Mystery of the Sea Serpent---No Longer Butt of Science

BY FRANK G. CARPENTER.

Panama City, Panama.

COME with me for a peep under the crust of old Panama of a Saturday night. We shall leave the Tivoli Hotel, where every thing is proper and pious and the fashionable world is a-dancing, and go off into the byways and slums. We want to see the poor of the city, and also take a look at some districts where vice carries on its mad spree until the wee hours of the morning. We shall choose the Saturday that comes after pay day, and shall have abundant reason to say why Uncle Sam should control both Panama and Colon, the two towns at the ends of our ditch.

In New Caledonia.

We begin our walk in New Caledonia. At the Tivoli the charges are $5 a day. New Caledonia is only a stones throw away, but you can get a bed there for twenty-five cents a night, or you may have a room at $10 a month and crowd ten other persons inside it. New Caledonia is made up of such rooms. They are filled with Jamaica negroes. A single room will often house a whole family and take in boarders to boot. Some of the best rooms have curtains across them that the females may have privacy while dressing, but as a rule the negroes nest like rabbits in a warren and dirt reigns supreme.

On Saturday nights these West Indian quarters are alive. There are dances in the saloons and out in the streets. There is the tamboureta, with black and yellow men and women going through motions similar to those of the Gewazi in Egypt. Other negro dances remind me of the Nautch girls of India or the Ouled nails of the Sahara; and there are some which compare with the hoche-kooche of the South seas. The negroes are dressed in their best, and they go through their armorous postures with wild abandon, which is unsurpassed even by the bunny hug or the turkey trot of our wicked New York. They grow more and more noisy as the night goes on, and by 12 o'clock the whole of Caledonia is mad. This is on Saturday. It is more quiet on other nights of the week.

Night Life in Panama City.

Leaving Caledonia we take carriages for a drive through Panama, visiting first the more respectable quarters. The houses here have balconies which run out from the second stories over the streets. The richer people live upstairs and these balconies form the sitting and gossiping places of the better classes during the evening. In the stories below, where a whole family may have but one room, the people come out on the sidewalks and sit on the doorsteps or curbstones taking the air. The streets are filled with such figures. They form two lines of humanity, one on the street and the other in the balconies above.

Some of the people are chatting. Some are playing cards. Here and there the thumping of a piano falls on the ear, and the graphophone with its rusty shriek slaughters the air. The most of the groups on the balconies are family parties. Nice girls are not allowed to have young men courting them, and the lover talks with his sweetheart only in the presence of the family and must do all of his spooning under the eyes of his possible parents-in-law. These scenes, however, are Spanish, and they are much the same as those of Spanish cities anywhere in the world.

A Look at the Slums.

We shall now leave the respectable quarters of Panama and visit those of which vice is the queen. We shall not have to go far, for the wicked sections are in the heart of the city and their signs are so plain they can be read on the run. You have heard of Port Said and Suez, the two bad towns at the ends of the Suez Canal. Rudyard Kipling has defined them as the place where the Ten Commandments come to an end.

"Take me somewhere east of Suez,
Where the best is like the worst
Where there ain't no Ten Commandments.
And you've not to raise a thirst."

I do not know just how bad Suez is, but you can see more wickedness in a day here than in a week at Port Said. In the cities of the Suez Canal the vices are hidden. The streets are quiet, and there are no signs and advertisements to attract the passers by.

At Panama the slum quarters are as open as is the Yoshiwara of Japan. One of the worst sections is not far from the cathedral and in the very heart of the city. It is known as the red light district, and the light is electricity filtered through glass as crimson as blood. There are great square red lanterns, with incandescent bulbs inside them, painted with the names of the special resorts they represent. Here, for instance, is "Fannie's Place," farther on "The French House," and in the next block is "La Perla de Pacifico," or "The Pearl of the Pacific."

Now stop your carriage before one of these gilded houses and take a look through the half-open door. The lower floor at the front is a saloon. You can see the bottles in the bar at the back, while at the windows and in the door looking out upon the streets are little girls with painted faces and gaudy clothes. Most of them are mere children, fifteen, sixteen and seventeen years of age, and they are dressed to look younger. Their skirts reach just to their knees, and they look as though they should put on their nighties and be tucked away in their beds.

The great majority of these girls are French. They are white slaves who have been smuggled into Panama through Costa Rica or other Central American ports and brought down here in boats to Panama Bay in such a way that the jurisdiction of our zone is avoided.

