

RECORDED HAPPENINGS OF THE BUSY YEAR OF 1909

MATTERS OF MOMENT TO EVERY NATIONALITY

Auspicious Happenings in America With Financial Matters in Federal, State and Municipal Governments Numerous Political Changes—A Year of Celebration.

By Arthur I. Street, Editor of "The Pandex of the News."

W HEN all the political events of the year are forgotten—all the tariff squabbling, Roosevelt's retirement, Taft's accession and spectacular trip across the country, culminating in his meeting with President Diaz in Mexico, the defeat of Tammany in New York, of Tom Johnson in Ohio, Giboney in Philadelphia, and Henry in San Francisco—the 12 months of 1909 will undoubtedly be remembered in history for two things: the aeroplane and the discovery of the North Pole. Epic achievements were made in both of these respects, and the future must look back to 1909 as the year of their joint happening.

their massive frontier preparations against each other might ultimately be rendered futile; and the bird-like ease with which Wilbur Wright took his aeroplane over the foreign warships, assembled in New York harbor for the Hudson-Fulton centenary, did not lessen the thought that man's conquest of the air is likely to change his methods of warfare, and, consequently, naturally, under such circumstances, military men directed themselves with some vigor in the discovery of means of destroying the airship and aeroplane while in the air. Various nations, including our own, conducted experiments of shooting captive balloons with large and small artillery; the Krupp invented a gun especially designed for airship destroying; but up to the close of the year nothing definite in this direction has been accomplished.

Of course the aeroplane had made great progress in the preceding year, but it has been the annual period closed that has brought the invention to a point where its definite adoption into the transportation system of the human race is no longer in doubt. Not only were there many so-called aviation meets, such as those at Brescia in Italy, Rheims in France, Johannisthal in Germany, and the Hudson-Fulton centenary in New York, at which various demonstrations were made as the fruits of developments thus far reached, Wilbur Wright, at the centenary celebration, starting all New York city by successfully negotiating a flight from the Hudson river to Grant's tomb and back again, each time, for the first time in the history of the world, guiding an aeroplane over warships.

Thus, all through the year the world was thrilled from time to time by performances of noteworthy feats in the air. But the excitement caused by the Wrights, the Bleriot, the Zeppelins, the Latham, pale into comparative insignificance when, on September 1, 1909, an anonymous expedition, led by Dr. Frederick A. Cook of Brooklyn, had discovered the North Pole on April 28, 1908, and five days later Lieutenant Commander Robert E. Peary returned to the Labradorian outpost of civilization with the news that he had landed on the Arctic coast of Greenland, that to him accrued the honor of being the first man ever to stand at the tip of the world, since he could prove that Dr. Cook was fabricating.

Successful Flights Made. But under the direction of the Frenchman, Louis Bleriot, the monoplane form of aeroplane crossed the British channel from France on July 25, electrifying the world; six days later Orville Wright, with one passenger, at Fort Meyer, made a five-mile flight across country at the rate of 43 miles an hour, again electrifying the world; the German, Count Zeppelin, made successful flights with his rigid airship from the extreme south of Germany to Berlin, and more or less irregular passenger service has been inaugurated along the Rhine provinces by enthusiastic supporters of Zeppelin. Indeed, in the matter of airship navigation, the Germans and French took much the same lead that they did years ago in the matter of the trolley. Whether they will retain the leadership, of course, remains to be seen. For while there has yet been no formal treaty between the United States to effect air transportation on a commercial basis, many companies were organized during 1909 for this purpose, and the outlook is for many more during the ensuing year.

Instantly, there resulted that extraordinary controversy between the admirals of Cook and Peary, which has yet to be definitely settled one way or the other in the cold courts of science. Suffice it to say here that Peary's statement that he has been to the North Pole, as verified by his polar records approved in October by a committee appointed by the National Geographic society to examine them; while Dr. Cook's records are now being examined under the direction of the United States Arctic expedition, to whom Dr. Cook promised to submit them when, on his return to civilization by way of Denmark, he was acclaimed the Pole's discoverer by that country's king and leading men and women generally.

Manufacturing Aeroplanes. In October, for instance, Glenn H. Curtiss, who proved himself during the year to be the most formidable rival of the Wright Brothers, secured lands and buildings in Schenectady, N. Y., and announced that he would proceed at once to the general manufacture of aeroplanes. The Wright Brothers, however, confined themselves almost entirely to developing the speed, elevation, and lifting power of their machine, leaving the commercial development for a later day. One of the brothers, Orville, succeeded in reaching a height of more than 1000 feet during a flight in Germany, and Leptot made in France, using a Wright machine, circled the Eiffel tower in Paris, which is 1000 feet high. Both at home and abroad the Wrights carried one and two passengers on their aeroplane without difficulty, and toward the end of the year made numerous ascensions without the use of lifting weights. They also won the prizes, amounting to \$30,000, offered by the United States army for a practical aeroplane, and then undertook the tutoring of army officers in the use of the machine—which recalls the fact that probably the most important practical bearing of aviation progress during the year was the demonstration of its importance in war.

