

THE COLUMBIAN.

BLOOMSBURG, PA.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 1908.

WASHINGTON

From our Regular Correspondent.

Washington, D. C., Sept. 14, 1908.

Although the official social season in Washington does not begin until the first day of January each year the Capital is now emerging from the partial eclipse in which it is obscured each year for about three months.

Next week the President will return to the White House, and it cannot be said that the city is ever dull when the flag flies over the Executive mansion, the sign that the President is occupying it. He comes earlier than usual this year and as a consequence people who have been deciding that they must stay away later each year because it was really not smart to precede the President's family to the city, are now hastily rearranging their plans so as to get home earlier.

The fashionable tailors and milliners who have previously decided that it was not worth while opening their shops and paying their assistants to sit about and wait until their rich patrons returned, and who in consequence pasted the signs on their windows that they would not be ready for business until October first or fifteenth are in despair.

Things are going to start off with a rush by the middle of September, and the patient ones who have stayed right at home through this unusually hot summer are the ones who will sell the bonnets and make the new sheath costumes. Of course there will be no official entertaining so that the social season cannot be really said to open yet, but as the so called "smart set" is after all such a small part of the nation's capitol it is a rather negligible quantity to everybody but its self, the haberdashers and the society reporter.

Several Cabinet homes are already opened. There is Secretary Straus of the Interior Department, for instance who has been home a week or more after "luxuriating" as he calls it in a house which he built in the woods at a total cost of \$450,000, furnishings included. He occupies a big, Venetian house on a hill overlooking the city, and as its exterior is of pink structure it is known as the "pink house" in contradistinction to the White House.

The Secretary who has carriages and an automobile or two prefers to walk every day to the Department, and any morning regardless of the weather he may be seen trudging along Sixteenth street to his office. In the afternoon he drives in the park with his handsome wife, looking even more grey and feeble by comparison with her youthful and healthy appearance.

There are to be a number of changes in diplomatic circles this Fall, the most important of all being that caused by the death of the Baron von Sternberg, the German Ambassador. The Baroness von Sternberg who is an American with her husband in Germany at the time of his death, but she will return to Washington to remove her effects from the Embassy here, prior to the arrival of a new Ambassador. The couple will be much missed in society here for though they were both afflicted, he with a cancer of the face which made it necessary to wear patches over one side of it all the time, and she with an incurable lameness, they were most hospitable and persons of interest and refinement.

The Baroness is quite noted as a beauty and the Ambassador was a warm and intimate friend of the President. The German Embassy a large, and rather forbidding looking house has always been one of those impossible buildings which, apparently no amount of skill or money could make attractive or homelike. When the Von Sternbergs took it the Kaiser himself proposed a large

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sum of money for its decoration and to make it more habitable after its long use as bachelor quarters by the previous Ambassador. How well the money was spent is a matter for disagreement. Someone conceived the idea of doing the interior throughout in white. A concession was made in the drawing room to cream colored walls and on these were hung a large number of mirrors and plaques in silver frames, all very valuable as they were antiques, but ineffective in their surroundings. They were suspended near the high ceiling so that they were useless as mirrors and as they became tarnished in a few days they were seldom seen to advantage and seldom appreciated. The great physical misfortunes of the distinguished couple made them more frequently objects of pity rather than of envy and the necessity of living in the midst of such costly ugliness must have seemed a gratuitous affliction.

The Swedish Minister, Mr. Lagercrantz, after more than a year's absence from his post here is returning this month. The cause of his absence has been subject for much speculation among the gossips but the fact of his return must allay the rumors that he was persona non grata at the White House.

During the transition period from the dullness of summer to the awakening of the business and official life of the city the only sensation has been in the remarkable tests made here by Orville Wright of his flying machine. This week he has made almost daily flights which are attended by prominent officials and Army officers, and Tuesday he broke all previous records for heavier than air flying machines when he remained in the air more than an hour and covered forty miles. The exhibitions have been given at the army post known as Fort Meyer, on high ground just outside of the city. The flights have been successful without exception and it is supposed he will give the official test soon.

No More Bugs.

An Effective Method of Destroying Them.

Dr. H. A. Surface, state economic zoologist, who is known throughout Pennsylvania by his relentless crusade on the San Jose scale, the codling moth, etc., has now declared war on the "climex lectularius." Perhaps you may not know what the "climex lectularius" is, but the chances are that the general public knows the insect under the name of a common bug that infests the couch of slumber and arouses the sleeper with sundry bites the livelong night, and is known as the most deliberate sleep destroyer in existence. In other words—to put it plainly—the "climex lectularius" is the common, ordinary bed bug, and Dr. Surface is after him with a gun, or rather a destroyer that destroys. He recently received a letter from a man in Lancaster who asked how to destroy bed bugs.