White Slaves From France.

I went into one of these houses with a policeman who had a summons to serve upon the matron. She was charged with being a white slave trader and with having brought several girl slaves through the Canal Zone.

I must say that she looked it. She was a brazen-faced French woman of about thirty-five, and in the room with her were half a dozen little chits of from fifteen to seventeen, who were probably the slaves she had smuggled. They could speak but little English, and were French from their toes to their crowns. They danced about the room while we stayed. At the same time other girls of similar ages were flirting with some men on the opposite side of the room, and at the table one drank beer with a Spaniard.

As I looked, the policeman said: "These girls are real slaves, and they are treated like slaves. They look very gay now in their jewels and fine dresses, but these jewels and dresses they are allowed to use only at night. During the day they put on common clothing and take care of the house, scrubbing and cleaning. The matron keeps them in debt, and they are so afraid of her that they do not dare to leave."

I don't know how many houses of this kind there are in Panama and Colon, but the number is large, and it is steadily increased by recruits from France and Southeastern Europe. The houses are licensed by the two cities. It is claimed that they are under medical supervision and that the girls are older than they look. I asked one of them whether she had yet passed fifteen. She mockingly replied that she was sixty-five, and danced away, swinging her bare arms around her head and kicking her red, silk-stockinged toe almost to the height of my nose.

The government is doing all it can to restrict the white slave traffic and to reduce the vice of the Panama cities. It has done wonders, and were it not for our influence in such matters things would be worse than they are. I believe that the morality among the white employes of the canal is far better than could be found in such a camp anywhere else. The canal has many good American women, and they and the Young Men's Christian Association clubhouses have done much to build up a high moral tone among the employes.

In the Opium Dens.

Leaving the red-light section, I visited some of the licensed opium dens. They are managed by the Chinese and are exceedingly rude. The beds are mere platforms made of boards, running along the sides of narrow halls. Upon these wooden bunks I found men and women lying with opium outfits before them. Some were hitting the pipe and others were sleeping off the effects of the drug. Some of the smokers were Colombians, a few were negroes and some were Chinese. I did not see a single American, although I am told that some are to be found among the patrons, and that even American women have come to the joints. I doubt this. I have seen the opium saloons of Shanghai and Canton. They are grand in comparison with these at Panama, but the glazed eyes and dreamy looks of the smokers are the same.

A City of Caves.

The average visitor to the canal leaves Panama City knowing nothing about it. If you would understand how these people really live you must get inside the houses and examine the caves which form the homes of the poor.

Panama is a queer city. It is one in which a hundred or more families have all the money, and where the remaining thousands earn only enough to keep soul and body together. The average family of the lower classes sleep in a cave on the first floor; or if on the second, it is over a store, and the whole family will have but one room. There are thousands of families here, each of which has only one room, and this is so small that the cooking is done in a common hall outside it. The kitchen stove is a pot of charcoal put inside a box to keep off the wind, the box being nailed to the fence or post of the veranda.

Most of these cave-homes have no windows, being ventilated by an opening which runs around the tops of the walls under the ceiling. There is no plaster nor paper. The walls are of boards, painted or not, as the landlord may order.

I am having my films developed by a photographer here whose studio is at the top of a three-story frame building. He tells me that there are more than a thousand men, women and children in his building, and that there are altogether something like two or three hundred rooms, each housing a family.

I have looked into some of the rooms. They are as dark as a pocket and the smoke from the cooking in the halls outside has turned their walls black. Some of the rooms are about ten feet square. They have no ventilation except at the doors.

That building is a fire-trap. It is all wood excepting the roof, which is of galvanized iron. I tremble at the possible loss in case of a fire.

I asked my photographer as to the rents, and was told that they are from $7 to $10 per room per month in gold. Similar rates prevail in the Jamaica negro quarters in New Caledonia, which I described at the beginning of this letter. The rents here are so high and the building so cheap that many structures pay in rents every year the cost of the land and the building. This is likewise so in Colon. There is one caravansary known as the Coal Chute, which has 100 rooms. It is said to have paid the cost of its erection within fourteen months.

The Cave Stores of Panama.

It is interesting to look at the cave stores of the Isthmus. They are mere holes in the wall about ten feet square and perhaps eight feet in height. They have no windows, facing the street, and the door alone gives the light. Often one of these little storerooms will be the home of the family which keeps it. It is a store or workshop in the daytime and a sleeping place after dark.

