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ASTORIA'S BUSINESS ACTIVITY

One of the most noticeable things about the visit to Astoria this summer of strangers and former residents is the fact that they almost unanimously express surprise at the activity which they note in business and industrial circles. The statement is made that few cities in the country of similar size are so busy as this.

These expressions of opinion can scarcely fail to be pleasant to the people of the city who, perhaps, can not judge so clearly of conditions as people who are not constantly here. It is true that business in every phase is better in Astoria this summer than it has been before at the same time of year.

The merchants are enjoying a large trade, and the factories located here are running to their full capacity. This speaks well for our industrial conditions. It can not be denied that Astoria is enjoying an exceedingly rapid, but at the same time substantial, growth.

M. Sato, spokesman of the Japanese peace commission, if the dispatch in yesterday's Oregonian may be accepted with authenticity, gave two interviews relative to the consummation of an armistice which show him to be rabidly inconsistent. He says Japan is willing to grant an armistice and simultaneously vouchsafes the contradictory intelligence that Japan will not consent to the ceasing of hostilities during the convention of the peace plenipotentiaries. Occupying his unusually prominent position it is hardly advisable for M. Sato to pursue such an irresponsible policy.

Portland's recently elected mayor, Dr. Lane, objects to City Engineer Charles Wanzer—he wishes to place one of his favorites in the important position. In Mr. Wanzer, for the first time in a great many years, Portland has a city engineer of exceptional ability and possessing the desirable qualifications of irreproachable integrity. From the time of his association with the municipal government of St. Paul, Mr. Wanzer's career has been one of enviable distinction. If Mayor Lane is actuated purely by his duty as he has often remarked, he will do well to devote his attention to some one other than City Engineer Wanzer.

Los Angeles has instituted a crusade against reckless automobile drivers. It seems deplorable that this move should be found necessary. The automobile has its virtues and is destined to become an important factor in the field of transportation. At present, however, the "buzz' car is merely the plaything of the rich, a juggernaut. Almost daily, from some part of the country comes the news that a person has met death under the wheels of an automobile. The speed restrictions are accepted with indifference by the average owner of a car, who rather than miss the fun of driving his cumbersome machine at hell's pace, smilingly pays the fine imposed by the magistrate. Stringent measures should be adopted byall communities to enforce the laws governing speed.

It is probable that should Lord Kitchener resign his position as commander in chief of the British forces in India, he will be succeeded by Lieutenant General Sir William Nicholson. The latter has seen a good deal of active service, including campaigns in Afghanistan, Egypt, Burma and South Africa. He was British attache with the Japanese army during the early portion of the Russo-Japanese war.

When Thomas F. Ryan took hold of the Equitable he began patronizing a newspaper clipping bureau. They had to cut so many clippings for him that an increase of readers was necessary and Ryan was flooded with them. So he sought relief by having only favorable notices sent to him, and now they say he didn't have a single clipping for ten days. "Good cure for conceit," quoth Mr. Ryan.

Sunday Chatter

The Week in Society as Sesn by Mademoiselle Yvonne.

It is to be regretted that the enthusiasm and interest in tennis has so completely wafted into sweet oblivion. There was a time when our players could have held their own with any of the Oregon experts. The old tennis club, which went to pieces last year numbered among its members Major Bethel, who twice held the championship of the Northwest and ranked among the first players on the Pacific Coast; Mr. Henry Marcotte, who was the champion of his class at college; Mr. R. C. F. Astbury, whose English game was steady and strong, and Miss Floretta Elmore, who held the double championship for Oregon, and Miss Halsted, the singles. Besides these, every other member of the club played exceptionally good tennis. This year Astoria was not represented at all in the Oregon tournament which was held this week in Portland. Until the last Miss Elmore and Miss Halsted expected to enter both the double and single events. They are playing better than ever this year, having practiced all winter in Pasadena with the Sutton sisters who are the finest women players in the United States and one of them, Miss May, only recently won the championship of the world.

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No large affairs were given during the week but many little informal gatherings helped to pass the time pleasantly. On Monday afternoon Mrs. Paul Badolett entertained at bridge whist, her guests being Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Tallant, Mrs. Prael, Mrs. Brown, the Misses Tallant, Elmore and Elsie Elmore.

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Mrs. E. W. Tallant has been the guest of Mrs. Kendall at her Seaside home the past week. Mrs. Kendall's cottage is one of the most attractive of the summer homes, being roomy and artistically furnished.

