

parlors, a library and a dining room, which are 110 feet in length and so joined by double doors that you can stand at one end and look clear through to the other. I cannot describe the magnificence of its furniture and its finishings. There are carving, plate glass and expensive frescoes everywhere, and the kitchens of the house are quite as interesting as the parlors. You could roast an ox on the Vice President's range. A railway has been built to carry the ashes out of the house. The kitchen is walled with china tiles and there is a hearth of costly tiles twenty-four feet long in front of the cooking stove. The building is sanitary throughout and if the Vice President will come to the assistance of the Democratic President there will be no trouble about this house matter being settled. The dining room will be amply big enough for a state dinner, and even the diplomats who have been accustomed to the palaces of Europe will not be out of place in it.

THE BLAINE MANSION.

It will be a queer thing if President Cleveland should at some time during his term rent the Blaine mansion. The thing is not yet an impossibility. The millionaire Leiter of Chicago, who has now a lease upon it, will have one of the finest houses in the United States of his own within a stone's throw of it next fall, and the Blaine house will probably be again on the market. Mr. Leiter has rented it for years. His first lease was, it is said, at the rate of \$13,000 a year for five years, and at the end of this time another lease was made, so I am told, at \$10,000 or \$11,000 a year. The Blaine mansion is about a mile from the White House, and is one of the biggest houses here. It is a red brick and it has, it is said, more rooms than the British legation. There are two main entrances to it, one for carriages on Massachusetts avenue and another by a fine stone staircase on Dupont circle. Passing up the latter between brass railings you enter a hall fifteen feet wide and forty-five feet long, at the back of which is a handsome fireplace and mantel, into which is set a great plate glass mirror. At the right is the reception room and on the left are parlors through which you pass into the drawing room and library. The dining room is hardly large enough for state dinners, but it has a dumbwaiter as big as a good-sized elevator and this waiter runs from the floor to the roof. The interior of this house is finished in beautiful woods; the windows are of plate glass. There are numerous chambers and the most elegant of bath rooms, including a hot air and Turkish bath chamber. There is a billiard room in the basement and there are smoking rooms, loafing rooms and all the accompaniments of a millionaire's palace. It requires a retinue of servants to keep it in order, and I have heard it estimated that it would take at least \$50 a day to live properly in it. The sanitary arrangements of it, however, are perfect, and baby Ruth would be sure of having good air and the atmosphere of summer if her father does not stint the coal.

A MILLIONAIRE'S PALACE.

Speaking of Leiter's big house, I visited it yesterday, and in company with the steward went over it from attic to basement. An army of workmen are now hammering away at it and this, perhaps the most elegant mansion in the country, is now rapidly approaching

completion. The ground on which it stands cost \$100,000. It will cost thousands upon thousands of dollars to build the house, and the interest on the money invested in it will annually amount to a good-sized fortune. It is on Dupont circle and New Hampshire avenue, and it is a massive four-story building of Milwaukee brick, cream white in color and polished like marble. These bricks form the outside coating of the house and it took 150,000 of them to cover it. The bricks were all selected ones, made with great care, and the process of selection was so careful that out of a lot of 20,000 bricks only 3,000 were chosen. The effect of these bricks is that of marble, or rather of a delicate ivory, and the house is more beautiful than any marble palace I have ever seen. On the New Hampshire avenue side there is a vast porte cochere of white stone upheld by Ionic pillars as large around as the biggest oak tree you have ever seen and reaching to the height of a three-story house. Passing through these you come to a wide entrance way, the staircases of which are of polished white marble, beautifully carved and of the delicate tint of an iridescent pearl. The staircase leads first to the basement, where are the reception rooms, almost on a level with the ground, however, and where the guests walk down this magnificent marble staircase to take off their things, and where there are all conveniences. At the right of this staircase and at the left are two others, leading to the first floor, or the parlors and dining room, and these are immense and they will be finished most gorgeously.

A WONDERFUL BASEMENT.

