

IN THE NEW BERLIN: It Is Cheaper To Taxi All Day Than Walk

Thirty-Three Cents Pays For a Drive and the Taxi Saves Shoes Which Each Day Finds More Difficult To Replace.

By FRANK G. CARPENTER.

Berlin is a new city under its republican government. It is half again as large as it was in 1914, but it is not so clean or well kept. Unter den Linden, the sacred highway of the Kaiser, where no one was allowed to smoke or speak loudly at certain hours of the day and where a man was liable to be arrested if his dog barked after dark, is now one of the noisiest streets of the capital. Students and hoodlums half drunk go through it at night singing their songs and it is thronged with pebbled traffic by day.

Seen On the Street.
In pre-war times the man who dropped a scrap of paper on the sidewalk in any part of the city was made to pick it up by a policeman, who warned that a second offence would mean his arrest. Today Berlin is littered with trash, which waits hours for the municipal cleaners. In the past there were no vagrants. Now there are beggars on every street corner, and some have their regular stands on the sidewalks. The blind go along led by dogs, and the lame beg upon crutches. There are many more too proud to beg who walk through the streets searching the roadway for crumbs of bread, or any stray thing of value.

I saw a hunchback this morning poking with a stick in the gutter. He picked up what looked like a piece of cardboard and ate it. It was a chunk of brown bread. I gave him 100 marks, which is about half a cent. He was so dumfounded he could not utter his thanks. I gave the same amount to a beggar a few steps further on. I cannot repeat

what he said, but the words came out with a hiccup and a smell which showed he was drunk. My next adventure was with a fine old gentleman who was selling newspapers. She had seen me giving the beggar the money, and said it was a crime to patronize such people, for there were plenty of jobs for any man who wanted to work.

Peddling Potato Peelings For Firewood.

Going through a side street, I saw a man peddling out sticks of wood to a crowd of women and children who had bags and baskets on their backs or in their hands. They came up in order and emptied their burdens, each taking so many sticks in exchange. Coming closer, I saw that the pile of stuff on the street was potato peelings. He replied he had pigs on his farm in the country nearby, and that he brought in this wood every week to exchange it for soap for his pigs. He gives a sack of wood for a sack of potato scraps, and the wood in each sack would just about fill a small kitchen stove. I photographed the man and women buying and selling.

A little further on was a meat market with booths on the street. One butcher was cutting off the odds and ends of the meat he served to his customers and throwing them down at his feet. As I looked, a well-dressed woman with a shawl tied around her head stepped up behind and grabbed some of these odds and ends and put them into her bag. The butcher objected. He said:

"See here, my good woman, I want that meat. Put it back."

She did so with a blush, and her mouth formed to a whistle. She called out: "Lux! Lux! Lux!" pretending to be whistling for a couple of minutes, perhaps, and then pushed her way out of the crowd and walked off very fast. She was ashamed to have anyone think she wanted to eat for herself, and the dog presence was evidently made up, for as she departed there was no dog in sight.

Buying by the Multiplication Table.

Many other things in addition to the taxis have their prices fixed by multiplication. Books are sold that way and in some cases, jewelry and drygoods. The results are not satisfactory as the currency rises and falls so rapidly that it is impossible to make the right calculations. A few weeks ago a German housewife of my acquaintance bought some linen for her maid. Today she finds this linen has trebled in cost and tomorrow it may be double the price of today. Three weeks ago I bought a pair of shoes for what in exchange equals \$1.75. Passing the same store today I see a similar pair for sale at 60,000 marks, which equals three dollars. This seems very little for a pair of good shoes, but it is now equal to a year's wages of a servant girl and it is more than many a government official makes in a week. The members of the Reichstag would have to work a number of days to get the price of that pair of shoes.

Hiring Taxis by Arithmetic.

I here took a taxi and drove to several other places about the city. I had the car several hours and when I looked at the meter I saw that it registered eight marks or what before the war would have been \$2. I paid the man 9,000 marks, the amount being arrived at by multiplying the figure registered on the meter by 1,200. Not long ago the multiplier used was 500. Before that it was 300, and it has steadily risen as the mark has gone down. As it is a ride which before the war would have cost \$2 now costs thirty-three cents. The cab fares are so low that riding is cheaper than walking. Indeed I keep a taxi at my call almost all the time, and if it stands idle an hour it does not make much matter.