As to work, the idea prevails at home that these Panamanians are lazy. I do not find them so. Some kind of house industry is going on everywhere. In one little shop shoemakers will be pounding away. In another the women and girls are making lace, while farther on are cigarmakers, carpenters and blacksmiths. Much of the work is done out on the sidewalks. I see many women sewing on the edge of the street, and the tailors bring their chairs out to the roadway and stitch in the sun. The most common store is the petty saloon. Drinks are sold everywhere, and there are scores of fruit stores and groceries.

The Lottery Business.

There is one thing which employes more people in Panama City perhaps than any other, and that is the lottery. Its tickets are sold by men, women and children on every block of Panama and Colon. It is against the law to sell them on our Canal Zone, but the lottery peddlers roost about the railroad stations and accost the workmen as they pass through. They do a great business with the negroes and not a little with the Americans. The grand prize is $15,000 in silver and in addition there is $17,000 of other prizes the grand prize has been drawn several times by Americans, but in most cases it has done little good, the money being spent in riotous living.

The Panama lottery belongs to a man named Gabriel Duque, a naturalized American who came here from Cuba. He owns also the Star and Herald, one of the chief newspapers of the Isthmus, and he is, I am told, a man of wealth. He pays the Panama republic for the license to run the lottery, and his profits from it amount to something like $50,000 a year. The drawings are held every Sunday, and a little girl picks out the balls containing the blanks and the prizes. This lottery is a great evil to Panama and the drain of it is mostly on the poor who buy tickets and parts of tickets even when they must go hungry in consequence.

Bullfights.

Panama has a bullring outside the city, and bullfights take place every Sunday whenever there are any bullfighters here on their way from Spain to Lima, Peru, or Mexico City.

The bulls, however, are not dangerous, and the sport is usually a fraud and a fiasco. I have seen some of these fights, and at one time watched a score of Panama boys rush into the ring and have a hand-to-hand fight with the bull. This was to get a ten-dollar gold piece which had been tied to the horns of the bull. Each man had a red blanket, which he tried to throw over the bull's eyes, in order that he might grab at the gold. Several of the boys were badly injured, but one of them finally got the ten dollars.

Changes in Panama.

In the meantime, notwithstanding these blots upon its escutcheon, Panama City is far better off than it has been in the past. I first visited it in 1898, fourteen years ago, when on my way around South America. The city was then one of vile smells. It had no sewerage, and the wells and cesspools were side by side in the courts. Business was dead, and the barefooted cabmen slept in their shabby old coaches. To-day the town is alive. It has modern improvements. It has water works and all sanitary conveniences. Outside the lottery peddlers there are no beggars whatever. Every one of the better classes rides about in carriages, and there are victorias for hire at every street corner which will take you on the trot or the lope from one part of the town to the other. These victorias have dinner gongs underneath at the front, so that they can be rung by the foot of the driver, and there is a continual belling going on.

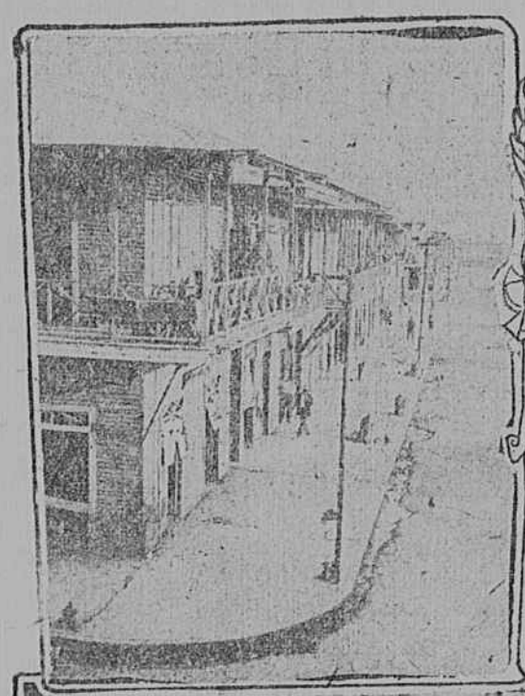
The New City.

