CHANGES IN THE DIPLOMATIC CIRCLE OF INTEREST IN WASHINGTON

Capital Sees Many Shifts in Embassies of Foreign Nations—President Harding Celebrates His Fifty-seventh Birthday.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Nov. 4.

WITH a good part of domestic officialdom either gone home to vote, or to get votes, campaigning wherever their party managers thought that they would do the most good in getting others to vote—"and vote right"—interest in Washington is largely centering in our imported society, the gentlemen of the diplomatic corps, and, of course, the ladies of their families. It is a melancholy interest. For now that the corps is settling down to winter quarters one realizes that the summer casualties have been terrific.

Not even the fact that the President celebrated his fifty-seventh birthday last Thursday seemed to make much impression. In fact, while he had a birthday, it is perhaps rather exaggerating to say that he "celebrated." For he spent most of the day at his desk as usual, receiving the usual number of visitors, and having the usual number of conferences, and watching over Mrs. Harding out of one corner of his mind's eye. You see they were a bit worried about Mrs. Harding, she had been doing so well, and then she had—well, it didn't amount to a relapse, but a little bit of a setback, during the cold weather of last week, but it passed away very nicely

Still the President didn't have much of a birthday, especially as compared with his fifty-fifth, when the people of these United States gave him their votes—votes of confidence—in such overwhelming numbers that they landed him in the White House and, incidentally, "a peck"—yea, many pecks—of trouble. It almost seemed as if there was more official cognizance taken in Washington of the birthday of the Mikado last Tuesday than there was of the President's day, though of course the White House was flooded with telegrams and flowers and such tokens of good will. For there was any number of official greetings and assurances of distinguished consideration, from the President's down, cabled to Tokio, and the Charge d'Affaires and Mme. Saburi entertained at luncheon and at dinner in celebration of Yoshihito's birthday—a large luncheon, for members of the embassy staff and other Japanese residents of Washington, and a smaller dinner just for members of the staff.

And at that it was not really the Mikado's birthday—only his official "jour de fete," as it were. For Yoshihito was careless about picking his birthday and arrived on earth in August, an "off season," when the celebrating isn't particularly good. So they decided to have his official birthday in chrysanthemum time, and picked October 31 as better suited to a nationwide celebration.

As already suggested, the interest in the diplomatic corps is rather a melancholy one. The long prophesied "diplomatic upheaval" seems to be upon us. The summer casualties have been terrific, and there is no certainty that the tale is as yet anything like complete. One finds oneself wondering where the lightning will strike next. True, the French Ambassador and Mme. Jusserand are back; the rumors that Jusserand would retire or be retired are for the time being at rest. He and Mme. Jusserand arrived last Saturday, and there are rumors that it is going to take all of the veteran's diplomacy to explain to Uncle Sam just what his country's attitude toward the ship liquor ruling is. One doesn't envy him that little job.

Others Who Return.

Also the Belgian Ambassador and Baroness de Cartier are back, though she has not as yet come down from New York, but there have been no rumors for the last year or more that Baron de Cartier was likely to be transferred. The Swiss Minister and Mme. Peter, and the Swedish Minister and Mme. Wallenberg, have also returned from vacations spent in their respective countries, and it is eminently satisfactory to know they are back, for there are no more popular members of the diplomatic corps, as it is now constituted, than these two couples. And on the same steamer with the Wallenbergs came the former Minister of Poland and Princess Lubomirska, equally as popular in Washington, but apparently not so thoroughly in accord with their own Governments, since they have not come to stay, but to make their permanent adieux.

Moreover, there is a certain uneasiness as to just what effect the change in British Premiers is to have on the British Embassy here—and there are those who do not hesitate to say the Ambassador will resign, as the Italian Ambassador Ricci has done since the Premier under whom he was serving is "out." But while Ricci's resigning affects Washington society very little—not half so much as Celesia's would, for instance—for Ambassador Ricci has been very little in Washington during the almost two years that he has been the titular head of the Italian Embassy, and never made much of a dent on the city's social consciousness (Signora Ricci has never been over at all) both Sir Auckland and Laddy Geddes are personally popular, and there is real dismay at the possibility of losing them.

Still, their friends in Washington may well be borrowing trouble, for they have been in Canada most of this week, having left Washington last Sunday for Ottawa, to visit the Governor-General and Lady Byng there. They took only Mr. Tennant, the Ambassador's private secretary—with them, and got back yesterday or the day before. Apparently they went up partly to make a social call, and partly so that the Ambassador and the Governor-General might select a Canadian Minister to the United States.

