

FINLAND and the FINNS

WASHINGTON GOSSIP

Visitor of Importance Spends a Day in the House



WASHINGTON.—It didn't make a bit of difference to Benjamin Oswald Johnson, aged six, what was going on around his little head the other afternoon. He was busy with his own devices? This young Ben Johnson stumbled around the floor of the House of Representatives, while the real Ben Johnson, from Kentucky, and other legislators and statesmen thundered and argued over the legislative, executive and judicial appropriation bill.

Little Ben is one of the five children of Representative Joseph Johnson of South Carolina. He kept the House of Representatives amused from noon until 4:39 o'clock p. m., when the gavel fell for adjournment. Ben appeared on the house floor at noon dressed in a dark blue sailor suit. His father had troubles of his own, for he is in charge of the legislative bill, and Representative Fowler, with his loudest voice, was out

after the scalps of several of the items in that bill. While Representative Fowler was being replied to by Representative Johnson, Little Ben was playing tag around his father's legs, going in and out between them in most marvelous fashion.

Young Ben interviewed pretty nearly every member of the house. He didn't wait for an introduction, but clambered right into the laps of the country's law makers. From the Democratic side he would hop to the Republican end of the chamber and pull out the watches of his father's dearest political foes, "just to hear the wheels tick." Uncle Joe Cannon contributed to Ben's war chest to the extent of a silver coin, and at the end of the day Ben's fists were bulging with nickels, dimes and quarters, which had been pressed upon him by admiring friends. He leaned against Representative Mann of Illinois while that statesman was shooting sharply pointed parliamentary arrows at Ben's own father. The little boy gazed calmly into the face of Representative Sereno Payne as the great tariff expert appeared to be sleeping peacefully at his desk. He rolled upon the middle aisle and forced Representative Ollie James to step over him, while the child himself was unmindful of the gigantic figure passing over him.

Strange Sounds Come from Smithsonian Building

IF you are passing across the front of the Smithsonian Institution at midnight and hear strange cries coming from the Byzantine, Norman or rounded Gothic towers, buttresses, battlements, groined arches and cornices, keep your nerve. The moon may be floating through the southern sky. Now it will be hidden under dense cloud masses, and then it will burst through the black mist and cast its silver sheen over the heavens and the earth. Against all this, the long red sandstone buildings, dark but for a watchman's lamp in the central vestibule, will be submitted. It looks gloomy and lonesome. One almost feels the damp and stagnant vapor that would rise from the moat around it, if a moat were there.

You can reassure yourself that you are not in the depths of a haunted forest and before some dismal medieval castle by looking northward to catch the glitter of the lights in the post office tower or by listening to the purr and soft ripple of the fountain not far removed from the northwest corner of the building. The sounds that have stopped you, and it may be, chilled you, come from



—not mortals—but from bats. There are many of these aberrant insectivora or flying mammals, family gallopithecidae, order of chiroptera, in the shadowy nooks of the Smithsonian building.

Satisfied that no harm is near, you fall to thinking of James Smithson's bequest of 1826; of James Renwick, the designer of this building, the first of its style not ecclesiastic, to be reared in the United States; your glance goes up to the top of the tallest tower 145 feet above the asphalt, all strewn with dead leaves, and your mind goes back to the time when President Polk and his cabinet and hundreds of proud men, now dust, attended the cornerstone laying in 1847.

Cigarette Smoking Under Ban of Censorship



CIGARETTE smoking by women has come under the ban of censorship by society women in Washington, who are leading a crusade against smoking and drinking in the social set at the capital.

Mrs. William H. Haywood, who put herself on record several years ago, when she served only grape juice at the debutante ball of her daughter, Miss Doris Haywood, is one of the leaders in the anti-cigarette movement, and is said to not permit women to smoke in her house.

Mrs. Levi Z. Leiter, who many think is to be the social leader in place of the late Mrs. John R. McLean, has also declared her willingness to aid the crusaders against feminine cigarette smoking.

Mrs. John B. Henderson, who is the arbiter of dancing and dancers in Washington, has always been opposed to the practice. It is said she requested a fair smoker to go outside. Lady Alan Johnston, daughter of Mrs. James Pinchot, is one of the defenders of the weed, and smokes when and wherever it strikes her fancy. She even puffed her cigarettes while riding in an automobile from one place to another.

Lady Johnston struck the first note in the battle some time ago, when she offered her cigarette case to other guests at a luncheon. The hostess was a crusader, and is said to have requested Lady Johnston, who happened to be the guest of honor, not to smoke.

Mrs. Franklin MacVeagh, who has recently completed her million-dollar palace on Sixteenth street, has provided little balconies from her ballroom windows for the men to smoke between dances. If the lady guests wish to smoke they have to go outside also.

Miss Helen Taft, at a recent luncheon, displayed her displeasure openly when cigarettes were passed.