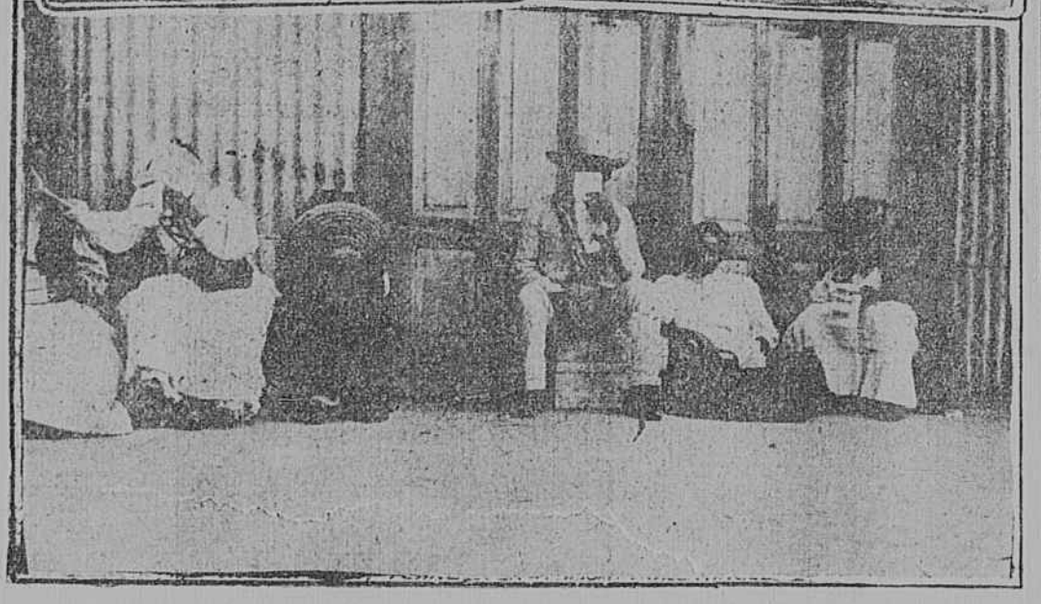
It was during my second visit here that Uncle Sam took hold of Panama and made it sanitary. He dug up the streets, put in sewers and a water supply, and paved the main streets with vitrified brick. He did the same with Colon, and you will not find two towns in the tropics which have as good streets as these.

Both places are growing. There are new houses on almost every block, and the Avenida Central, which runs from the plaza to the railroad station, at the end of Ancon, is lined with houses and stores all the way. They are Panama stores, and some of them carry large stocks of goods. They are nothing like our business establishments, and some are more like the general store which you find at a country cross-roads or in villages.

In the centre of Panama are many fine buildings. The National Palace and theatre cost something like three-quarters of a million dollars, and the Panamanians will tell you that the theatre is the finest in the world. This is doubtful. Nevertheless, it has sitting and standing room for 1,600, and a fireproof metal drop curtain which is wonderfully made. The new city hall, facing the plaza, not far from the cathedral, is another large building, and a third is the national institute, devoted to education. The institute cost a million pesos or more, and it will, in time, develop into a university. At present it has about 300 students, ranging from those of the kindergarten to those in the college. These buildings are only a part of what the country has to show for the $10,000,000 it received from Uncle Sam at the time of the settlement as to the Panama Canal.

(Copyright, 1912, by Frank G. Carpenter.)