Washington had a sort of "hunch" that Ricci would not come back, in spite of continued assurance from the embassy that they fully expected him. There was a feeling that if there was the slightest plausible excuse he would remain in Italy. And the excuse certainly presented itself in the very complete Italian domestic upheaval, which seems to have hit the entire Italian Government below the King.

But when one considers that already there is no Argentine Ambassador, and none has been suggested for probable appointment since Dr. Le Breton went home, after many leavetakings, to be a member of his country's Senate; that the Japanese Ambassador is among those missing, and there has been no Mexican Ambassador for four or five years, although Mexico bought the Franklin McVeagh house about a year ago for use as its embassy, and maintains a sort of skeletonic embassy staff here; and there has been no Turkish Ambassador for at least as long—and is not likely to be one again; that there is no longer a Russian embassy and the capital has seen its last Austrian Ambassador (although diplomatic relations have been resumed Austria has not felt that it could afford a Minister, but has contented itself with a Charge d'Affaires, Mr. Prochnik, who with his charming wife and family of young children are well established in Washington esteem, both officially and socially); that the Minister of the Netherlands, Dr. Everwijn, went home on leave six months ago and announced very soon thereafter that he would not return, but was about to plunge into the maelstrom of "big business"; that the Charge d'Affaires of Panama, "Joe" Lefevre, whom Washington regarded as a fixture and quite one of the family, has been promoted and has gone hence; that the Grouitches are packed and about to start for Serbia, and nobody quite trusts the assurance that the Bibescos are coming back to the Rumanian Legation; that there has been no Greek Minister here for years, and while there are hopes there is as yet no appointment announced, and that the Chinese Minister, Dr. Sze, and his wife are heading across the continent to sail for China on six months' leave—well, really, it does look as if the diplomatic corps was rather undergoing a change, doesn't it?

For, remember, all these are heads of missions, Ambassadors or Ministers, and as yet I have not even mentioned the devastations in the ranks of the subordinate members of embassy and legation staffs. That is equally appalling, but it is expected. It is part of the diplomatic training, the continual shifting of secretaries and attaches of all grades, giving them opportunity to familiarize themselves with the conditions and the point of view of many different countries and educating them to greater utility to their own when they shall in their turn become heads of missions.

In some instances Washington has already made the acquaintance of the new Ministers. The Minister from Panama and his wife are very thoroughly established, and the new Serbian Minister, Dr. Pavichich, has been here for a month or more, and Dr. Grouitch has partially initiated him; and the new Minister of Venezuela—I forgot to mention Dominici, the former Venezuelan Minister, among the casualties. He wrote his President a very spunky letter last spring, telling him that he didn't like the way he was behaving at all, and went off ostensibly for a four months' leave. Naturally there is a new Minister in his place. I believe he is still abroad, and I suppose likely to remain there until Venezuela has its next revolution.

Probable Successors.

As to who will fill the vacant Ambassadorships, there is very little indication. Prince Ishii and Baron Hanihara—it seems to me that they made him a baron as a reward for his services during the Washington conference last winter, though he was plain "Mr." when he was here before—have both been mentioned as possible successors to Shidehara as Japanese Ambassador, and as they are both well known here and well liked would either one of them be assured of a warm welcome. One remembers that when Hanihara was stationed here during—I think it was the Roosevelt regime—one used to hear him alluded to affectionately as "Hanihara Honeyboy." But he was a gay young blade in those days with a beatific smile. Afterward he served as Japanese Consul-General on the Pacific coast, and when he returned for the conference he seemed not merely more serious, but more severe.

Prince Ishii has been here first as head of the Japanese war mission soon after the United States entered the war and later as Ambassador for a short time. He was good looking and genial, and entertained magnificently. Society generally found him charming and was sorry when he was transferred. Probably with both Ishii and Hanhara the wish is father to the thought, for so far as I know there is no real reason to think that they are to have the post. And if good wishes and popularity over here were likely to count for much Saburi, the present counselor and Charge d'Affaires, could scarcely be improved upon. Both he and Mme. Saburi have been very generally liked, and are progressive, and either English or American educated, which helps a good deal in getting the point of view.