South Pole Exploration. Until the world was treated to the truly unique situation of two Americans returning from Arctic fastnesses within a few days of each other and asserting their right to immortal fame as the Pole's discoverer, interest in exploration activities had been centered in the Antarctic achievements of Lieutenant E. H. Shackleton, of the British navy. On March 12 came the startling announcement that he had succeeded in penetrating, after a series of most extraordinary hardships, to within 112 miles of the South Pole.

At any rate, whatever their significance, they served to fix the attention upon the fact that the year was marked, in almost all nations, and, for the matter, by a remarkable array of financial budgets and resources. England, and all others, entered into this problem with a vital appreciation of its consequences. The Liberal ministry, under Prime Minister Herbert Henry Asquith, making it the party issue of the year. Confronted by an impending deficit of over \$78,000,000, the ministry proposed, among other radical measures, a great increase in the inheritance, income and real estate taxes, together with stamp taxes on real estate and stock exchange deals.

Quite naturally, the news of the actual discovery of the other end of the world dimmed considerably the glory of this feat, and our British coin. On the other hand, the mere fact that the North Pole had been discovered by America awakened in England a strong desire to be accredited in history with the discovery of the South Pole, and an Arctic expedition, backed by British funds, was made up entirely of British subjects, is now being equipped with the object of placing the Union Jack at the southern tip of the world. Hence, if this particular expedition fulfills its goal, the triumph of human endeavor over the elements of the South Pole will have resulted clearly from a zest of emulation born of an epochal event of the year just closing.

At ships in National Maneuvers. Virtually all the principal countries of the world use some form of airship in the annual maneuvers, even Japan not being excepted. In Germany, the dirigible balloon accomplished some important results in scouting, and, after the maneuvers were over, executed a dramatic surprise against one of the strongest forts in the empire. In Italy, the army signaled its appreciation of the value of the dirigible by ordering an entire fleet to be constructed. And when Bleriot crossed the British channel and Zeppelin made his air tour along the highly fortified Rhine provinces, the feelings seemed to come home to military strategists throughout the world that an entirely new era in warfare was approaching. England became convinced that the dirigible "revolution" had been terminated; both France and Germany, realized that all

the biggest strike of the year, as far as this country was concerned, began on December 1, when 20,000 railroad workmen in the northwest went on strike, completely tying up the movement of freight in that section and causing numerous industries, such as the Minneapolis and St. Paul flour mills, to shut down for lack of raw products. The strike was inaugurated in an attempt to secure a higher pay, about the middle of the year, practically all of Sweden was seriously inconvenienced by a general strike of the labor unions, partly for higher pay, and partly as a protest against general livability. In that country, a dead could not be buried, a bread farmer was attacked, and even milk for infants was most difficult to obtain, even with the army performing all sorts of manual work, such as running lighting plants and making and delivering bread and other necessities.

At the close of the year, the Turkish parliament met in Constantinople, and the Mohammedan Revolution, brother of the old sultan, to be sultan, and on May 10, as Mohamed V, he was formally girded with Mohammed's sword. The year ends with constitutional government apparently "making good."

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While the Young Turks were deposing Abdul Hamid only about 500 soldiers and a few noncombatants were killed. The most stormy and bloody aspect of the revolution in Anatolia, where the tensely religious masses, said to have been instigated by the old sultan, in the hope of holding his throne, took place, about 20,000 Armenians being slain and numerous towns and villages laid waste by Mohammedan fanatics. The powers were obliged to send their warships to the vicinity to protect their vessels. Fortunately the new government proved itself able to restore order and to punish offenders; and thus international complications were averted. Had the contrary been the case, the complications would undoubtedly have been serious. For, shortly prior to the Turkish revolt, Austria-Hungary, keenly alive to internal troubles in Turkey, had disturbed the whole peace of the Balkans by suddenly disregarding the treaty of Berlin and seizing the provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, presumably in order to increase her access to the sea. Against this Turkey protested and eventually won the right to her independence, and that much more vehemently than did Turkey. Indeed, at one time, there was every evidence that the situation would develop into a war between Serbia and Austria-Hungary.

and Great Britain ran parallel, with the only difference that our fiscal discussion centered, not around a so-called budget, but the revision of the tariff. Pursuant to the pledges of the platform on which he was elected, President Taft immediately following his inauguration, on August 1, as a Roosevelt's successor, called congress in extra session on March 15 for the express purpose of revising the tariff without delay, with the two-fold object of living up to the Republican platform promise to revise the tariff and annually increasing the national revenue, and, being estimated all the way from \$60,000,000 to \$100,000,000.

method of city administration, made rapid advancement. Government by commission was adopted in Arkansas City, San Diego, Wichita and other cities, and in Minnesota and Wisconsin legislative authorization was issued to cities of certain class to alter their administration to conform to this new plan. Des Moines, Iowa, which was one of the pioneers of the plan, reported during the year that an annual deficit of \$60,000 had been converted into an annual surplus of \$20,000; and this alone did much to stimulate interest.

the whole subject of waterways should put upon the same comprehensive business like basis as had been done in the case of the Panama canal. He advocated the formation of a national plan of procedure and the creation of a bond issue with which to carry out, at the same time setting the final deadline for the completion of the idea. He promised to recommend a message to congress.