Ice Skating a Real Fad in Society at Capital

THAT part of Washington society which delights in outdoor winter sports has started a movement to discuss the ways and means of promoting ice skating. To that end invitations were sent out by a committee of interested men and women for a meeting which was held in the banquet hall of one of the large hotels. It is hoped the feeble efforts of "Jack Frost" in Washington may be supplemented and real ice skating provided for those who wish.

The tidal basin at the foot of the Washington monument is unsafe at best, and then there are only a few days' skating on it through the winter. Last year the time was extended somewhat because of the almost unprecedented cold weather in this region. There are many expert skaters in Washington, who come from all parts of the world. Most of them belong to the diplomatic circle, although not a few are people who have spent the greater part of their lives in the northern part of the United States.

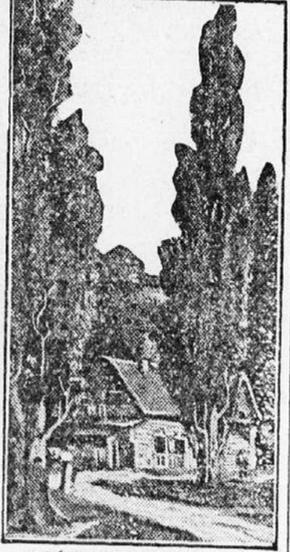
Among those interested in the project is Major Henry T. Allen, whose wife was Miss Johnstone of



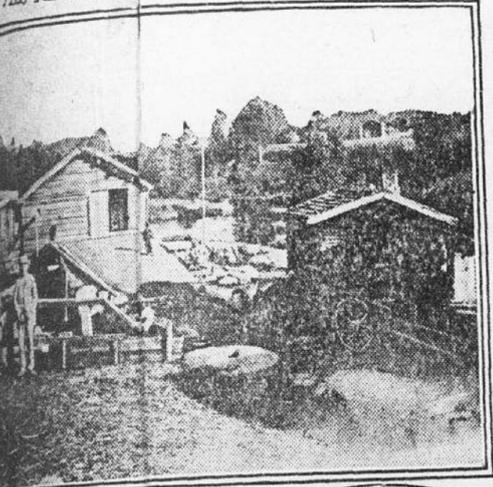
Chicago. Major Allen is also an expert horseman, and with his daughters, the Misses Jeannette and Desha Allen, takes an active part in the Hunt club of this city. The secretary of the navy, George von L. Meyer, is another of the promoters of the scheme to "build" an ice pond. The Meyer family is from Massachusetts, where nature, unassisted, keeps winter sports going for months. The daughters of the secretary and Mrs. Meyer are adepts in skating, which they learned in their native state, and in which they had a chance to exercise when they were living in St. Petersburg, to which capital their father formerly was accredited by the state department.



THE MARKET PLACE, HELSINKI, FINLAND



A FINNISH HOMESTEAD



A FOREST ROAD, FINLAND

Land of Many Waters is the poetic designation of their beloved country most cherished by the people of Finland. Mountain ranges and forest stretches—bold and verdant—interspersed with valley meadows and fragrant meadows. In summer the sun and spray of the forest streams hang sparkling on the golden meadows while the vapid marshes are full of rainbows and the rascal fruit of the berry hedges. The meadows of green moss and the roadstead gray stone—roadstead carpets—spread out with the hand of nature the sweetest forest.



A FOREST ROAD, FINLAND

hibits a burning candle in every window; the peasants' dwellings are littered with clean straw and the cattle in their stalls have extra supplies of food. A popular observance is to arrange inverted saucers around the festive board—one for each guest—under which are placed objects bearing significant meanings. Each person in turn raises a saucer. May be it has covered a piece of red ribbon—that presages a wound or some bodily injury; or a coin, riches; or a key, for a girl the token of her direction within a twelve-month of some household, for a boy the entrance on a commercial career; or a piece of fuel, which fortells death; or a ring for matrimony, and so forth.

The "Christmas Buck" visits every home in Finland. He is an old man with long white hair and beard and heavily clad in fur. He drives his team of reindeer over mountains and frozen lakes and enters unannounced each doorway. He makes a circuit of the family and inquires whether the children have been good or bad. Before leaving he throws down klapps for all. At Twelfth Night the "Star Boys" make their appearance. They are five young men in fancy dress. Three represent the Three Holy Kings of the Epiphany, one is King Herod, and the last a goat with hoofs and horns. They enact a legendary play which has for its finale the death of Herod, whilst the goat is thrust outside the door. Wherever they go they collect alms for poor people who have no Christmas cheer.

After the gayeties of Christmas two months elapse during which one is able to restore one's digestive organs, and then comes Lent. A distinctive Lenten diet is blines and caviar; the former the large thick pancakes which are eaten with butter, sour cream and fruit juice. At mid-Lent a fresh water fish is much esteemed—lake it is called. It is caught in nets sunk through holes in the ice of rivers and lakes. It is boiled in milk. On Easter Eve everybody eats hard boiled eggs.

