

Tornado and Flood Only Start of America's 1913 Disasters, Says Mme. de Thebes, Who Predicted Present Troubles at Year's Beginning

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BY William G. Shepherd. (By Special Cable.)

Paris, France, April 11.—I have just come from an interview with Mme. de Thebes, the woman who predicted on New Year's day the terrible Omaha tornado and the still more awful floods which have just washed Ohio and Indiana. It is the only interview the famous French seeress has given out. I found her hiding in a tiny country village north of Paris and practically inaccessible to anyone.

"I am hiding," she said, "because I do not want to be interviewed. I fear to tell the world what I see—that America is just at the beginning of these awful catastrophes which Nature is going to heap upon her this year! I am ill myself with horror at the awful things I foresee."

"Let those in America who survive this present disaster protect themselves against further cyclones and inundations, for I cannot see any calm returning to America before April 21st."

"It was three months ago that I predicted how wind, water and fire would assail the United States in March and I have kept repeating it since to all the Americans I have talked to—telling them the disasters were on the way. The Americans would not take heed—they always hoped that I might be wrong about my prophecy, but you see I was not. I understand their attitude, for I, too, also hope always that I may be mis-



MME. DE THEBES.

taken. I have spent a terrible three months awaiting this present disaster."

"Is there no way, you think, for us to avoid further troubles?" I asked the madame.

"Alas, no," she said. "The finger of God is at work in America! It is an occult force; I do not know why it is there or how it came. None can tell, but all the terrible, hidden influences that generate holocausts are at work in the skies above America and I cannot see the end."

"From 1910 America should have taken precautions, putting herself on the defensive until 1918. For she is in the grip of terrestrial evolution and each of these years the enemies—fire, wind and water—will assail her! Sometimes they will come separately and sometimes together! A large portion of her territory will slip into the sea within the next few generations and I foresee that that event will be much more terrible than the present one!"

"September is to be the most dangerous month for America, and everybody there ought to be ready to flee from floods, fire or cyclones any day."

"In that month most of the horrors, however, will develop from winds."

"I truly wish I could be mistaken and that my vision might be wrong, but I know my hope is vain. I have told you what I have seen in the past regarding America and from that you must feel that what I see for the future will prove true. These catastrophes are the will of God. His destiny is at work and you in America are helpless—practically so. You can only safeguard yourselves, wait and endure."

with Harvard University was the son of a brick mason. The child, whether it have poor parents or rich parents, is the most valuable undeveloped resource in the state."

"Society forever needs reinforcements from the rear. It is a shining day in any educated man's growth when he comes to see and to know and to feel and to admit that it is just as important to the world that the ragamuffin child and his worthless neighbor should be trained as it is that his own child should be."

"Until a man sees this he cannot be a worthy democrat nor get a patriotic conception of education, for no man has known the deep meaning of democracy or felt either its obligation or its lift till he has seen this truth clearly."

"I believe in the free public training of both the hands and the mind of every child."

"I believe that by the right training of men we add to the wealth of the world. All wealth is the creation of man, and he creates only in proportion to the trained uses of the community; and the more we train the more wealth every-one may create."

"I believe in the perpetual regeneration of society in the development of democracy, and in growth everlasting."

"The southern people were deflected from their natural development. They are the purest American stock we have. They are naturally as capable as any part of our population. They are now slowly but surely waking out their own order of society which will be an important contribution to the republic that their ancestors took so large a part in establishing. Rich undeveloped resources of American life lie in these great rural stretches that are yet almost unknown. The foremost patriotic duty of our time is to hasten their development."

"What are you here for? What are you trying to do? Just to make another magazine? Or to make money? Or to advance some cause? Or to further some movement? This was the vigorous and challenging volley of questions that a frank philosopher of one of our university faculties flung out during the early days of the editorial office during the early days."

"No, none of these is the main aim. The main aim is to hold fast to and to apply at every turn the ideals of a republic, as the best home that is or has ever been of equal opportunity and fair play, and by these to build up individual and national character."

"The loveliest luncheon set imaginable can be made from flowered cretonne. Purchase rose-flowered cretonne and cut six circles each for plate and glass doilies and one large one for the centerpiece. Allow a half inch for turning under to produce a neat finish. Overcut this narrow hem by hand and border the doilies with cluny lace three inches in width. This set is most effective when used on a highly-polished table."

