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LATEST FROM WORLD CAPITAL

Letter From London Tells of Interesting Things Happening There

CHANGING CUSTOMS

Chinese Banquet, Freedom of City, Leap Year Festivities, Empire Exhibition

(By Panton House, for the Canadian Press)

LONDON, March 7. — London celebrated this year the day of St. Valentine, after neglecting that saint for many years. Elderly people can remember a time when the postman arrived on February 14, weighed down with "valentines"—objects resembling the more elaborate kind of Christmas card, but bearing amatory sentiments. Often these missives were anonymous, and damsels of the Victorian age derived much mild excitement from endeavors to identify the senders. Even 40 years ago, the drawing room had deserted St. Valentine; the kitchen honored him a few years longer. Attempts were made to reintroduce his cards, but they fell flat. London, however, liked the idea of Valentine dances and dinners, and February 14 this year was a gala night in some of the most important hotels and restaurants. So many people took parties to these entertainments that nearly every private omnibus in London was booked for the night of the festival.

Though woman's privilege is held to apply to every day of Leap Year, it is associated chiefly with the day that makes Leap Year—February 29; and this, too, was celebrated in the West End of London with special dinners and dances. As each of these occasions was new to London, nobody knew the precise form which the celebrations would take. The hotels and restaurants planned all kinds of charming and amusing surprises for their guests.

On February 5 the Chinese colony in London kept their New Year with a banquet of their national foods. This was easily arranged as the West End of London already possesses at least one restaurant which specializes in Celestial menus. British guests, who had come heroically prepared to tackle such alarming dishes as two-year-old eggs and sea-slug, were delighted to encounter such familiar articles of diet as fried sole, stewed chicken, roast pork and steamed duck with mushrooms. Bamboo shoots appeared in several forms, and bamboo skin formed the foundation of a soup. All these delicacies made up a dinner that took two hours to work through. The men were in ordinary evening dress, but the women guests wore their picturesque national garb of colored silks.

Prince George, the youngest son of the King and Queen, who attained his majority not long ago, is to receive the Freedom of the City of London. The city bestowed this compliment upon Mr. Mackenzie King last October. Sons of "Freemen" (and Prince George comes into this category) have certain privileges; otherwise the city confers her freedom or withholds it, uninfluenced by outside opinion. The City Guilds, of Livery Companies, also give their freedom as a compliment, and Prince George is to receive that of the Clothworkers. This is one of the twelve "Great" Companies, who take precedence of all the rest—about 80 in number. The companies are so ancient an institution that their origin and early growth is "wrapt in mystery." Founded for social fellowship, mutual help, and trade supervision, they became the governing bodies of their various trades, and acquired the control of important monopolies. By the 13th century they had acquired great influence in municipal affairs, which they retain to this day. Many of them possess trust incomes of $50,000 and upward, which is spent largely on charitable and educational work. Several own ancient halls, where they transact business and give sumptuous dinners. Although these interesting halls are not open to the public in the same way that, say, St. Paul's Cathedral is open, they can usually be seen on application.

Before the British Empire Exhibition opens its gates on St. George's Day, April 23, a vast sum will have been spent on it. As an example of the scale on which preparations have been made, the electric power plant (which has to supply current for 2,000,000 lamps) is of the type that would be required by a city of 200,000 people. At a quite moderate estimate 25,000,000 people will visit Wembley during the summer — say 1,000,000 a week, or 170,000 a day. One will move about the 240 acres by the "Never-Stop" railway, seen here for the first time on more than an experimental scale. There are no drivers or conductors; the cars move on continuously, slowing down to 2½ miles an hour at the platforms where one enters or leaves them, and reaching a speed between stations of 24 miles an hour. This railway can carry 20,000 passengers an hour.

In the British Government Pavilion at Wembley the British Royal Navy will be represented in a way altogether new in the history of exhibitions. A "water-stage"—a semi-circular tank 70 feet wide—has been prepared for the displays, which will be witnessed by 500 people at one time. Beautiful model ships, some of them six feet long, are in course of construction. Not all will float, in some cases rails on the "sea floor" will be used. Several historical episodes will be shown; the long running fight with the Spanish Armada, the Battle of Trafalgar, the raid on Zeebrugge. Owing to the immense area of sea over which the Battle of Jutland was fought, and to its complicated actions, it cannot be represented; but we are to see a modern naval battle based on the experiences of Jutland. There will be a procession of ships illustrating the evolution of vessels of war and commerce, from the 11th century to the present day. Submarines and naval aircraft will be seen in action. All these will be made more realistic by clever lighting effects. The tank is backed by a white semi-circular wall, on which sunshine, moonlight and mist can be indicated.

This is the season when London's huge pets, the elephants at the Zoo, get their annual treatment for the complexion. An elephant may suffer from a chapped skin, just like you or me, and when one's skin is several inches thick cracks are a serious matter. The remedy is neat's-foot oil, applied with a whitewash brush. The rhinoceros, too, would be all the better for this kind of face-cream, but as he is much less intelligent than the elephant, and has a far worse temper, his beauty doctor has an awkward task. A keeper walks up and down within the railings, and presents a constant succession of biscuits, while a second attendant slaps on the oil as the rhino lumbers past.

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SAPIRO LAUNCHES ACTION FOR LIBEL

REGINA, March 7. — Charging that a series of articles dealing with his co-operative marketing activities have branded him with being "guilty of an offence punishable by imprisonment," and that they charged him with being "dishonest, dishonorable, deceitful and unfaithful," Aaron Sapiro, co-operative marketing expert of California, today launched a $50,000 damage action against the Regina Leader Publishing Company.

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TERRACE NOTES

Mrs. McCook who has been in Remo for the past few weeks has returned to Prince Rupert.

T. R. Davis returned on Monday from Prince Rupert.

Alf. Egan spent the week-end in Prince Rupert.

Fred Hall was in Remo on Monday.

Mrs. Lanfear made a trip to Rupert Monday.

Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Raven left for the hatchery at Lakelse on Friday.

A belfrey is being added to the Roman Catholic church, here.

Howard Wilson has returned from Hazelton hospital.

Mrs. T. H. McCubbin has returned to Pacific.

Mrs. Walker of Copper City was in town on Saturday.

Mr. Loyd of Usk was in town on Saturday to attend T. R. Davis' sale.

Mrs. O'Connell and little girl of Pacific made a trip to Terrace last week-end.

Tom and Cecil Lever and Orval Kenney were in Usk over the week-end.

Fred Bishop has started clearing his lots near the G.W.V.A. where he is planning to build a residence and a house for his

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lighting plant.

Ben Ager has started building operations on his lot on the corner of Lakelse and Kitsumkalum Avenues.

A. H. Barker of the Bank of Montreal made a trip to Usk over the week end.

J. W. Graham was in Rupert this week end, going down on Sunday's train and returning on Monday.

Mr. and Mrs. Hilyard arrived from Peace River on Wednesday's train.

Mrs. W. J. Parsons entertained her class of Willing Helpers at dinner on Saturday night.

The regular monthly business meeting of the Ladies' Auxiliary of the G.W.V.A. met on Tuesday.

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