"You may think that is a singular request," said Dr. Surface, "but it is one that is frequently received here—a request for some method of destroying these pests. I tell them all to fumigate their homes with Prussic acid gas. All that is necessary to kill the bugs, and not only bugs, but rats and mice and other vermin, is to pour water into a vessel (avoid using metal) and drop the cyanide of potassium or Prussic acid in the water in a paper bag and leave the room. The mixture will do the rest. Use an ounce of cyanide to four ounces of water, and you can do the trick. But you must not stay in the room while the remedy is working. Get out of the room as quickly as possible and stay out for about forty minutes. Then open the doors and windows for at least fifteen minutes before again occupying the room, and my word for it there will be no more bugs or vermin of any kind in that room.

"The comfort to many persons during the summer time would pay many times the cost of fumigation, and many would be glad to undertake it if they were only certain they could succeed with safety, but if the directions that I am now sending out over the state are carefully followed there can be no danger. Only care must be taken that the fumes of the mixture are not inhaled. The bed bug must go, and that is the most effective way of driving it out of existence."

Low Water.

Reports from the towns in York county bordering on the Susquehanna river are to the effect that the water at present is only about five inches above the low water mark of 1893. At places the river can be waded, and rocks are exposed that no one living had ever seen.

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WIRELESS RAYS A MENACE TO HEALTH.

Will Probably Cause Some Mysterious Disease Like the X-Rays Did.

London, England.—It is now asserted that wireless telegraphy may turn out to be a menace to health of the human race.

Basing his alarming suggestion on the fact that the Admiralty is now sending messages to the British fleet at sea by means of a wireless telegraphic apparatus erected at the Navy Headquarters in Whitehall, a well-known scientist says:

"This means that ether waves are being let loose in one of the densest parts of London, in my opinion a most dangerous experiment, considering the totally unsuspected results produced by X-rays, which are only another form of ether waves, upon people coming into frequent contact with them.

"With this wireless system once in use the people not only of London, but of all England, will be continually subjected to these mysterious and little understood ether disturbances, with possibly calamitous results in the shape of some fearful and obscure disease akin to that caused by X-rays."

Professor Sir William Crookes, when consulted on the subject, immediately admitted the possibility of the wireless rays being injurious.

"Marconi rays and X-rays," he said, "are both vibrations of ether. The X-Rays did not produce any injurious effect for some years, and the fact that they were at all dangerous was not suspected. Personally, though I have worked with the X-rays from the beginning, I have escaped harm. It is possible that the wireless rays may have an ill effect upon people constantly subjected to them, though I have not heard of a case yet."

A professor at King's College said: "It is so uncertain at present in what way the X-rays generate skin disease that I should not care to affirm that wireless rays have no such effect. For a considerable time no one imagined the X-rays to be harmful and then several bad cases occurred. It is impossible to be sure that the Marconi waves are not injurious, when we know that the X-ray ether waves are so dangerous. It cannot be denied that another set of ether waves might have their own special action upon the human system. It might be undiscovered for years. Experiment alone can determine whether these wireless rays are harmless or not."

WIFE GOT THE MONEY.

"Come On" Was Wise, and Bunco Men Were Buncoed.

Wichita, Kan.—J. J. Savage, a ranch owner of Amarillo, Texas, came to this city to bet \$2,500 on a "fixed" horserace. He has fled back to Texas with his own money and \$500 belonging to the four men who tried to fleece him. He brought a draft here to wager on the race. After Savage cashed the draft the bunco men gave him \$500 of their own money to wager, thinking to convince him that the deal was all right.

Before the wager was made a friend gave the Texan a tip, however, and he and his wife hired a motor car, drove from the city to Wellington, and took a train home. Mrs. Savage took charge of her husband's \$2,500 and the bunco men's \$500.

IS \$20,000,000 WASTED?

Experts Say Government's Ohio River Dams Are Bad.

Pittsburg, Pa.—The most of the \$20,000,000 which has already been expended by the government in making the six dams below Pittsburg, in the Ohio River, has been practically thrown away, is the contention of rivermen, and there is a fight on in the matter between river interests and the engineers in charge of the government work.

It appears that the government dams have been so constructed that the water eddies immediately below the dams, making sand bars, which are far more dangerous to shipping than were conditions in the river before the dams were built.

HORSE HURRIED TO DOCTOR.

Wise Animal Knew What to Do When It Got Colic.

