

INTERESTING WASHINGTON NOTES

WASHINGTON, D. C., Sept. 7. (Special.)—One's life in Washington depends on conditions—just as it does everywhere. Everything, everywhere, is relative—makes one feel as if one knew much about the life of a statesman in Washington, nor about the life of a senator, nor that of a diplomat, nor even that of a millionaire.

I could not write of life in this city from the viewpoints of such persons without relying on my imagination for the "facts"; and that would be hardly fair to any person who might read my letters. Life here is good or bad, pleasurable or painful, much as it is everywhere else. The individual who can be happy anywhere is a true philosopher, and he can be happy in one of the finest capitals of the world as well as elsewhere; while the pessimist might be as miserable.

Indeed there are many considerations calculated to make one feel more contented with life here than in any other less favored localities. There is much, for instance, that appeals to and pleases the eye. There are miles of beautiful tree-bordered avenues and wide streets, usually clean and attractive; numerous stately mansions scattered throughout the city and district that impart an air of solidity and substantial well-being to the community; many public buildings and institutions in slightly elevated locations that lend to the city's self-conscious air of political importance; and a river that responds to the ebb and flow of the tides.

All these without human life would be nothing. But here are more than a quarter of a million people—the third largest in the United States, and the others comprising a local and a cosmopolitan society that embraces almost everything to be found in America, from the lowest to the highest step of the social ladder—from the slums of New York or Chicago, to the White House.

At this writing I have in mind an estimable Southern woman who has been a department clerk for several years. Her case may be taken as typical of a small class in the service. She entered the office a widow with a dependent family of three young boys, and given them an education, and the two older ones are now making their own way in the business world. The other day, in answer to my inquiries, she expressed her views of the service substantially as follows:

"I would rather have my boys work elsewhere for less money than they might earn in the departments. They have given them an education, and the independence they might not have in the government employ as clerks; they are more likely to be justly appraised, and receive what they deserve in return for their services. They can make a reputation and have a chance to go into business for themselves, some time, should they so desire."

"In the department, they would always be at the mercy of others, few of whom care for anything but their own selfish purposes. It is not always merit that wins promotion here."

"That is one view of the department service. It is a genuine Southerner; was born and reared in the South, grew up and developed amid its traditions, imbibed its spirit, and breathed its atmosphere."

"To her, 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' is a travesty of truth. Has she ever read it? No, indeed; and if she could have her way, no one else would read it, because she thinks it conveys a very erroneous and wicked impression of the South and its people."

"She is familiar with Southern conditions today, and with the 'race question.' She grew up among the colored people, as it were, and believes the Southerners alone are qualified to deal with them in an intelligent and truly sympathetic spirit. She regards them as children—to be taught, rewarded, indulged, punished. In the course of time they may reach maturity."

"Anything that is 'Southern' appeals to her with all of the force that 'big red apples,' or the 'beautiful Willamette,' or a fine picture of a blond would appeal to an excited Oregonian. She was enthusiastic over Exon's 'The Leopard's Spots,' and would have all her Northern friends read that book, for it embodies her views and reflects the spirit of that South which she knows and of which she was and is a part."

"Some of the clerks need occasional diversion—or did, in the past. What I shall here set out on that score happened before me in a department and I employ, but the principal actors are known to me. It is a true story, and hardly a 'story' being rather a simple statement of fact that may serve to further illustrate department life 'among the lowly.'"

"A Westerner was one of the central figures in this little comedy. He was an old man of military bearing, tall, slender, erect, with a fierce gray mustache. When younger he must have been attractive to feminine eyes. He came to Washington a widower, but evidently determined to change his state. His fellow clerks soon detected his weakness for women."

"A practical joker happened to be in the same office. In some way he procured a letter to be written in a dainty feminine hand and addressed to the widower. It timidly admitted a growing admiration on the part of the writer, and a strong desire to meet him in person, and ended by suggesting a day and place for meeting. The place named was a street near opposite the office in which he worked, and where was a pump. It also suggested that to prevent any mistake he should hold a handkerchief in his right hand while waiting for the fair unknown to appear."

"He rose to the bait like a mountain trout after fly. At the hour named, dressed 'to kill,' his mustache carefully waxed and curled, he repaired to the trysting place, where for half an hour he paraded up and down the pavement carrying a white handkerchief in his hand, and waving it gallantly at every passing woman who chanced to look in his direction."

"Happening to glance up at the office windows, after a time, he made a discovery. At those windows were all his fellow clerks, doubled up in wretched misery, laughing till they could laugh no more at the silly spectacle. The man on dress parade suddenly remembered another engagement."

"That incident is laughed over yet, and the story related to new comers. To invite the victim, even at this day, to meet you 'at the pump' would be considered equivalent to a formal challenge."

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ST. LOUIS, Mo., Sept. 17. (Special.)—An infant, yet a giant; such is the unique position of wireless telegraphy at the present time, when the ramifications of its development are extending to every country on the earth, and every sea. Its application to commercial uses is of but a few years growth; yet that growth has been by leaps and bounds, and apparently there is no limit to its possibilities. One day we read of its application to railroad work, permitting a moving train to communicate with headquarters of a station along the line; the next, we find the Agricultural Bureau planning to install a system of automatic fire alarms in the great western forests to give warning of approaching fire; again a press dispatch is flashed across the seas for hundreds of miles, despite intervening islands, and the men crew of a naval battle far out at sea on the other side of the world, while the conflict was still raging.