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Mrs. Walter Robb has been giving a series of very delightful picnics and boating parties this summer on the government launch Patrol. Mrs. Robb is a charming hostess and always prepares a delicious luncheon and finds a beautiful spot on the banks of one of the small rivers hereabout on which to serve it.

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Miss Elizabeth Schneck, the daughter of Col. Schenck, of Fort Stevens, has made many warm friends since she has lived here. She is a decidedly interesting talker, has a bright vivacious manner and is always the center of a lively group at any function she attends. She has been the guest of the Misses Elmore the past week.

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One of the most enjoyable events given during the week was the six-handed euchre party of Mrs. Alexander Brown on Thursday afternoon. Mrs. Charles Heilborn won the first prize and Mrs. Frank Summerville, the second.

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On Friday afternoon the bridge whist club held their final meeting of the year at the residence of Mrs. E. W. Tallant. The house was artistically decorated for the event. Pink roses and white were used in the parlors and dining room was in pink sweet peas. Delicious refreshments were served after the game of whist. The prizes were won by Mrs. J. L. McConnell, of Woodland, and Miss Sue Elmore. Those present were Mesdames Carruthers, Finch, McConnell, Thing, Summerville, Brown, Badolett, and Mills and the Misses Elmore, Tallant, Schneck, Adair and Crang.

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Mrs. Frank Summerville, of Edmonston, B. C., is in the city the guest of Miss Harriet Tallant.

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Mrs. Roland Mills, of Portland, is visiting her sister, Mrs. Paul Badolett.

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Mrs. John Rogers, of Portland, is spending the Summer with her mother, Mrs. Charles Heilborn.

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Mrs. S. Elmore, the Misses Elmore and Miss Floretta Elmore were hostesses at a daintily appointed luncheon yesterday afternoon, given in honor of the ladies of Forts Columbia and Stevens. Yellow was the prevailing shade in the table decoration, nasturtiums being used. A great center piece of nasturtiums enhanced the attractivenes of the tastefully arranged festal board and at each plate were small bouquets of the blossoms and cards which will be preserved at mementos of the very enjoyable affair. Fourteen were present among whom were Mesdames Forfe, Schneck, Smith, Gardner, van Poole, Kerfoot, Finch, McConnell and Miss Schenck.

YVONNE.

FORM BIG COMBINE

Eastern Street Car Building Companies Consolidate.

FIFTY-FOUR MILLIONS CAPITAL

J. G. Brill Company, American Car Company and St. Louis Car Company Are All in Merger and Other Concerns Whose Names are Not Divulged.

New York, July 29.—Reports that a combination has been effected of street car building companies, including some of the largest concerns in the United States, are confirmed to day by the Times, which states that the consolidation will be capitalized at $54,500,000. Foremost among the firms of the merger is said to be the J. G. Brill company, of Philadelphia, which takes in the American Car company and the John Stephenson company, each a big concern in itself.

The St. Louis car company is also in the merger. Edward Harrison Power will be president of the company and a banking house in this city will manage the syndicate which has undertaken to float the stock.

The $54,000,000 capital is to be divided into a bond issue of $11,500,000, $15,500,000 of preferred and $27,500,000 of common.

Besides the concerns mentioned, several more old companies are in the merger but their names could not be learned. The list is understood, however, to include the Barney and Smaith Company, of Dayton, Ohio. This company has a capital stock of $2,500,000 preferred and $1,000,000 common.

VISIT OF FRENCH FLEET.

British Make Preparations For Event At Spithead.

London, July 29.—An elaborate program for the occasion of the visit of the French fleet to Spithead the week beginning August 7, shows the importance attached to this further demonstration of Anglo-French friendship. King Edward, Premier Balfour, and Secretary of Foreign Affairs Lord Lansdowne will each act as hosts at functions in honor of the visitors and both houses of parliament have arranged to give luncheons in Westminister hall to the French officers.

The visitors will also have the privilege during their stay of free railway and hotel accommodations, in order that they may visit any interesting place they desire to see.

King Edward will review the French and British fleets August 9 and will take luncheon on board the French flagship Massena. The French officers will give banquets, luncheons and garden parties at Windson Castle, the guild hall, London, and elsewhere and will also be entertained at various fetes. The fleet will leave for Portsmouth August 14.

Governor Deneen, of Illinois, stepped into the Hoch controversy at an inopportune moment and spoiled a good front page story.