THEY STICK TO THEIR BEER.

The Germans stick to their beer, but as a nation they are drinking only half as much as they did before the war, while the high cost of making it has cut in two the number of breweries.

Speaking of taxis, those of Berlin are excellent and the service is good. The city has comparatively few, however, and this is so of all kinds of motor vehicles. Germany is short on such transportation. I have looked up the statistics, and in the whole republic there are less than sixty-one thousand automobiles. This means about one car per thousand, a striking contrast with the United States, which has more than one automobile for every twelve people. Hamburg, which is as big as Detroit, has less than 3,000 motor cars, and Bavaria, with seven million population, has less than 6,000 automobiles, notwithstanding Munich, its capital, is about equal to Boston in size.

Street Traffic in Berlin.

The traffic of a big city is a good indication of its prosperity or the reverse. On this basis Berlin is doing practically no business. It has not as many motor trucks as a city of fifty thousand in the States, and private automobiles are almost unknown. There are no private cars parked on

pulling carts as there are motor cars and horse-drawn vehicles. Sometimes men and women work side by side hauling their loads through the streets. Sometimes the man pulls and the woman pushes, and it is not uncommon to see a dog aiding in drawing the load. Many small purchases are delivered this way, the work being done by the job for a gold rate, which is exceedingly small. It reminds one of the human horses common in Japan and China, the only difference being that in China they have a wheelbarrow and in Japan a jinrikisha for the two or four-wheeled carts. There are also men and women who carry loads on their backs. They earn about two-thirds the amount of those who pull carts. No one can say that the Germans are not willing to work and that both men and women are not doing all they can under present conditions. In the most fashionable part of the city I saw a two-horse wagon loaded with coal being emptied by a man and a woman. The woman stood in the wagon and using a scoop-shovel filled a two-bushel basket with coal. She then lifted up this heavy weight and placed it on the shoulders and back of the man, who carried it into the building. I was told that her wage for this work is equal to seven cents a day.

The mark is continually rising and falling, but the prices go steadily upward. My typist bought a pair of shoes a few weeks ago when the mark was 40,000 to the dollar. They cost her 54,000 marks or about \$1.30. She found them too small, and has just exchanged them for a larger pair. She has had to pay 125,000 marks, and that notwithstanding the mark is only 20,000 to the dollar, twice as high as it was then. If she had bought two pairs of shoes at the time of her purchase, she might sell one pair now and have the other for nothing with a little profit besides.

Tippling at One-Tenth of a Cent.

I hear daily of instances illustrating the pitiful wages of today. A

Peddling Potato Peelings For Firewood—Men, Women As Beasts of Burden—How the Bolshevists Paid Their Bills At Genoa.

manicure girl gets 15,000 marks a week and a plain shirtwaist costs 75,000, which is equal to five weeks of her wages. This girl has a cup of coffee at noon that costs her 700 marks, and she has to pay 250 marks to ride on the street car. She sometimes walks home to save money, but the wear and tear on her shoes is more than she saves. A servant who works in this hotel gets 16,000 marks weekly besides her percentage and the foreigners but might little from the Germans, as they are too poor to pay. She had yesterday a tip of twenty marks or one-tenth of a cent. A window cleaner who washes the glass, charges two hundred marks per hour. My typist employed her and paid her fourteen hundred marks at the close of the day. She says that the woman's little boy when he came to go home with his mother asked her to buy some herrings for supper. She refused as the price of two herrings was equal to the earnings of her whole seven hours.

Beating the American Tailor.
The value of the mark makes all goods involving skilled labor exceedingly cheap. As I figure it I have just made \$185 by patronizing a tailor here in Berlin. The tailor has eleven testimonials from kings, nobles and dukes, and he might be called the royal tailor of the capital of Germany. Among his customers are the King of Bulgaria, the King of Siam, and Prince Eitel Friedrich, the second son of the Kaiser. He had the bulk of the best trade of Berlin before the war and about the only exception among his distinguished customers was the Kaiser himself who had all his clothes made in England, the cutters and fitters traveling back and forth from here to London to measure the royal physique and to make the fit as he directed.