But first let me tell you something about the basement or ground floor. You can get lost in it. There are rooms for all sorts of purposes. Here are two for ice and cold storage. In this ice house you could stow away enough ice for a month, and in it are hooks where the beeves and sheep and game shipped to Mr. Leiter can be kept for weeks. All the beef and mutton used in this house will come from his big farm in Wisconsin. It will be killed by his own butchers and shipped direct to Washington for his use. This is now done at the Blaine mansion. Take a look at the kitchen. The stove is nine feet long and you could feed one of John Wanamaker's Sunday school picnics with the food that could be cooked on it at one time. It has a ventilator over it which runs from the kitchen to the roof and this is so operated by a fan and an extrapipe that when Mr. Leiter eats sauer kraut or codfish the smell of the cooking will go from the stove up this ventilator, and even after the dish is taken off of the stove the pipes will carry its aroma from the table to the ventilator. Another curious arrangement is the apparatus for keeping the plates warm. I venture to say that this apparatus cost at least \$500, for it had to be made especially for the house. It consists of a great boiler of heavy iron, as big around as a two-bushel basket and so heated by gas that a coil of pipes running from it to the butler's pantry overhead is always filled with hot water. These pipes run back and forth in the shape of a coil in a cupboard of zinc in the butler's pantry, and in this cupboard the plates are kept. They grow warm in a few minutes, and the cupboard is large enough to hold the service of a whole dinner. There is a billiard room

in the basement which is 25 feet square, and this, as the whole house, is heated by hot water, the pipes being so covered up that you can't tell where the heat comes from. Under many inviting divans and beautiful resting places there will be steam pipes, and the arrangements for furnishing the heat are such that it would automatically be kept at an even temperature throughout the whole house.

THE PARLORS OF A CROESUS.

None of the finishings have yet been done as to the parlors and dining room. But I can tell you something about them. The grand hall-way on the first floor is itself big enough for an ordinary house. The music hall or dancing room is about twenty-five feet wide and fifty feet long. It opens into a drawing room and a great library, which is twenty-one by forty-five feet in length. All the ceilings of this floor are fifteen feet high and all will be finished in mahogany. The upper part of the house is to be finished in cherry in its natural color, polished like a piano, and of the finest selected varieties. The third floor, of the same wood, is to be painted a delicate ivory and all the wood-work of the house will be like mirrors. The floors are to be of quartered oak and of the heart of Georgia pine. Only the finest of selected woods are used, and thoroughly seasoned woods brought from the planing mills are reseasoned here before they are put down.

TURNING NIGHT INTO DAY.

I can't begin to describe the queer conceits of this house. The lighting is to be a revelation. Electricity will turn night into day, and in the dining room and in the music hall the electric lights will be so arranged that no one can see where the light comes from, but the rooms will be brilliantly lighted by the pressing of a button. The whole house has electric lights and electric bells. In each room there is a bell for the butler and the ladies' maid and a third servant, whose name I forget. The lights are so arranged that you can touch one button and light the whole house, or you can turn on the light on a single floor or in a single room. The electric wires of the building are all incased in tubes, so that if anything gets out of order you can pull the wire out from the tube and pull another within it at the same time without disturbing the house. These tubes run all over the house. The tubes from the electric light wires are brass, those for the electric bells are of a different composition, but both are made so that they are non-conductors, and wires are also wrapped in some non conducting material.

MAGNIFICENT MANTELS AND BIG BATH TUBS.

The mantels are to be magnificent. There is one made of green marble in the dining room running from the floor to the ceiling which is made up of eight thousand different pieces of marble, and which looks more like malachite than anything else. The dining room is paneled in mahogany, and some of the most beautiful rooms in the house to me are the bath rooms. These are floored and walled with ivory tilings, and many of them are as large as fair sized bed rooms. There are ten bath rooms in the house, all finished in this way, and each equipped with a bath tub of solid porcelain so large that you could scald a hog in it without scratching the sides.