Such feats are eminently in keeping with the spirit of the twentieth century. And yet, to the uninitiated, there is in them an element of the weird, the unbelievable. To a great mass of people wireless telegraphy is still more theory than practice; more dream than reality. It is a giant stride of science—and some of the people have not yet come abreast. A year or two more of successes, of spectacular achievements, of continued daily application to commercial purposes, and wireless telegraphy will assume natural proportions in all eyes. It will, as the telephone and wire telegraph, become an essential component part of every-day life, and settle down to an ever-widening career of usefulness, that only time itself can limit or gauge.

One important factor in every commercial enterprise, particularly in its future prosperity, is recognition by national governments. In this respect wireless telegraphy has been particularly fortunate, as was the wire telegraph. And a most notable and clear-sighted action on the part of the United States Navy Department was the contract for five wireless stations whose circuits will cover the waters of the Mexican gulf and Caribbean sea, and the Greater and Lesser Antilles. According to widely published press reports: "With the greatest care the government experts conducted most rigid tests, and reported that the DeForest system already existing Government contracts, on a similar scale, was the one which offered the best service. During a period of several months seven wireless stations were in operation in the same magnetic field and yet long messages were received and transmitted by the DeForest system. This achievement, regarded by the government experts as the greatest in the history of the science, was possible only by the utilization of 'synthetic aerography,' in which Dr. DeForest's attuning apparatus is employed."

The contract with the Government which makes the company, and the Government, in a sense, allies, since commercial messages are exchangeable between all stations and ships equipped with the DeForest instruments, whether maintained by the Government or by the company. This arrangement is a most happy settlement of the inelegant controversy regarding Government ownership of all coast-wise wireless stations on grounds of public policy and welfare. Such a harmony agreement obviates the possibility of friction between private and Government stations, because the two classes of stations, supplied with the DeForest tuning apparatus, are able to operate simultaneously in close proximity without interference. In other words, the art is reduced to the simplicity of the local Bell Telephone exchanges, where one may drop a connection and pick up another on a moment's notice.

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The points at which the large Government stations are being established are: Pensacola, Key West, South Cuban Coast, Porto Rico, Panama. Any one of these stations will be able to communicate with any other in the circuit. Herein is to be found a pertinent comparison of relative cost of wireless installations and land and cable stations. To install cables between each of these points would require a cable length of approximately 4,770 miles, which would cost at the average of all the cables of the world, \$7,500,000. The cost to the Government in this instance is something less than one-fifth of that amount.

The closing of this contract, the largest for wireless communication ever awarded, is admittedly due to the use of DeForest Wireless by the London Times in reporting the Russo-Japanese war. The coasting steamer Hainium was equipped and a land station erected at Wei-hai-wei, a neutral English port and cable station. The Russian Government had the largest wireless communication ever awarded, is admittedly due to the use of DeForest Wireless by the London Times in reporting the Russo-Japanese war. The coasting steamer Hainium was equipped and a land station erected at Wei-hai-wei, a neutral English port and cable station.

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Of the forty-four stations in operation or complete in the United States three are seen in daily use on the grounds of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, St. Louis. For several months these have been sending regularly, every day, in all kinds of weather, news matter of the fair to two downtown wireless stations in the newspaper offices without interference, the wireless impulses going through the heart of the business section of the city, through high buildings and low, at the speed of light, which is 186,000 miles a second. This is the speed of all wireless messages. The fair and new feature is wireless telegraphy, and so elaborate the DeForest display, that, as the telephone was to the Centennial, the Louisiana Purchase Exposition is becoming widely known as "The Wireless Fair."

Ten stations of the DeForest Company have already been built along the Atlantic Coast. They are located at Providence, R. I., Quogue, L. I., N. Y., 22 Broadway, N. Y. City, Highlands of New Jersey, Cape May, N. J., Lewes, Del., Hatteras, N. C., Key West, Fla., Havana, and Washington, D. C. The Atlantic DeForest Wireless Telegraph Company, headed by Charles C. Galbraith, formerly Eastern manager for Armour & Co., is preparing to take over these stations from the parent American DeForest Company, and to build at every point of importance along the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts from Maine to Texas.

In the same manner the Great Lakes, Western and English DeForest companies have been and are being organized for operating purposes, the groups being organized on the same principle as the Bell Telephone companies, each company operating separately, exchanging business at points of contact, and presenting an united front for its practically exclusive sea business and competing in many instances with land and cable lines.

It is not proposed to begin the equipment of coast-wise vessels until the circuit of wireless stations are complete. It will then be possible for passengers to keep in touch with business and home, for the owners of any vessel in the coast trade to keep in touch with their captains from port to port; ships will receive storm warnings and "ball time," enabling skippers to regulate their chronometers a thousand miles from shore as well as in land.

On the Central American coast, at Port Limon, C. R., and Boas del Toro, Panama, two DeForest installations have gone away with the old cable ship between these points and wireless communication is kept up day in and day out for months with much less trouble than even would be experienced with land wires. These stations are the property of the United Fruit Company, and are the nucleus for an extensive Central American and Mexican wireless system.

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