Great War Scare of the Year. The great war scare of the year, however, centered around Germany and England. The apparent growing strain of relations between the two countries, causing the entire civilized world to discuss almost daily throughout the year the possibilities of a war in which they would be the combatants. It is an undisputed fact that both Germany and England all through the year have been engaged in making military preparations at a somewhat more than usual gait, England going at the work of building ships with the grim determination of not allowing the mastery of the seas to be wrested from her by the Germans.

Income Tax Amendment. Another piece of Taft recommended legislation that developed during the year was an amendment to the authorization for a vote of the states on an income tax amendment to the constitution. The amendment was at once acted upon in the state of Alabama, where it was unanimously approved by the legislature and signed by the governor. It was also adopted by the legislatures of Virginia, West Virginia, and North Carolina.

Regulating Immigration. As a part of the movement for better conditions in our cities, which have to bear the brunt of the burden of making aliens over into Americans, much attention was given to the critical subject of immigration, exclusion and deportation of immoral persons being one of the provisions of the American Immigration act. Immigration on an extensive scale was resumed during the year, and the pressure for some means of restraining it was resumed almost simultaneously. To meet this pressure, the governmental authorities applied all possible excuses for restriction, increasing the number of deportations until many cries of injustice were advanced.

President's Country-Wide Trip. In fact, the president's western tour was fruitful of an extraordinary number of legislative proposals. The first started across the country on September 15 from Boston, passing many cities enroute, reaching the west and north as Seattle and San Francisco, Los Angeles, San Diego, and the southern states. The long trip was made for the purpose of informing the people of the administration's legislative program.

Britain Alarmed. In England public men of national and international fame declared unequivocally that the growing strain of relations between Germany and England, and the fact that both Germany and England all through the year have been engaged in making military preparations at a somewhat more than usual gait, England going at the work of building ships with the grim determination of not allowing the mastery of the seas to be wrested from her by the Germans.

Great Problem Before Labor. Interest centered in the so-called "Columbian" case, wherein the leaders of the American Federation of Labor, Samuel Gompers, John Mitchell, and Secretary Morrison, were held guilty of contempt of court for continuing to publish a boycott of the St. Louis and Range company of St. Louis in the "Federationist." On March 11, the District of Columbia court of appeals sustained the lower court in its decision that Gompers and his associates were guilty, and in October the federal court for the District of Columbia still further sustained the decision. Gompers and those with him contended that obedience to the mandate of the court by the first instance was an abridgment of the right of free speech, and that labor organizations could not submit, and they insisted that, though they might be imprisoned, they would continue to fight for the principle involved.

Billings of Petrosino. On March 1 a federal investigation committee reported that the immigration laws were much in need of amendment, especially with regard to the criminal classes. On March 12, emphasis seemed to be given to this contention by the dramatic killing in Palermo, Italy, of a lieutenant of police of New York, Joseph Petrosino. Petrosino had been for several years a most courageous and daring prosecutor of the so-called Italian "Black Hand" in New York. He had gone abroad to secure evidence against criminal Italian immigration, and his murder at once provoked much comment throughout the country on the dangers involved in an unrestricted immigration law. Aside from the criminal aspect of the immigration problem, an interesting phase developed in an agitation for a scientific distribution of immigrants under federal direction.

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Germany After Trade. On the German side, officials close to the emperor made repeated assurances that his latter's aims were altogether peaceful. As late as November, Count von Bernstorff, the German ambassador to the United States, made an extended speech in Philadelphia, in which he stated that his government no longer sought extension of its colonies and that the future was the expansion of trade. But, some months before, when the reichstag opened, one of the principal measures brought up for discussion was a new scheme of taxation, whose obvious object was an increase in the military budget.

Finances All Important. Sufficient time had not yet elapsed when the year closed to determine the ultimate fate of the new British budget or the ultimate effect of the new American tariff. But the fact that so imperative a necessity for increased revenue had been found across the world, and that governments—in fact, in three, if Germany be included—perhaps placed the question of the finances of government in the fourth rank among the year's developments.

Strike and Race War. Something of emphasis was imparted to the foreign-American problem by the developments among the steel industries in Pennsylvania, where a bitter struggle was going on between the workers at McKees Rocks involved an almost equally bitter and sullen conflict between races. At one time the Americans at McKees Rocks marched back to work independently of the foreigners; and again Secretary Morrison of the American Federation of Labor declared that the whole trouble at the mills was that the owning company was seeking to cut down wages by taking advantage of the fact that the majority of the employees were newly imported foreigners. Eventually, this strike settled itself by popular pressure, the company giving in to the demand that it was an intense and dramatic affair while it lasted and contained many elements of social disorder that created momentary apprehension.

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Elixir of Senna
acts gently yet promptly on the bowels; cleanses the system effectually; assists one in overcoming habitual constipation permanently.
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Ask your grocer for the package bearing this trade mark



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