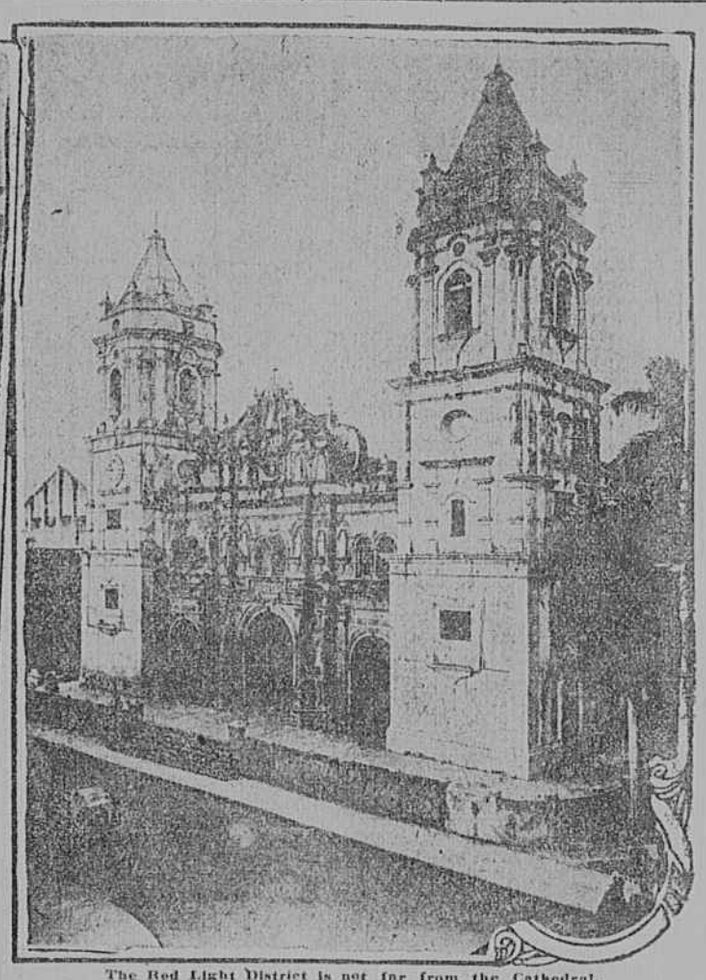




In New Caledonia, where a dozen people sleep in a room and single rooms rent for $10 a month.

The Panama Lottery, where the drawings are held upon Sunday.

Lottery peddlers roost about the railway station. These people were evidently ashamed of their job, for they covered their faces when I took my snapshot.



The Red Light District is not far from the Cathedral.

FRECKLES

Don't Hide Them With a Veil; Remove Them With the New Drug.

An eminent skin specialist recently discovered a new drug, othine—double strength—which is so uniformly successful in removing freckles and giving a clear, beautiful complexion that it is sold by Tragle Drug Co. under an absolute guarantee to refund the money if it fails.

Don't hide your freckles under a veil; get an ounce of othine and remove them. Even the first night's use will show a wonderful improvement, some of the lighter freckles vanishing entirely. It is absolutely harmless, and cannot injure the most tender skin.

Be sure to ask Tragle Drug Co. for the double strength othine; it is this that is sold on the money back guarantee.

Hamilton Watch History

The first Hamilton Timekeeper was begun in the early spring of the year 1892 and completed late in the fall of the same year. The fourth Hamilton Timekeeper to be made was purchased by Mr. Edwin Paul, a conductor on the Pennsylvania railroad, and if you were to ride from Philadelphia to Harrisburg, Pa., to-day on Mr. Paul's train you would be running on the time of that same Hamilton Timekeeper.

The Hamilton Timekeeper was originally a railroad watch made for the use of railroad men.

Now every business man who appreciates an absolutely accurate timekeeper may have a

Hamilton Watch

Let us sell you one. $15.00 up.

Smith & Webster

Time Specialists,
612 East Main Street.

One lot of 25c Hard Rubber Combs, 17c at

Tragle's

ALTAVISTA

[Special to The Times-Dispatch.]

Altavista, Va., August 10.—Misses Pauline Lane and Ambler Bobbett spent over Sunday at Lynch Station, guests of Miss Margaret Douglas.

Miss Kizzie Bray is visiting her invalid mother and other relatives at Crutchfield, N. C.

Miss Roxie Tyree, who has been attending the summer normal at Farmville, returned to her home at Lynch Station, Saturday.

Mrs. E. B. Harris and two sons left Tuesday for a two week's visit with her parents at Keswick.

Professor R. H. Thornton, of South Hill, is spending a few days with his uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. W. E. M. Thornton, on Bedford Avenue.

Misses Lucille and Gladys English, of Leesville, were guests of Miss Nellie Carr last Friday.

Miss Pattie Hinfield, of Sedley, who has been visiting Mr. and Mrs. W. E. M. Thornton on Bedford Avenue, left Monday for her home.

W. H. Staples, of Roseland, Nelson County, arrived here Saturday to spend some time at the home of R. H. L. Johnson during the latter's absence in North Carolina.

Miss Sallie Drinkard, who has been visiting at the home of her sister, Mrs. C. W. Beasley, on Broad Street, left Sunday for her home in Appomattox County. She was accompanied as far as Lynchburg by Mr. and Mrs. Beasley.

R. H. Urquhheart, of Durham, N. C., spent Thursday and Friday here visiting relatives and friends. He was accompanied home by his aunt, Mrs. M. N. Moorman, who will visit relatives for a few days.

