

WHITE HOUSE DINNERS.

They Are Magnificent, Elaborate and Perfect Functions.

Description of a State Dinner Given by the President to the Diplomats Residing at Washington.

[Special Washington Letter.]

There will be no more diplomatic dinners at the white house during this season. The social customs of nations are amusing and ridiculous to men who do not believe in any sort of temperance.

During the next eight or nine months the president of the United States will probably be able to maintain friendly relations with the diplomatic representatives of foreign nations in this city without giving them meat and drink. During each winter season, however, it is expected that the president shall give a series of dinners, which are served after dark, where food of the most costly kind in great abundance is served and washed down with gallons of champagne and other wines.

The diplomatic dinners at the white house have made trouble on more than one occasion. A familiar instance was that of the British minister Merry, who made a great row because some other lady was taken in to the table by Thomas Jefferson before Mrs. Merry. During the Garfield administration Mrs. Blaine actually left the president's board in anger because she had not the place to which she considered herself entitled. The plan adopted of making the order of precedence among the diplomats depend simply on length of service here is an admirable solution of the problem on the whole.

The various ambassadors and ministers located in Washington give dinners to the secretary of state and the assistant secretary. They also entertain our senators and representatives in a similar manner. The president gives receptions and dinners to the members of the supreme court and to the senators and representatives during the entire ante-lenten season.

At the diplomatic dinner at the white house the British ambassador is given the seat of honor because he is regarded as the dean of the diplomatic corps, on account of his seniority of rank by continuous service at this capital. The president offers his arm to the wife of the British ambassador and leads the way to the dining-room, followed by the diplomats and the ladies of their families. The president stands beside his seat in the middle of one side of the long table, and remains standing, until all of the ladies and gentlemen have found their way to their respective places. All then take their seats and the banquet begins.

When the guests arrive at the white house they are escorted upstairs, the gentlemen going to the library and the ladies to one of the larger bedrooms in order to remove their wraps. Presently they go down to the large east room, where the president and his wife are found awaiting to receive them. Promptly at eight o'clock the steward of the white house opens the door of the state dining-room and bows to the president, who thereupon leads the procession to the table.

Before going downstairs to dinner each one of the gentlemen finds on a table in the library an envelope addressed to himself, unsealed, with the American eagle in gold stamped on the envelope. Within the envelope each gentleman discovers a card with beveled and gilded edges, bearing the name of the lady whom he is to take to dinner. On the back of the card is a diagram of the table with the seats numbered. Two numbers are struck out



SIR JULIAN PAUNCEFOTE.
(British Ambassador to the United States.)

with a pen, thus indicating to the gentleman receiving the card where he and his partner for the evening are to sit at the table. Thus it is practically impossible for any error to be made in seating the guests at these big banquets.

The last president's reception was indefinitely postponed because of the sinking of the battle ship Maine, whereby so many of our sailors lost their lives. That dreadful catastrophe shocked the civilized world, and it caused thrills of horror in this city. There was such a spontaneous burst of sentiment that even society quailed before it, and all social affairs were brought to a sudden termination. Thus it happened that the social rounds were stopped at the white house; and, now that Lent is here, they will not be resumed during the present season.

It is not generally known that it is the duty of the president to accept an invitation to dine with an ambassador, but that it is beneath his dignity to dine with a minister plenipotentiary. Ambassadors are the incarnation of their sovereigns. The British ambassador represents Queen Victoria, and for that reason he may personally call upon the president on official business at the white house. But the minister from Turkey or from China cannot call thus upon the president. On the contrary, he ministers must transact all of their diplomatic business with our department of state. The ambassadors outrank all other diplomats.

In like manner, Ambassador Hay may have audience with Queen Victoria, in-

stead of depending upon the British foreign office for consideration. Mr. Hay, as our ambassador to Great Britain, represents the president of this republic. When Mr. Bayard was our minister, before the ambassadorship was created, he could not have audience with the queen; but as soon as he had been promoted to be an ambassador he became a greater personage.

It may be well to remember that all of our ambassadors to foreign countries are men of superior ability and sagacity. The same may be said of the ambassadors who are sent by foreign countries to this capital. In all emergencies an ambassador must represent the head of his nation. Therefore it is necessary that each ambassador should possess intellectual ability and educational acquirements which are practically equal to those of the sovereign or president at the head of his government.