For the rest, it is definitely announced that Dr. Wroblewski will succeed Prince Casimir Lubomirski as Polish Minister here, and that Jonkheer Dr. A. D. C. de Graeff, now Minister of the Netherlands to Japan, is to be the next Minister of the Netherlands here. But as to when either of them will come there is nothing like a definite announcement, although the De Graeffs seem likely to get here before the first of the year, about Christmas time. Possibly the announcement of Dr. de Graeff's appointment so long before he could arrange to get here may have been to put a quietus on rumors that kept bobbing up to the effect that that good looking young De Beaufort, who had two terms of service here and was Charge d'Affaires for so long the last time, and even after he had been appointed his country's Minister to Greece was kept here for the conference last winter, at which he was one of his country's delegation, might return as Minister, and yet other rumors that the present counselor and Charge, Dr. Hubrecht, might get the post. That scarcely seemed probable, for it is not in accordance with diplomatic usage to promote a man from counselor to Minister at the same capital. When he is promoted he is usually transferred—as De Beaufort was—and is broken in as Minister in some less important capital, though he may be returned here later, after serving his apprenticeship elsewhere.

Dr. and Mme. Hubrecht, by the way, have spent the summer at Mount Eagle one of the historic old places down near Alexandria, which they had rented for the summer, and liked it so well that they stayed on into the fall. They were still there a week ago, but I suppose they are likely to be getting into town soon, though their new little daughter, they have one not more than a couple of months old, was thriving so down there that they rather hated to bring her in to Washington.

Jonkheer de Graeff and his family seem likely to be a distinct addition to Washington, which met them very briefly, in 1918 when they passed through Washington on their way from the Orient to Holland. They had with them at that time only their younger children, the elder girls having been sent home in advance of their parents. They have four girls and a young son. Their eldest daughter is married to a young Dutch officer, at present Military Attache of the Netherlands Legation at Tokyo, and two of the others of an age to be interesting additions socially to the diplomatic corps, one already out, and the other of debutante age. Those who met the family as they passed through four years ago remember them as quite charming. Jonkheer de Graeff was then president of the council in Dutch East India, a position second only to that of governor general, and Mme. de Graeff was the daughter of a former governor general. Dr. de Graeff worked his way up to his important post through the various grades of the Dutch Colonial service and had about reached the top when he came home, four years ago. He was rather young to have traveled so far, as he is now not more than forty-seven or forty-eight. He stayed at home for a year, and was then appointed Minister to Japan.

Both Dr. and Mme. de Graeff speak English fluently—in fact all educated Netherlanders do—and they are both persons of culture and charm and wide social experience. And they will have the fun of being the first to occupy the residential quarters in the fine new legation building at Fifteenth and Euclid streets, on the edge of what is coming to be regarded as the diplomatic center of Washington. It is quite a remarkable building, and neither trouble nor expense has been spared to make it quite the last word in elegance and convenience. The offices have been in use for some time, and it had been expected that when Dr. Everwijn returned to Washington early last spring (it was about the first of March), bringing his wife with him, they would take possession and fit it up. But it wasn't quite ready, and Mme. Everwijn didn't seem at all inclined to hasten things. She made no secret of the fact that she didn't at all like the idea of living in Washington, and had no intention of trying to accommodate herself and be contented here. So they remained at Wardman Park, and the business of getting the legation ready for residential occupancy did not make very rapid progress.

It is ready now, however. They had a lovely party there Tuesday night, when Dr. and Mme. Hubrecht and members of the legation staff were hosts. It was a delightfully impromptu Hallowe'en party, celebrating on Dutch soil—the embassies and legations are always foreign soil, you know—a typically American feast, in a typically American fashion. Jack o' lanterns peeped out from unexpected places; the decorations were those of the season, and good old fashioned Hallowe'en games were played. It was the merriest sort of a party, except that it was a farewell as well as a housewarming, for Dr. and Mme. Andreae, who have been here long enough to make many warm friends, are leaving soon for New York. It was the first function to be given in the new legation, and, indeed, the first time that the residential part of the building has been opened. Besides being a housewarming and a farewell and a Hallowe'en party it was in a way a party in honor of three distinguished Dutchmen who were special guests, Mr. Kelage and Mr. Warnaar of Haarlem, both of them bulb experts, and Mr. Louis Keller of New York, a commission sent here to consult with our horticultural authorities of the Department of Agriculture, on the question of the importation of Dutch bulbs