GORDONSVILLE

[Special to The Times-Dispatch.]

Gordonsville, Va., August 10.—The Misses Meredith, of Harrisburg, Ky., are guests at "Monteith," the home of Mr. and Mrs. M. D. Cowherd, Sr. Later they will spend some time at Oak Hill and in visiting their many relatives in Virginia.

Mrs. Bond and her daughters, Misses Ada and Mamie Bond, of Petersburg, are guests at "Springfields." Mrs. Bond, who met with a painful accident on Sunday by falling downstairs, is much improved.

The Junior German Club was entertained at "Springfields" on Tuesday evening. A number of out of town visitors were present, who added to the pleasure of the occasion. Among the guests were Mrs. A. H. Scally, U. S. N.; Misses Meredith Ada Bond, Nannie Bond, Mrs. N. T. Cowherd, Misses Katharine Scott, Deane Scott, Marian Scott, Homassell Graves, Martha Graves, Addie Cowherd, Irene Goodloe, Julia Goodloe, Marshall Buckner, Agnes Sampson, Lindsey Coleman, John Graves, Herndon Cowherd, Thomas Sampson, L. C. Graves, Jr., R. G. Cowherd, Mr. Patterson, Beverley Parrish, Richmond; S. F. McElroy, Mr. Spencer and Mr. Whitehead.

Mr. and Mrs. N. T. Cowherd and little Miss Virginia and Master Tom Cowherd arrived at "Springfields" on Saturday for the remainder of the summer.

Mrs. Allen Potts and Thomas Rives Potts returned from Charlottesville on Friday, where they attended the horse show.

Mr. and Mrs. James P. Flewellen were Sunday guests at "Lower Springfields."

Captain and Mrs. Wambersie were guests of their daughter, Mrs. W. W. Osborne, this week.

Miss Addie Cowherd returned from Fredericksburg on Saturday, where she has been a student for the last six weeks at the normal school.

Miss Katharine Scott returned home on Saturday. Miss Scott has been a teacher in the summer normal, Charlottesville. She will visit relatives at Millford, and Somerset this week.

DURING THE LONG SCHOOL SEASON

A SCHOOLHOUSE without a telephone would seem strangely isolated in these days of constant communication.

Parents know that the school is always within call and this knowledge gives them a sense of security and comfort.

The Bell Telephone carries the same confidence into all the relations of life. Your friends are brought within reach of your voice by the universal service of the Bell System.

One great advantage of the Bell Telephone is its readiness to serve your sudden and unexpected needs.

Are YOU a subscriber?

SOUTHERN BELL TEL. & TEL. COMPANY OF VIRGINIA.

Every Bell Telephone is the Center of the System. 6

ing the guests. The house decorations were in exquisite taste, and the lawn was lighted with Japanese lanterns, placed artistically about the spacious grounds, presenting a scene of rare beauty. Refreshments were served on the lawn, and, as usual, Miss Daniel's reception was voted among the most delightful social events of Weldon.

Misses May and Aileen Hill, of South Boston, Va., who have been visiting Mrs. J. L. Shepherd in South Weldon, have returned home.

Mrs. E. J. Joyner and Mrs. A. S. Joyner, of Franklinton, are the guests of Mrs. T. C. Harrison.

Mrs. M. A. Grigg and Mrs. Ella Thacker, of Petersburg, are the guests of Mr. and Mrs. T. S. Jones.

Mrs. G. Roettger and daughter, Miss Dorothy, of Petersburg, who have been spending some time with Mrs. W. L. Scott, have returned home.

Misses Ruth Williams and Gertrude Freeman, of Portsmouth, have been spending the week with Miss Susie Parker.

Misses Mary B. Sledge and Mae Spencer left Thursday for Asheville, where they will spend a month.

Miss Laura Powers and Miss Ida Sledge left Thursday for Panacea Springs, to spend two weeks.

Mrs. W. J. Ward and Master David Jackson Ward have returned from Ocean View, Va.

Mrs. A. B. Southall and granddaughter, Miss Seeless Southall, are spending some time with relatives at Hampton, Va.

Mrs. S. A. Ruth and daughter, Miss Gladys, are spending the month of August at Lincolnton.

Mrs. Ida V. Stainback has returned home from a visit to Greenville, S. C.