This should appeal to the clever mistress as an excellent suggestion for a wedding, engagement or Christmas gift.

MINARD'S LINIMENT CURES BURNS, ETC. Clara—My only hope is that she and I will never meet again, either here or hereafter. Maud—What! you associate with her if you met her in heaven? Clara (passionately)—Never. I'll die first.—Life.

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HIGH-MINDED MAN OF LETTERS IS NEW AMERICAN AMBASSADOR TO THE COURT OF ST. JAMES

Walter H. Page Has Devoted Life to Study of the Nation's Social and Economic Problems—Unknown Figure in Politics and His Wife Does Not Like "Showy" Society.

In the New York Sunday Sun of last issue appears the following sketch of Walter H. Page, President Wilson's choice for English ambassador.

President Wilson's selection of Walter H. Page as American ambassador to the court of St. James arouses special interest, as it is a conspicuous instance of his policy to make fitness rather than the possession of large means the basis of appointments to diplomatic posts. Since Mr. Page's acceptance of the office was made public last Tuesday, many public statements regarding his intentions and his career have appeared. These have been misleading in many respects, and since the curiosity of the public in such a matter must be satisfied Mr. Page has consented, through the Sun, to give an authentic and dependable account of his career and the attitude he assumes toward the office which, he points out, is not his until President Wilson's choice is ratified by the Senate and approved by Great Britain.

Walter H. Page was born in Cary, a suburb of Raleigh, N. C., in 1855. He first attended the Bingham School, where he was thrown into association with pupils who afterward attained national distinction. Later he was sent to Randolph-Macon College. At the Virginia institution, as at the preparatory school, he was thrown in with the best youth of the Southern States, and many of his associates later took an important part in the reconstruction of the South. Here one can detect the origin of the deep interest in the South which Mr. Page has shown throughout his career.

A High-Minded Scholar. Page, the student, is remembered affectionately for his companionable qualities and his high scholarship. His special friend and guide in those years was the late Professor Thomas R. Price, the scholar, who died a few years ago.

In the year of his graduation Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore was organized and Page was one of the first twenty fellows of that institution. He spent two years there. He studied Greek under the venerable Professor Gildersleeve, but his associates soon realized that he was studying many other things besides Greek—history and politics, in particular. It became evident that technical scholarship could not curb his growing interest in the practical affairs of the active world about him. He was encouraged to

prepare for a professorship, but he was anxious to go out in the world and join the "doers," and soon he was out West as a reporter on a daily newspaper.

In a short time he became editor of the sheet. At this time the South was still regarded by many in the North as a foreign and very turbulent country. Mr. Page became deeply interested in the affairs of the South and decided to study conditions at first hand. He travelled through the South and organized the first newspaper syndicate to publish his letters on the situation. These letters attracted very wide attention. One of them, an interview with Jefferson Davis, was reprinted in journals in every part of the country. This journey through the Southern States was the beginning of the periodical trips which Mr. Page has been making ever since. In this way he keeps in close touch with the affairs of every part of the United States.

His Southern letters brought him an offer of a place on the New York World. For a time he wrote editorials and book reviews, but the old desire to travel and report things at first hand resented itself. As a result he was sent to Utah to live among the Mormons and contribute letters about their life and customs to the World.

On the occasion of a visit to his old home he was encouraged to start a little progressive paper in Raleigh. The paper he produced was an energetic sheet with the people of the community still remember it vividly. It stood for precisely those things which have constituted the program of the South during all the intervening years—better farming, the rotation of crops, manufactures, good roads and good schools. He laid out the program at a time when much of it provoked lively opposition. He made himself a foe and the progressive man of his native commonwealth have looked upon him as a leader ever since.

Then followed various literary connections with the best newspapers of the country. In 1899 he became editor of the Forum. Here his combined literary and business talents, a rare union present in a large degree in Mr. Page, did much to make the magazine a national force. Later he became editor of the Atlantic Monthly, in Boston, and he directed the efforts of this publication to fields of more vital importance than pure literature alone can serve.

While in Boston he served as literary adviser of Houghton-Mifflin Co., and here he began to make the acquaintance of the most prominent literary folk of the country. He became an intimate friend of James Ford Rhodes, John Fiske and William Roscoe Thayer, the historians. He was a friend of Sarah Orne Jewett, William James, Charles W. Eliot and Mrs. Julia Ward Howe, whose reminiscences were brought out in the Atlantic Monthly. He brought John Muir into the Atlantic's family and he accepted the first novel of Mary Johnston.