The first of May is an ancient festival of general observance, especially by students and youths. They meet in the public parks of Helsinki, the capital, and in country market-places, and there sing old folk-songs to the spirit of spring. Then they drink deeply of sweet mead and consume vast quantities of struvorich puff-paste tarts—and then they dance and flirt with buxom maidens to their hearts' content. Midsummer day is of universal observance in Finland. Birch trees are planted at all the house doors and twigs of birch are stuck all over every room. The sun sets in the eve at eleven o'clock, and rises in the day at two. During those three brief hours the young people kindle big fires. All are bent on dancing around and above the blazing embers. They call the fires kokko, "love's flame."

Rye harvest is a very important season. On the first day the laborer-farmers, with their wives and families, foregather at the mansion of the land-owner. They are divided into squads—one man, two women and three children. To each squad is assigned a certain area wherein the man cuts the crop, the women shock and the children glean. They work from four in the morning until eight at night, with intervals for breakfast and dinner. These meals, together with the supper at the end of toil, are substantial in every sense. They are provided gratis by the land-owner and are eaten at long tables placed in front of the mansion, whereat the land-owner and his family serve. After supper all join in singing the plaintive national song, kalewala, and then a happy time is passed with games and dances.

The rye crop, which provides the Finns with their staff of life, does not dry in ordinary seasons in the fields. It is consequently carried to the rias, or barns, and laid on racks and rafters. Fires are kindled in each corner and the smoke permeates the crop, imparting a much-loved and peculiar flavor. The country people's diet consists chiefly of talkumma, a sort of porridge made of rye. This is carried, when well set, in birch bark knapsacks. It is also baked hard and hung in great round, thin cakes, with holes in the center, from the ceilings of the houses. Their favorite beverage is coffee, which they brew to perfection. Corn-rye brandy is a liquor much esteemed by all classes and sometimes indulged in to excess.

The greatest refreshment of the Finns is the bath; every homestead has a bath-house. It is their unfailing remedy in sickness. "If bath and brandy fail," they say, "then comes death." In the bath-houses are stone ovens wherein wood fires are kindled and every orifice is closed. After the fire has burnt itself out buckets of water or shovelfuls of snow are dashed upon the embers and red hot stones. Dense clouds of steam arise and into them the bathers plunge. The whole body is switched with birch rods, and then follow thorough massage and rubbing down with soap. As the bather quits the bath-house sousing of cold water or snow are administered, sometimes a header into deep snow is preferred! Then for a while to cool they all sit on benches in the open air, and then they resume their clothes. During harvest time such baths in common are taken every evening after work is done; in winter the Saturday night tub suffices. Few spectacles can be more weird and astounding for the traveler than, when driving to night quarters, he suddenly comes upon the family at bath

mountain-ash is sacred, its ashes, after burning, are carefully preserved, for when sprinkled on the ground they denote luck or the reverse in wooing.

Land tenure and land service in Finland present many interesting features. The more salient points are actual survivals of federal times. The class of peasant which may be called "laborer-farmers" consists of men who receive no wages. They occupy buildings belonging to the landowner, which they are required to keep in repair. The land-owners make grants of seed and other necessities, and of certain lands which the laborer-farmers cultivate for their own benefit. They have free access to the forest for fuel and for lumber for repairs. In return they are obliged to work for the land-owner with their own families and horses. On holdings, where there is clay, the laborer-farmers are allowed to make bricks and to earn what they can by sales, paying so much per cent on their gains to their landowner.

Many laborer-farmers are quite well off, and, whilst they retain their status as peasants, their sons and daughters are sent to excellent schools and enter government and commercial employments. This class of men must not, however, be confounded with the "free" peasantry. The latter, although generally poorer, have superior civil rights and form an estate of the realm with direct representation in the Finnish parliament.

Finland was first occupied by the Russians in 1809. Alexander I. granted the inhabitants autonomy under their ancient laws and institutions. Recent events have greatly curtailed Finnish liberties, but like the patriots the Finns abide and sing:

"Land of a Thousand Lakes,
Where faith and life are ours,
Past wrongs inspire our powers,
For us the future wakes!"

Like other folk, the Finns rejoice in festivals—religious and profane. Christmas is the greatest of them all. Ever so long before the eve of the Nativity the stores are crowded with people choosing klapps, gifts for family and friends. In each town and village the snow-covered marketplace becomes a pine forest full of Christmas trees, for every home keeps Christmas thus. If they do not rejoice in beef and plum pudding they have their reasonable dishes all the same—stark, dried cod, soaked in brine and boiled to jelly; with it they eat a sort of pea-pudding. Smoked roast pork follows and then comes rice pudding full of almonds—the more almonds you get the more happy months you will live. Plum tarts, served with paste and clotted cream, form the dessert. On Christmas Eve each house and cottage ex-