A case in point concerning ministers occurred recently. The Spanish minister to this country, Senor De Lome, committed a grave breach of courtesy. He was invited to the department of state to make an explanation or an apology. He did not respond, but left this country without delay. He could not have gone to see our president about the matter, because only an ambassador has that privilege, while a



MR. WU TING FANG.
(Chinese Minister to the United States.)

minister has not. Consequently, without making any explanation or apology for his cowardly and treacherous conduct, he hastily packed his household effects and miserably sneaked out of our national capital. While here he had been honored with the respect of the administration. With typical Spanish cunning and cowardice he bowed low, smiled and demeaned himself as one who sought the friendship of this country and who appreciated the leniency of our nation. At the same time he was writing insolent and coarse allusions to our president in his official communications, as well as to his personal friends in Spain.

But to return to the white house dinners. They are paid for out of the contingent fund which congress supplies. When state dinners are given the president and his guests sit at table about 2½ hours. They have their trained waiters slowly changing their dishes and rapidly filling their glasses. There is a waiter for every one present, and constant attention is paid by these sable servants. For 2½ hours they eat, drink and talk. There are no toasts for the state dinners are not banquets. But they talk on all sorts of topics, just as your neighbors will talk informally when you have them to dinner in your home. When they are finally through with this long feeding and drinking they get into cabs and carriages, drive to their homes, go to bed and sleep off the effects of their gormandizing. That is the plain and wholesome truth of the matter.

These state dinners are gorgeous affairs. The table service of the white house would do credit to any monarch. Between the president and his wife, in the center of the table, is a great big golden vase, filled with the rarest of flowers. Candelabra of gold and silver make radiant the brilliantly gilded and decorated room. There are scores of wax candles, and there are hundreds of little bits of electric lights, half hidden with foliage. The forks, knives and spoons are pure gold and pure silver. The china ware is of the most costly character, and all of it is hand painted. So you see, when our president entertains, these important personages he does it in royal style.

Now, whether our presidents enjoy this sort of thing or not, is a question which cannot be determined. If any president does not enjoy such social functions, it would be inexcusable bad taste for him to say so. Afterwards his guests would feel different, and some of them might even decline invitations. Ex-presidents are also reticent. It is well.

Whether this sort of procedure is right or not, is another question. The custom of social and costly entertainment is very ancient. Away back in Biblical times, we read of social interchanges of costly courtesies. It is recorded that the queen of Sheba traveled many miles, bringing tokens of admiration to the court of King Solomon. The royal lady was superbly entertained.

In the early days of our republic the white house entertainments were very simple, but they have increased in brilliancy and costliness, as the nation has increased in population and in wealth. Whether these state dinners are right or wrong, since it seems to be necessary to keep up the custom, we may at least take pride in the fact that our president does the grand act with as much magnificence as a king or emperor.

SMITH D. FRY.

In Philadelphia.

Mother—What is the matter, my dear?

Married Daughter (in tears)—Charles has become so irregular in his habits! He went out after dinner and didn't come home last night until nine o'clock.—N. Y. World.

Disagreeable for All.

Gowper—I don't know how it is, but wherever I go there is sure to be some thing disagreeable.

Stickin—And wherever you go that's just what everybody else says.—Boston Transcript

POWDERLY IS CONFIRMED.

The Senate Ratifies His Appointment as Commissioner of Immigration—Mr. Hanna Denies that There Was a Bargain Made in '96.

Washington, March 17.—T. V. Powderly was confirmed by the senate in executive session yesterday by a vote of 43 to 20. Senator Chandler was the only republican who cast his vote against confirmation, while a large number of democrats voted for him. The vote was preceded by a sharp debate in which the question whether Mr. Powderly had made a trade with the republicans in the last campaign was discussed. Senators Teller and Stewart attacked Mr. Powderly's record on the financial question and Senator Stewart read a letter from Mr. Powderly written during the campaign of 1892 in which he had declared his adherence to the cause of bimetalism, and denounced those of the labor element who had aligned themselves on the republican side as rendering themselves liable to the charge of being made the subjects of bribery. Mr. Stewart contended that Powderly had placed himself in the same category in which he had previously sought to place others, by his course in the campaign of 1896.