ASHEVILLE

[Special to The Times-Dispatch.]

Asheville, N. C., August 10.—One of the most delightful dances of the season was given in the ballroom of the Swannanoa-Berkeley Hotel Monday night, by the members of the Asheville Alumni Chapter of the Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity. About 150 guests were present at the ball, and the affair proved a very brilliant one. The ballroom was decorated with bunting of red and purple, the fraternity's colors, and numerous fraternity and college pennants were suspended from the walls. A feature of the decorations was the large vari-colored heart, in the middle of the ballroom. The heart is the emblem of the fraternity, and in one of the figures, the dancers made the design.

Miss Hulda Hautemer was the hostess to about a dozen of her friends Tuesday afternoon at a "five hundred" party, which was arranged in honor of Miss Bertha Crum, of Fort Deposit, Ala. The home was decorated with golden glow, palms and ferns and cut flowers. At the conclusion of the playing the winners were awarded handsome prizes and refreshments were served.

Mrs. Jesse J. Yates was at home to a large number of Asheville women Tuesday night, when she entertained in honor of Miss Sara Simms Graves, of Wilson, N. C.; Miss Susie Warren and Miss Mattie King, of Greensboro, N. C. Mrs. Yates's home was handsomely decorated for the occasion in numerous potted plants and cut-flowers and tea was served by Miss Elizabeth Porter, who was assisted by Miss Mabel Cooper and Miss Pauline Moore.

At her home on Furman Avenue Saturday afternoon, Miss Josephine Carr entertained about twenty of the members of the younger set at a "five hundred" party, which proved a very delightful affair.

In honor of her cousin, Miss Eleanor Harris, of Wilmington, N. C.; Miss Helen Meares gave a "cubical hearts" party Friday evening. The house was tastily decorated for the occasion. The prizes were won by Miss Edna Baxter and Robert Baxter.

Dr. S. W. Fountain gave a dinner Sunday evening at the Mountain Meadows Inn, in honor of Mrs. Arthur Williford, of Raleigh, who is spending the summer here. The guests drove to the inn late in the afternoon and returned to the city after dinner had been served. The guests were Mrs. Williford, Miss Medora Duncan, Miss Mary Bonebrake, Miss Mildred Beall, Miss Helen Knox Spain, Miss Frances Fountain, Turner Fitton, J. M. Strong and Francis Gilman.

Miss Margaret Millendor entertained in a most delightful manner Friday afternoon in honor of her house guest, Miss Ruth Cresch, of Greensboro, N. C., and Miss Helen McCuller, of Atlanta, and Miss Sadie Lipscomb, of Gaffney, S. C., who are the guests of Miss Frances Oates.

Miss Frances Oates's cotillion at the Battery Park Hotel Thursday evening, which was arranged in honor of her guests, was a very delightful affair, being largely attended. The ballroom of the Battery Park was used for the event, and the dancers enjoyed themselves until the early morning hours.

Mrs. Sarah Sebles, of Columbia, S. C., who is spending the summer here gave a bridge party Thursday evening in the green room of the Battery Park Hotel, to a number of her Asheville friends and guests at the hotel.

WELDON

[Special to The Times-Dispatch.]

Weldon, N. C., August 10.—Miss Jeannette Daniel was hostess at delightful reception given at the home of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Walter E. Daniels, Thursday evening, from 9 till 12 o'clock, in honor of her guest, Miss Myra Vann, of Edenton. Miss Daniel was assisted by the honoree in receiv-

How Can [illegible] Work Through the Long Hot Summer?

Thousands are saying this.

If you have to toil and swelter away in the hot city, remember that

THE TOXINS OF FATIGUE ARE IN THE BLOOD.

If you can't take a vacation, take

MILAM
FOR GOOD BLOOD

It is the next best thing to fresh air and rest for the hot, tired worker. It will give your body, nerves and brain strength to stand the heat. It will remove the fiery acids from your blood.

"Milam is better than a trip to the springs."—Geo. B. Crater, Greensboro.

"Milam is a splendid body-builder, and has relieved me of acid in my system."—Mrs. S. E. Keck, Danville, Va.

"This is the first spring and summer I have enjoyed in years, thanks to Milam."—Miss Winnifred Poston, Roanoke, Va.

MILAM BENEFITS OVER 98 PER CENT. OF THOSE WHO TAKE IT. (ACTUAL RECORDS.)

Ask your druggist.