Before I get away from the diplomats and begin to tell you about other Hallowe'en celebrations—for Washington was certainly gay Tuesday night—and other distinguished visitors let me tell you what I have been able to learn about Dr. and Mme. Wroblewski, who are to replace the Lubomirskis. It isn't going to be easy to fill the Lubomirskis' place. People liked them so much, and it does seem too bad that they have not returned to stay. They are cultured, of course, and as simple and unaffected and friendly as possible—splendid examples of the very genuine democracy which is possible to genuine aristocracy—each of them being descended from a long line of princely ancestors, and yet with a graciousness and approachability which endeared them to every one. It was understood when they went home last spring that it was "for keeps." It was even announced that Prince Sapieha, whose wife is a niece of Prince Lubomirski, would succeed him as Polish Minister. For a long time nothing happened, and then apparently Sapieha was side tracked and Washington delighted to hear that the Lubomirskis were returning. But that proved a mistake—at least they were only returning for long enough to get permanently away. And Dr. Wroblewski, who has been serving as Minister in London, is coming over, "probably in a few weeks now." Really nobody seems to know much about them. Mme. Kwapiszewska, wife of the Polish Charge d'Affaires, has met them and says they are charming. Mme. Wroblewska young and pretty, and that they are likely to be lively and gay and entertain and "go" a good deal—people who like society and are used to it. Apprently they have no children.

Probably really the most distinguished visitor in town has been Dr. Solf, who has been visiting the German Ambassador and Mme. Wiedfeldt. Not long ago Dr. Solf himself was rather prominently mentioned as under consideration as a possible German Ambassador to these United States, and for a while during the first year of the war he was Chancellor of the German Empire. Now he is on his way to Japan to be the Ambassador of the German Republic there. Times certainly have changed!

His visiting there, and the fact that the German debt commission—or rather reparations commission—has arrived, has rather directed attention to the once familiar German Embassy on Highland Terrace, overlooking Massachusetts avenue, and to the fact that it is no longer a bachelor menage. Dr. Weidfeldt when he returned to this country in September, brought with him his wife and son, the latter rather a pleasant looking chap, very German, bespectacled and studious looking, but quite human. I'm told that he was rather addicted to the bicycle and did Washington rather thoroughly on his wheel. He was not here long, however, as he had arranged to enter one of the middle Western State universities and take courses in agriculture and economics.

Mme. Weidfeldt has been very busy putting her house in order. She seems to be a modern Martha, worried about many things, a quiet, sensible looking woman and probably a typical German hausfrau. It is understood that she is planning a reception for the diplomatic corps and expects to make the usual round of official calls, but she has been rather held up by the non-arrival of certain of her personal belongings, which are supposed to be lost in New York. She hasn't felt ready to plunge into the fray.

The Embassy has been completely furnished except the ballroom, which I believe the Weidfeldts have no intention of equipping for the present. Dr. Weidfeldt is said to be a wealthy man, but he and his wife have a sense of the fitness of things, and do not think it would be in good taste for the Embassy to permit itself any extravagance in the present financial stress of Germany. But the drawing rooms of the Embassy must be suitably furnished, of course, and their equipment will be of tremendous interest to visitors, if all one hears of them is true. It is said that their furnishings were shipped from Berlin and were part of the Imperial furnishings of one of the city palaces of the Hohenzollern family there. "The curtains," one is told, "are of pale green brocade, bordered with deep insets of gorgeous tapestry, while the chairs, lounges, tables and smaller pieces of furniture have heavily carved gilt frames and pale green brocaded cushions and upholstery, from which the Hohenzollern arms have been removed." I'm told that the rugs and carpets are marvelous old pieces from Persian looms, probably a century or two old, but wonderfully preserved, and that Mme. Weidfeldt, who has traveled all over the world with her husband in the old days, has some wonderful curios—panels, screens, bric-a-brac, &c., collected during a four years' residence in Japan, which will in due time be installed in the Embassy. It seems that they had been engaged in industrial investigation in China and Japan, and were in Tokio in 1914, and feeling that they had earned a long vacation, sailed for San Francisco and were actually in America, on the West coast, sightseeing in a leisurely way when the war broke, and in September spent several days in Washington. It seems almost impossible that they should not have realized what was happening in Europe, but apparently they did not. Mme. Weidfeldt is a type of the home loving German matron, absorbed in the problems of her home. And Dr. Weidfeldt was at that time simply a wealthy German gentleman, a man of affairs without training in diplomacy or international matters, but a student of social questions and of political economy. There will be a good deal of interest, and not a little curiosity, in the reentrance of the German Embassy into the social life of Washington, where of yore it played a not inconsiderable part.