Senator Hanna made a brief speech in which he asserted that Mr. Powderly's support of the republican ticket in the late campaign was not the result of any collusion or bargain. "Mr. Powderly," he said, "came to us without any solicitation on our part. We did not go after him and we did not promise him anything."

Furthermore, he said, he was not originally a supporter of Powderly for the position of commissioner of immigration, having another candidate for the office. This fact ought to be sufficient evidence, Mr. Hanna thought, to convince the most skeptical that there had been no bargain that Mr. Powderly should have the office as the result of his services in the campaign.

Mr. Chandler made another speech in opposition, reading protests from labor organizations, and declaring that the republican party could not afford to appoint to so important an office a man so distasteful to the labor element.

Mr. Fairbanks closed the debate in Mr. Powderly's behalf, defending his record in the office and his character as a man.

A WEAK PROTEST.

Spaniards Make One to Our Government in Regard to the Assembling of War Ships at Key West.

Washington, March 17.—The main development in the Spanish situation yesterday was in connection with the representations submitted by the Spanish government to the state department concerning the assembling of a large fleet of American warships at Key West, the war preparations and the influence which these might have on the approaching elections in Cuba. These representations were in line with the semi-official utterances recently accredited to a high official conversant with the views of the Spanish cabinet. While these representations cannot properly be regarded as a protest against the acts of the United States government, they may be set down as a remonstrance calculated to have an effect in European court circles. Not, however, being a technical protest, the statement has not called forth any official rejoinder on the part of the state department, for it is lacking in tangible accusations, being rather an argumentative presentation of alleged Spanish grievances.

The Fern sailed for Havana from Key West yesterday. She goes to relieve the Montgomery as a home for the officers engaged in supervising the wrecking operations at Havana.

WITH MILITARY HONORS.

Remains of Gen. Rosecrans are Laid in the Tomb.

Los Angeles, Cal., March 17.—The funeral of Gen. W. S. Rosecrans yesterday was one of the most impressive this city has ever witnessed. Thousands assembled to honor the dead warrior. Business was interrupted during the ceremonies.

The remains were removed from the city hall, where they had been lying in state, to the cathedral, where Bishop Montgomery officiated at the services. A huge procession of G. A. R. men, Confederate veterans and militia escorted the remains from the church to the cemetery. Following them came the hearse and directly behind it a riderless horse was led. The services at the church were brief. At the conclusion of the services, one of the infantry companies fired a salute of three volleys over the tomb, taps were sounded and the warrior was left to his rest.

FLOODS IN MICHIGAN.

Raging Rivers Cause Great Damage in the Vicinity of Saginaw.

Saginaw, Mich., March 17.—The Saginaw river is flooded to a height not hitherto reached since 1884. The Shiawassee, Cass and lesser tributary rivers are flooded to their utmost capacity. Travel was suspended yesterday over the Mackinaw street bridge. The water has not reached the floor of that bridge yet, but the protecting piles are submerged. In some streets the sidewalks and pavements are weighted by iron and the police have closed the streets to traffic. Between Saginaw and Bay City is an immense lake and several smaller villages are almost entirely evacuated. The Michigan Central has had a number of washouts between Saginaw and Bay City and cannot run trains.

Only the Best are Wanted.

Washington, March 17.—Considering the competition offered by the navy and marine corps in the enlistment of recruits, the war department feels that it is doing very well in securing men for the artillery regiments. The adjutant general's report yesterday was that 220 men had been secured. This is at the rate of 800 per month and about as fast as the men can be properly taken care of. The officials want the best men. The reports indicate that every section of the country is contributing to the enlistments and those from Dallas, Tex., are particularly encouraging.

A CHICAGO HORROR.

Three Men Killed, Eighteen Missing and 30 Maimed as the Result of a Savage Fire in a Business Block.

Chicago, March 17.—It required just 2½ minutes yesterday for one of the most savage fires Chicago has seen since the famous cold storage warehouse fire on the world's fair grounds in 1898, to take anywhere from 5 to 18 lives, maim 30 people and reduce the six-story brick building 215-221 Wabash avenue to a pile of blazing timber, red hot bricks and twisted iron.

The number of dead is in doubt and probably will not be definitely known until the debris of the building is sufficiently cooled to admit of a search being made for the bodies of those who are undoubtedly in the ruins. This will be two days hence at least. Three men are known to be dead. They are:

Samuel A. Clark, bookkeeper for the Olmstead Scientific Co.
Miles A. Smith, salesman for the Olmstead Co.
Edward Binz, cashier for Sweet, Wallach & Co.