Launches Publishing Firm. After five years of residence in Boston he decided that if he was so valuable to others he was worth more to himself as a publisher, and he joined F. N. Doubleday in founding the house of Doubleday, Page & Co. In his work in the development of this publishing house Mr. Page has spent the best years of his life. When the World's Work was started he was made its editor, and his comments on current subjects of importance have given the magazine a high individual character. In all his work Mr. Page has shown not only that he is a literary man, but also that he has talent for organization and a thorough understanding of the needs of the various sections of the country. He himself minimizes the importance of his services to the country, and insists that more credit is due to the men who were actually concerned in the forwarding of the various movements which he encouraged in all his writings. But it cannot be denied that Mr. Page, through his writings and lectures on reconstruction and education in the South, has done much to bring about the present situation.

He is a member of the general education board, and has been from its beginning. He has taken keen interest in its campaigns to aid the Southern farmer, to establish country schools

and to organize country life. He is also a member of the Southern Education Board and of other boards interested in the building of rural schools for negro children. As a member of the sanitation commission for eradicating the hookworm and in his extensive writings on this Southern danger he has done much valuable work. It is said that he is largely responsible for calling the attention of John D. Rockefeller, jun., to the hookworm peril and obtaining his aid in fighting it.

Unknown in Politics. It may seem strange to many that Mr. Page was chosen for all the important posts of ambassador to England, though he has never occupied any political office. The nearest he ever came to a political office was when he served on Roosevelt's unpaid country life commission. He has known President Wilson for many years, and was one of the first to see in him the qualities of a great national leader.

Mr. Page is a quiet, unassuming man, leads a very modest life and shuns publicity. It is only his keen interest in the welfare of the country that has led him into activities which have made him a public figure. In late years he has enjoyed a good but not a large income. He is tender of the poets than of business, yet he has undoubted business ability.

In spite of statements that have appeared in regard to his plans as ambassador, Mr. Page denies that he has made any whatsoever. When seen in his office in Garden City, where the Doubleday, Page & Co. plant is located and where he lives, he declared that such statements were not founded on fact. "Now that I have been thrown on the screen for a moment," he said, "speculation has been free as to the facts of my life and my future movements. The fact is, however, that I really have no plans. Besides, it would be very unwise for me to make my statements at the present time. You see, I am not yet ambassador. Several formalities must still be gone through."

No Plans to Discuss. "Furthermore, it is one of the invariable traditions of the office of the ambassador not to talk. His special field is prompt action when necessary. So it would be tactless of me to discuss any aspect of the appointment just made."

More than this Mr. Page would not say. It is easy to see, however, from his character and his family's mode of life that the London embassy will not be conducted on the same lavish scale as it was in the time of the late Ambassador Reid. Mrs. Page is known to be a woman of modest tastes and to possess the preferences of the typical educated American woman. She is not fond of society in the sense of display and is very much devoted to the conduct of her household.

A few quotations from the writings and speeches of Mr. Page will prove timely and will throw some light on his aims and ideals. The first quotation is especially interesting in the light of his recent appointment. "The only advantage that Americans have over their kinsman of the old world is the advantage of free democratic training. We are no more capable by nature than the English, and we are not as well trained as the Germans, but we have greater social mobility, which is the very essence of democratic training. We have built a type of society that permits more men to find their natural place in it. And thus it is that the greatest contribution to social science, to the science of training men and of building states, is the demonstration that we have made of the ever-recreative and ever-renewing quality of democratic society."

"The whole American people is a good master to serve. But any sect or section or party of them would be a tyrannical master."

"Great changes come as silently as the seasons. I am no more sure of this springtime than I am of the rejuvenation of our society and the lifting up of our life."

"The most sacred thing in the Commonwealth and to the Commonwealth is the child, whether it be your child or the child of the dull-faced mother of the hovel. The child of the dull-faced mother may for all you know be the most capable child in the state. At its worst it is capable of good citizenship and a useful life if its intelligence be quickened and trained. Several of the strongest personalities that were born in North Carolina were men whose very fathers were unknown. We have all known two such who held high places in church and state. President Eliot said a little while ago that the ablest man that he had known in many years connection

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