

The SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE SECTION

A Magazine for your Reading Table

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS' PAGE



Senator Augustus O. Bacon, of Georgia

More Pin Money for Ambassadors

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On Foreign Relations

THE SALARIES of the ambassadors and ministers of the United States accredited to foreign countries are entirely inadequate to their needs. This fact is generally known and recognized by those who have informed themselves in regard to existing conditions. Even those who have made no investigation of these conditions have been informed of this marked inadequacy by the oft repeated and notorious assertion that only men of large wealth can afford to accept one of the more important diplomatic appointments at the hands of our government. Not only so, but it is equally well known that for many years these positions have, with few exceptions, been filled by those who rank in the class of the very rich, commonly called millionaires.

In a free country the avenues to preferment and to honorable official station should be open alike to all who by capacity and character are fitted for the same. But the injustice done to those denied the enjoyment of this equal opportunity is not the greatest evil of this condition. While it exists the best service is not secured for our government.

Millionaires Make Poor Diplomats

THE men best qualified for such difficult and responsible station are not as a rule to be found among those whose thoughts and faculties and energies have been for years absorbed and occupied in the amassing of great fortunes; nor are they chiefly to be looked for in the ranks of those who in the inheritance of great wealth have lacked the stimulus to arduous exertion for the development of mental powers and the acquisition of knowledge.

On the other hand, those who have spent their lives in those studies and pursuits in which naturally there are developed the powers and gathered the knowledge best qualifying one for such duties and responsibilities, have not had the time or the inclination for the piling up of millions.

It is true that among the very wealthy men who have diplomatically represented us abroad we have had some entirely efficient and acceptable ambassadors and ministers; but they have been the exception rather than the rule.

All of our representatives in foreign

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courts during late years have not been millionaires, but the invariable experience of men of moderate means who have accepted these positions in recent times has been that they have necessarily encroached largely upon their private fortunes in spending more than their salaries in order to maintain with reasonable dignity their official stations as the diplomatic representatives of the United States.

The necessity for relief from this present condition has been accentuated of late by the lack of desirable applicants for appointment to the most important diplomatic posts. The remedy should be applied without delay.

U. S. Buildings in Every Capital

THERE are available one of two expedients. The salaries of our diplomatic representatives could be increased, or they could be furnished at each capital with a building suitable for an embassy or a legation, as the requirement may be. The latter course would appear to be the more desirable of the two.

To increase the salary would still leave it within the power of a rich ambassador to rent a palace and set a pace which could not be followed by his successor; and another of moderate means appointed as an ambassador to another country would still be under temptation to sacrifice a large part of his private fortune in order not to suffer by comparison with the royal state of his American diplomatic colleague living in his palace in the adjoining country.

Ostentatious, extravagant display by our diplomats, rivalling in some instances that of royalty, should be stopped. It is inconsistent with our institutions and with our ideals. It is not elevating to the aspirations of American youth and it is offensive to the taste and good sense of right thinking Americans.

The effective manner in which to accomplish this is to provide in each capital an embassy or legation simple and tasteful in design and sufficiently commodious for the purpose; and when thus provided and furnished and equipped, to require the ambassador or minister to occupy it as his personal and official residence.

It would be more desirable to own these houses if they could be procured at once; but as this is impracticable, a bill which has been introduced in the Senate, and a similar one also in the House, provides for leasing immediately for a short term of years a building in each of the foreign capitals, and also providing for properly furnishing the same; with a further provision looking to purchasing or building embassies and legations at those places so soon as it can be done advantageously.

The limit of cost for such leases, and for furnishing, is specified in each case with variations in accord with the necessities in each different locality. No amount has been specified as the limit of the purchase cost, as that is yet to be estimated. It is believed, however, that the average cost of the ten embassies will not exceed \$200,000, while the average cost of the legations will be much less.

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