Bloomington, Ind.—The most sensible horse of local record was found here when the family animal of Samuel Johnson became sick with colic, and of its own accord made its way to the veterinary eight blocks away. Dr. Sweesy heard a noise in his yard and he found the Johnson horse reeling in pain. He treated the animal and sent it home.

To Trace Shells by Telescopes.

Washington, D. C.—One hundred observation telescopes are to be purchased by the Ordnance Department of the army. They are to be used in coast artillery practice to watch the fall of shots.

Return Wave of Immigrants.

Washington, D. C.—Immigration officials scatter a few bits of information which tend to lessen the pessimism stirred by the news that 600,000 Europeans have already booked passage back to America.

NOT A HORSELESS AGE.

Facts Seem to Indicate That It Is Farther Away Than Ever.

The horseless age that has been so persistently predicted is not merely slow in coming; the facts seem to indicate that it is farther away than ever and perhaps may never come. People must be riding a great deal more than they ever rode before. The automobile industry in this country has quadrupled in value in the last three years and has developed at even a greater rate in the number of machines manufactured. But the statistics of horseflesh keep on expanding. There were more than fourteen million horses in this country in 1897, but according to the figures for the year just closed there are 19,746,000 horses in the United States at the present time. This is a gain of nearly 40 percent. In a decade, a much larger one than the human element can show in spite of our large and continuous importations. As mechanical rivals multiply he rises in the scale of dignified personality. The last horse will probably take his leave at about the same time as the last man.—Boston Transcript.

Squeaky Shoes in Demand.

Small automatic pumps, very ingeniously contrived, spirited air in between the layers of the soles of each finished pair of shoes.

"That beats me," said the visitor. "I never saw air put in shoe soles before. Pneumatic like that, are they very springy?"

"No, they're noisy," answered the foreman of the Lynn factory. "These shoes are for the export trade. They go to Africa. A native African judges the white man's shoes by their squeak. The louder the squeak, the finer the article. In fact, the native won't wear a non-squeaking, silent shoe. It is wind between the soles that make shoes squeak. Put in enough and your footgear will be as noisy as two pigs under a fence."

A Fireless House.

To demonstrate his faith in the practicability of electricity for all domestic purposes, an official of an Illinois electrical company has recently built a house at Carrollton, Ill., without a chimney or any other means of making use of fire. The house is heated by steam and the cooking done by electricity, both supplied by the heat, light and power company with which the gentleman is connected. This construction marks the beginning of an effort to obtain customers for current to be used in the kitchen, and a special rate has been fixed for that kind of service.

A Bit of Forestry.

"Do you know how to tell a hard wood tree from a soft wood tree?" said a forester. "I'll tell you how to do it, and the rule holds good not only here among our familiar pines and walnuts, but in the Antipodes, among the strangest banyans, baobabs and what-nots. Soft wood trees have needle leaves, slim, narrow, almost uniform in breadth. If you don't believe me, consult the pine, the spruce or the fir. Hard wood trees have broad leaves of various shape—the oak, the ebony, the walnut, the mahogany and so on."

Every Bird a Weathercock.

"Where's the wind?" scoffed the sailor. "Why, look at the birds—they'll tell you. Don't you know that every bird's a weathercock? Stop moistening your finger and hold it up." He went on, in a tone of disgust. "The practice ain't hardly cleanly. Look at the birds in all you got to do, for every bird sets with its head always straight at the wind. Every live bird in a tree is as reliable a weathercock as them dead birds on the spires what is so much considered in this here Lenten season."

Why Go to Bed?

It seems to me we make a mistake in prescribing special hours for going to bed and getting up. Why should we thus gorge ourselves with slumber? Why should we not follow the example of the dog and take an occasional nap when we have nothing better to do? Why should we go to bed when we don't feel sleepy? Why should we not take forty winks when inclined thereto? It strikes me there is too much method and regularity about our somnolent arrangements.—London Graphic.

Noisless Europe.

Railway whistles inflict torture on so many people that the efforts abroad to check the plague have won approval from the people. Austria has introduced a system of dumb signaling to start and stop the trains. Belgium is trying compressed air whistles instead of steam, and Germany experiments with horns.

Statues to Ministers.

Considering how great a part the ministers of all our denominations have played in the national life for at least ten centuries, it is simply astounding to find how few are the statues that have been raised to them in public places during the past five hundred years or so.—Sunday Strand.

Hardest to Fight.

Gossips are almost invariably great liars, "but," asks the Howard Courant with unexpected candor, "did you ever hear a story about yourself that wasn't partly true?"

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