

and when he was teaching a country school he got a salary of \$25 a month and boarded round. Andy Johnson's empty stomach flapped against his backbone many a time before he filled it with the rich things of the White House kitchens and Ben Harrison lived in narrow quarters at Washington boarding houses, even when he was a United States Senator. None of the presidents I venture had softer beds at home than they got in the White House. Those used now are of the finest hair resting on springs which give at every turn of the body. The old bedsteads of mahogany which I have been told were dangerously alive at times with unmentionable insects have long since been displaced by bedsteads of brass, and the White House today is as clean as a pin and as comfortable as any home of the country. Mrs. Harrison was a splendid housekeeper and so is Mrs. Cleveland. Mrs. Cleveland, I am told, watches everything about the Executive mansion herself and sees that things are kept up to date and in good order. The house, you know, is cleaned every spring. It takes about 200 people to do the cleaning, and so you need not worry about any lady of the White House being overworked if she has enough executive ability to know what she wants and tell others how to do it.

But let me tell you just how the White House looks in this year of our Lord 1897. It is bigger than it seems, for it covers the third of an acre. You do not see the basement as you look at it from the street, and the basement is almost a house in itself. Its rooms are high, and, with its recent improvements, it is now as dry as a bone. The White House is, you know, some distance back from the street. A big park surrounds it, and going up to the front door you walk about a drive which leads in the shape of a half moon to Pennsylvania avenue. On one side of this drive there is a flag pavement, and in coming into the side of the yard nearest the treasury you walk half the length of the building before you reach the front porch. As you do this you can look right down into the basement and see the servants at work. The room below you is devoted to the laundry, and you may see colored women here almost any day of the week rubbing away at our president's shirts or ironing the pretty white dresses which the White House children wear. Passing these you reach the large portecochere. The columns which uphold this are as big as the biggest oak tree, and the stone platform within them is so large that a regiment of soldiers could be stationed upon it and have room to spare. You reach this platform by stone steps and stand at last before the front door of the White House.

Stop a moment before you go in. Do you realize where you stand? You are at a point where the great miracle in the history of nations is enacted every four years. Within a few weeks through that door will pass out forever the king of what is one of the greatest peoples of the world and at the same time a new king will step in.

Without a jar, without the stoppage of a single wheel, in the twinkling of an eye the government of seventy millions of people will be changed, and our national machinery will go on as smoothly and as irresistibly as it has since its beginning. Think again where you are. You are at the goal of the American's ambition. At the door of the White

House, the point where thousands are ever striving to enter as masters, but where few succeed. Look back over the procession which has already passed in, and in your mind's eye picture the disappointed faces of some who have gone out. Note that little fat mau in gorgeous coat, knee breeches and gaiters. How his bald head shines and how he swells and puffs as he walks through the door. That is John Adams, the first president who ever lived in the White House. His great ability was so leavened with vanity that he thought himself superior to George Washington. Look again. It is four years later and Adams is about to depart. How his face frowns. He leaves the White House with regret, and now at midnight on the 3rd of March his coach is at the door, for he cannot bear to see his successor inaugurated. Now it is morning. A new President stands upon the stone steps under the great portecochere. This man is big and raw-boned. He has a red head and his face is covered with freckles. See how democratic he is and how his blue eyes smile on all those about him. That is Thomas Jefferson. He feels proud and rich as he enters the Executive Mansion. It is eight years later, and he also is about to depart. He has been denounced and calumniated during his reign, and the iron of bitterness is in his soul as it was in that of John Adams. He has during his term spent more than his salary. His wine bills alone have cost him more than \$11,000, and now at the close he finds himself going back to his Virginia home almost a bankrupt. He sees that he is destined to be pinched for the rest of his life, but he does not yet realize that he will have to sell his magnificent library to Congress for a song, or that his estate will eventually be disposed of by lottery that enough may be gotten to support his children.

The next party that comes is a little old fellow with a jolly young wife, who makes the White House ring with the fun which goes on about her. It is pretty Dolly Madison in her high turban cap and her sober old husband, who is tied to her apron strings. Then comes Monroe and John Quincy Adams, and behind them I see the handsome and stately Andrew Jackson, with his cavalier ways. Then there is the foxy Van Buren with his hair combed just so and looking as though he had come from a band box, and bluff General Harrison, who used to go in and out of that door carrying a market basket, for he liked to select his dinners himself. There is the Roman-nosed Tyler, who had more fights with Congress than Cleveland, and bluff old Zach Taylor, who died in the White House. There are Fillmore and Pierce, and the pompous Buchanan, and greatest of all there is Abraham Lincoln. Then comes the Presidents of more recent days, and as they pass before us the tragedies and comedies of twenty-four lives are played over again as we look.

The front door of the White House! What stories it could tell of grief as well as joy. Through that door Abraham Lincoln was brought after he was shot by John Wilkes Booth. Step with me to that side window and I will show you an old man who was one of the White House messengers at the time, and who is still stationed at the door. His name is Pendle. He told me once how little Tad Lincoln came running to him the morning after that shooting and

cried:

"They have killed my papa; they have killed my papa!"

He will tell you how he picked up Tad and tried to comfort him, and how he carried him upstairs to his room and talked to him until he dropped off to sleep.

It was through that same door that Garfield was brought after he was shot by Guiteau. He had been but a few weeks in the White House, and, tired and worn out by fighting with the office-seekers and the Senate, was just about to go to Long Branch for a few days of much-needed rest. He came out here and took the carriage for the depot, not half a mile away, and was waiting for the train to start when the assassin's bullet brought him back. He was carried in through this door, and lay here for weeks, racked with excruciating pain. During those last days he said to Steward Crump, who nursed him, that he could not see why Guiteau had shot him, and he thought he might have waited at least until he had returned from his little vacation. Arthur, the doorkeeper of the private secretary's room of the White House, whom we must meet today if we would call upon the President, was here then. He told me that Guiteau came day after day to the White House to see Garfield but Arthur thought he saw danger in his eyes, and would not allow his card to be taken in. Guiteau intended to kill Garfield in the White House. Failing in this, he stationed himself in the park just opposite, and was there seen watching this door the morning that Garfield was shot. He remained there until he saw the White House carriage come out, and then, taking the street car, he reached the depot and performed his bloody deed. Since then the White House has been more carefully guarded than before.

We passed policeman when we came into the yard. They patrol the streets about the White House night and day. There are now more than a dozen on duty within the White House grounds, and Pres'dent McKinley will be watched almost as carefully as any king. There are guards within the vestibule on the other side of the door. There are guards in the basement, and the messengers who conduct you from room to room, though they look very harmless, have by long watching become expert detectives, and can tell a crank almost at a glance.

There are only four hours of the day when strangers without urgent business can be admitted to the White House. This is from 10 a. m. till 2 p. m. After this, if you call and ring the bell, you will see a guard's face at the little round hole filled with plate glass in the mosaic window of the door and a pair of sharp eyes will examine you before the knob is turned which lets you in.

If you are so fortunate as to pass this inspection, you will see the doors open inward and a moment later will find yourself standing in what might be called a very cave of Aladdin. Columns have been written about the east room and the wonders of the parlors of the White House. The most beautiful part of the whole building to my mind is this great vestibule with its frescoed ceiling, its beautiful walls covered with the coat of arms of the United States, its floor of many colored tiles and the jeweled wall which separates it from the corridor opening into the blue room, the red