The missing, of whom nothing could be learned at a late hour last night and most of whom are without question buried in the wreck of the building, number 18.

The building had two elevator shafts, one in front and one in the rear, and reaching from the third story to the roof was a light shaft which gave the flames every chance, and it was because of this shaft that the fire spread with such awful rapidity.

The building was occupied by a number of concerns, some of them employing large numbers of people. It is estimated that 400 persons were at work in the building when the fire was discovered.

The origin of the fire is in dispute. By some it is said to have been caused by an explosion of collodion in the wall paper warehouses of Alfred Peats on the third floor and by others to have been the result of an explosion among some chemicals in the photographic supply house of Sweet, Wallach & Co. on the sixth floor. Employees of both concerns deny that there was any explosion in their vicinity.

The sound of the explosion threw the inmates of the building into a panic, and on several floors a wild stampede began for the stairs and elevators. To add to the panic the men in charge of the elevators ran their cars up to the top of the building, shouting "Fire" at every floor. When they reached the top both elevators took on a load of frightened women and started for the bottom. The front elevator was in charge of Harry Gleason, a boy, and the rear one was handled by William St. John, a young man. Both of these showed much coolness and bravery and were instrumental in saving many lives.

The elevator in the front of the building was in good order, but not calculated to produce much speed. Gleason made one trip to the sixth floor, carried down a load of women, and although the smoke was rolling through the building in dense clouds, he started up again. At the fourth floor he stopped to take on a crowd of girls from the rooms of the National Music Co., being assisted in his work by Miss Katherine Carney, the forewoman. A man attempted to force his way into the elevator, but Gleason shoved him back into the hall that the women might have the first chance. The man never came out and probably met death in the flames.

After reaching the bottom with his load of girls Gleason was about to start up again when the supports of the elevator machinery at the top of the shaft caught fire and, seeing that they would give way before his slow elevator could make another trip, Gleason gave it up.

At the rear St. John did equally good work, but was not able to make more than one trip, as the fire swept through that portion of the building before it attacked the front. In less than ten minutes after the explosion that started the fire all escape for the inmates by the stairs and elevators was cut off. There remained only the windows and the single fire escape, a narrow iron thing not over 18 inches wide. This was speedily covered with a string of people.

Many of those who could not reach the fire escape made their way to the front windows and it was out of these that Clark, Smith and Binz hurled themselves to death.

Clark was bookkeeper for the Olmstead Scientific Co. on the seventh floor and remained to put the books in the safe. He might have escaped had he run upon the first alarm. He was first seen at one of the seventh story windows and a few minutes after showed himself in a window of the sixth floor. The fire was close upon him, the floors and walls behind him were crashing down, and it was certain death to remain where he was. There was no possibility of help and he took his only chance. Three seconds later he was dead on the pavement below.

Miles A. Smith, a salesman for the Olmstead Co., also leaped from a window in the sixth floor. He hesitated some time before taking the leap. He was killed, his body being horribly mangled.

Fruit Crops Ruined.

San Francisco, March 17.—A heavy frost occurred in the southern part of this state Tuesday night and serious damage was sustained by the fruit industry. Reports from Stockton, Fresno and Sacramento are to the effect that the apricot, peach and almond crops are ruined.

Steamer and All Hands Lost.

Lowestoft, Eng., March 17.—The bark British Princess, from Leith for Liverpool, was towed in here Wednesday with her bows down, having been in collision at 3 a. m. off Gibbard lightship with an unknown steamer. The steamer sank within three minutes with all on board.

Reached a High Mark.

Washington, March 17.—The receipts from customs yesterday amounted to \$1,319,737. This is the highest point by nearly \$365,000 that the customs have reached since the new tariff act went into effect.

A DEFI FROM SPAIN.

Will Never Pay Indemnity Nor Permit Intervention.

A Semi-Official Announcement is Made at Madrid that Shows the Temper of the Dons in the Present Crisis.