Outside of the Germans, of the distinguished visitors in town, in a way the most interesting is L. A. Coromilas, who is at the Shoreham and is entertaining and being entertained in a quiet way. He is an old friend returned—for he was Minister of Greece here for several years, about ten years ago—and he married Anna Cockrell, daughter of Senator Cockrell—generally regarded as a "real Washington girl" since she had practically grown up here during the years that her father was serving in the Senate. And the chief interest attached to his presence here just now is the suggestion that he is likely to again be Greek Minister here. Just now Greece is a bit too upset to be sending Ministers. She is absorbed in things that are happening to her at home, but Mr. Coromilas would certainly be warmly welcomed, should he return here, either officially or unofficially. Another old friend returned is Prince de Bearn—formerly counselor of the French Embassy here, who has been in this country about a month and is now in Washington for a short visit.

On Way to China

Mme. S. Alfred Sze, wife of the Chinese Ambassador, who is accompanying her husband on a trip to the Orient.

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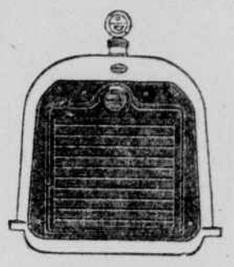

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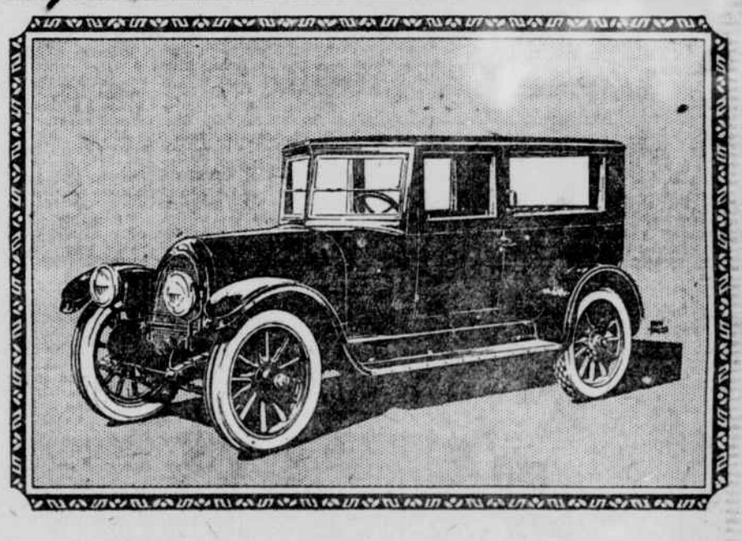

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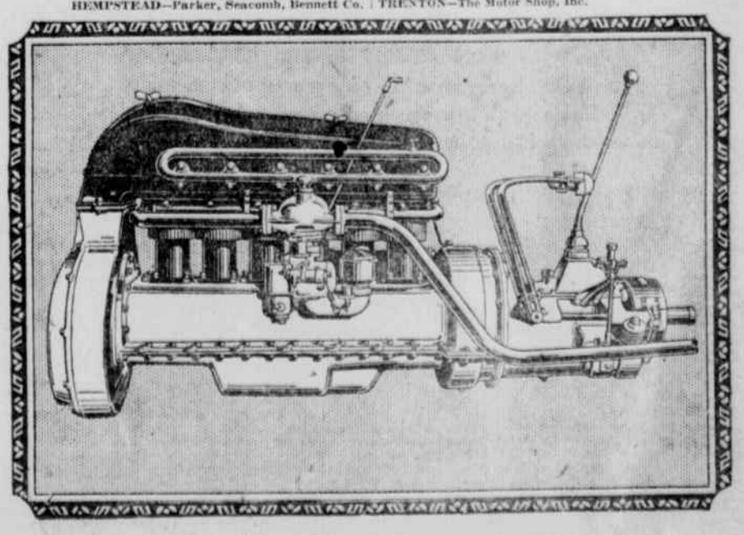

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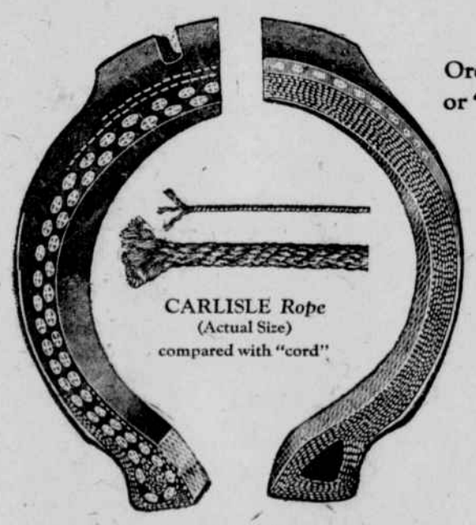

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