This tailor is now paying two and a half cents per hour to his workmen according to the tariff fixed by the trade. The tariff decides just how much time a man may use for

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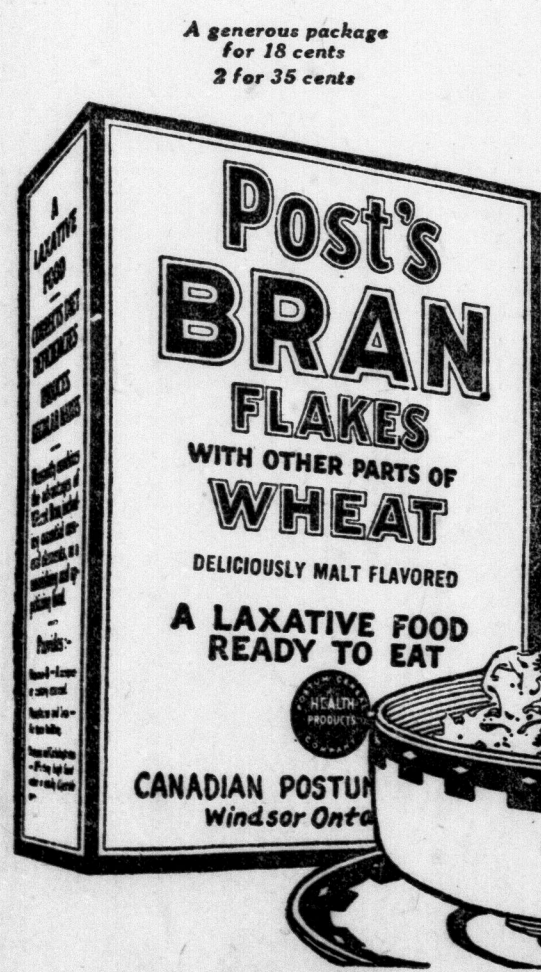
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By AVES.

Orioles Have Arrived and Have Set Up House—Put Not Your Trust In Erratic and Frivolous Hens Who Lack Sense of Responsibility

The orioles are back. That is always a big event in our orchard, and this year they have beaten the cherry blossoms by at least a week. The cherry trees are now in full bloom, and the orioles are busy building their nests.