Madrid, March 18.—The following semi-official note was issued here yesterday:

"The report of the Spanish commission on the Maine is not yet known, but the statements of several officers who have made a close examination of the scene of the disaster, show that it was indisputably due to an internal accident. American assertions to the contrary are therefore deplored in official quarters as tending to mislead public opinion and render the situation still more difficult from the standpoint of maintaining friendly relations between the two countries. It may be regarded as certain that should the American technical commission present a report declaring the disaster to be due to an external explosion, the public here will refuse to accept such a finding, and any demand for an indemnity based thereon will be indignantly repelled by Spain."

Washington, March 18.—The semi-official statement given out at Madrid advancing the government view that a demand for indemnity based on Spanish responsibility for the Maine explosion would be indignantly repelled by Spain, attracts much interest in official circles. There has been little doubt for some time that Spain was preparing for the contingency of an adverse report by the American court of inquiry and to that end was preparing to offset it by making clear the government's policy of standing by the report of the Spanish commission. The report of the latter body was due in Madrid on Wednesday, and while its conclusions are not officially known it is a foregone conclusion that it will find that the Maine disaster was an accident, resulting in internal explosion. This was foreshadowed in the advance utterances of Capt. Peral, head of the Spanish commission, who stated publicly several days ago that the theory of external explosion was untenable.

Along with the semi-official statement from Madrid that a demand for indemnity will be indignantly repelled, is the further statement from reliable sources that Spain has made it clear to the authorities here that intervention may lead to war.

The prospects of such intervention appear to be seriously entertained by Spain and strong efforts have been made to avert it by showing that the condition of the reconcentrados did not warrant the step, and also that it would threaten to end all prospects of further pacific negotiations.

A STRATEGIC MEASURE.

Removal of Battleships from Florida Waters to Hampton Roads is Thus Described by Naval Officials.

Washington, March 18.—The event of Thursday in official circles was the issue of an order for the formation of a new squadron of naval vessels to be stationed at Hampton Roads. The squadron in the beginning will consist of five ships, all the best of their types. Two of them—the battleships Massachusetts and Texas—are withdrawn from the present North Atlantic fleet at Key West and Tortugas.

In ordering this movement the navy department is not animated by any purpose of yielding to representations that may have come from the Spanish minister. On the contrary the formation of the new squadron was brought about by purely strategic considerations, although it appears from a nature of the force so far under order that this strategy is of the defensive nature.

The new squadron cannot be called a "flying squadron" because the association of heavy battleships with fleet cruisers like the Brooklyn, Columbia and Minnesota reduces the available speed of the whole to the speed of the slowest vessel and the squadron could not do much "flying" in the naval sense.

In place of the cruiser New York the people of Key West will look upon the big monitor Puritan, supposedly the most powerful ship in smooth water in the world. She will have to assist her on guard the double-turreted monitor Miantonomah and the monitor Amphitrite.

BRUCE IS DEAD.

A Leader of the Colored Race Passes from Earthly Life.

Washington, March 18.—Blanche K. Bruce, registrar of the treasury, died Thursday. He was born a slave in Virginia in 1841, taught school for a time in Hannibal, Mo., and later became a student at Oberlin. In 1869 he became a planter in Mississippi, was elected sheriff of his county, and subsequently superintendent of education. In 1877 he was elected United States senator as a republican, and served until March 3, 1881. He was a member of every republican national convention held since 1868. In 1881 he was appointed by President Garfield registrar of the treasury, and later was appointed recorder of deeds of the District of Columbia.

About six months ago he was again appointed registrar of the treasury by President McKinley. Next after Fred Douglass, Mr. Bruce has long been regarded as the most conspicuous man of his race.

The First Money Goes to England.

Washington, March 18.—The first disbursement under the act of congress appropriating \$50,000,000 for the national defense has been made by the treasury department on an executive order for \$145,995, to be cable to London to the credit of Sir William Armstrong, in part payment for 12 rapid fire guns. The purchase price, including mounts, etc., is \$21,000 for each gun, or \$252,000 for the 12. In addition to this payment the treasury department today will cable Rothschilds at London \$1,699,631 in full payment for the Brazilian cruiser Amazonas, and in part payment for the Abreul.

\$500 Reward

The above Reward will be paid for information that will lead to the arrest and conviction of the party or parties who placed iron and slabs on the track of the Emporium & Rich Valley R. R., near the east line of Franklin Houser's farm, on the evening of Nov. 21st, 1891.

HENRY AUCHE, President.

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