill as a translator admirably clothed the lectures in your own lucid language, and sent them out to help a little in strengthening the ties of friendship between France and America. Grateful for all the charming hospitality of your country, which made my year happy and, I hope, not unfruitful, I dedicate to you this book on the Spirit of America, because you have done so much to make me understand, appreciate, and admire the true Spirit of France.

HENRY VAN DYKE.





## PREFACE

THIS book contains the first seven of a series of twenty-six *conférences*, given in the winter of 1908-1909, on the Hyde Foundation, at the University of Paris, and repeated in part at other universities of France. They were delivered in English, and afterward translated into French and published under the title of *Le Génie de l'Amérique*. In making this American edition it has not seemed worth while to attempt to disguise the fact that these chapters were prepared as lectures to be given to a French audience, and that their purpose, in accordance with the generous design of the founder of the chair, was to promote an intelligent sympathy between France and the United States. If the book finds readers among my countrymen, I beg them, as they read, to remember its origin. Perhaps it may have an interest of its own, as a report, made in Paris, of the things that seem vital, significant, and creative in the life and character of the American people.



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