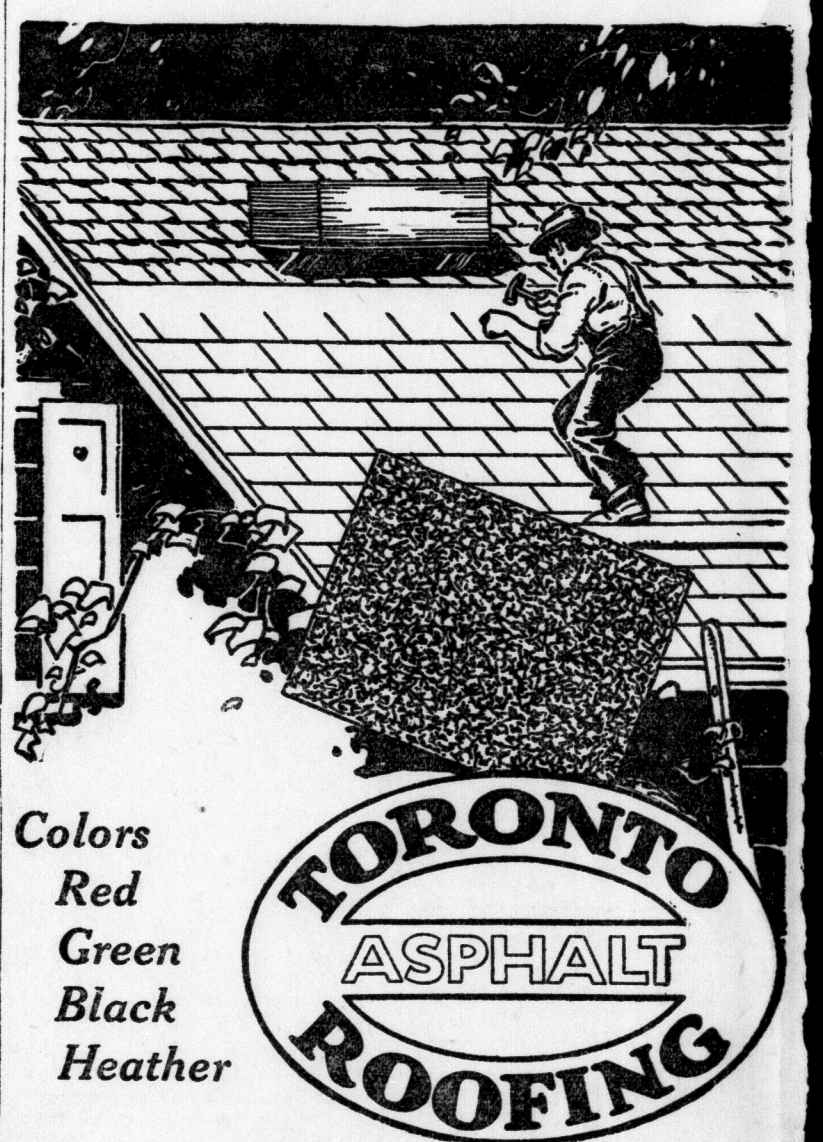
Blackbirds Are Aloof.
We don't see very much of the redwinged blackbirds, which are cousins of the orioles, as they stick pretty closely to the marshes, but we always have a flock of grackles nesting in a pine grove not far away. They are pretty birds, and their liquid notes are very welcome in the springtime, but we have always had a strong suspicion that they have more than a passing fancy for the eggs of smaller birds. Whenever we have found a little wren or a sparrow mourning over an empty nest we have said very un-neighborly things about the blackbirds. They are very funny in the courting season; they bow and scrape and open and close their wings to show off their shining feathers, doing it all so gravely and solemnly that it is a very amusing performance to watch. The bobolink also belongs to this family (Icteridae), and his long journey and quite different costumes have given him many different names. While nesting here he is known in his black and buff and white suit as bobolink, but before he leaves for the south he changes his wedding garments for a traveling suit of brown and buff. This is his reed-bird dress, and in it he journeys some 4,000 miles to his winter quarters south of the Amazon. He starts in July, and late in August visits the rice fields of Georgia and Carolina, where he does tremendous damage to the rice crop and is known as rice-bird or oriolan. The next stop is Cuba, where he is called chambor, while in Jamaica, owing to his extreme fatness, he is known as butter-bird.

Meadowlark and Cowbird.
In meadows made merry by Bobolink's music one is almost sure to find the meadowlark as well. He is easily recognized—upper parts black, brown and buff; under parts yellow with a black bib around his neck, and he shows two conspicuous white tail feathers when flying. These birds build their nests on the ground in a tuft of grass, which they arrange in a sort of dome over it, and their eggs are white speckled with reddish brown. Their nests, on account of the grass roof, are harder to locate than those of the song-sparrow and vesper-sparrow, which place theirs on the ground without much attempt at concealment.

The cowbird also belongs to this family, though he isn't any credit to it. We often see them feeding in the pastures near the cattle, and might admire their glossy, metallic plumage if we didn't know them for the contemptible creatures they are. They always live in small flocks, never pairing or attempting to build a nest or raise a family themselves. The mother bird simply deposits her egg in any convenient nest, generally one belonging to a much smaller bird, and leaves it to be hatched and cared for by the rightful owner of the nest. The poor little birds thus imposed upon never seem to detect the deception, but rear the greedy young cowbirds, which often even shoves his foster brothers and sisters out of the nest.

While on the subject of incubation, may I make a few pointed remarks about the common hen-variety Barred Plymouth Rock, though we called her worse names than that when we found what she had done? Why, oh, why, did she sit on those eggs for nineteen days and shirk her coming responsibilities the very day before the precious chicks were to hatch; the school fair chickens, which were to bring their small owner fame and riches beyond all dreams of avarice? Put not your trust in broody hens—a quiet, serious-minded incubator is much to be preferred.

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