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SIGHTS AT THE FAIR.

WITH PICTURES BY A. CASTAIGNE.

IT was in the Italian section of the Liberal Arts Building, and I was looking at a fine piece of armor well set up,—helmet with vizor, breastplate, greaves, etc.,—when a woman's voice behind me exclaimed: "It's a diver. I've seen 'em. Ain't he natural looking!"

They were evidently an elderly country couple, and she had just caught sight of the armor. I wondered what the smith who had wrought with such patient art would have said could he have heard the exclamation, and have seen the couple walk on perfectly satisfied that they had seen a diver, the husband delighted with his wife's knowledge. The very resemblance which made the mistake not altogether inexcusable made it all the funnier. Doubtless amusing mistakes like this have counted up into the millions at the Fair; yet in spite of these it has not failed in its function as an educator.

It is, however, as an exposition of landscape-gardening and architecture that the Fair will most grandly fulfil this function. If there were not a picture, nor a yard of textiles, nor a ton of machinery, inside the buildings, these themselves, and their disposition about the grounds, would preach most eloquently the gospel of beauty. For this reason the location of the Fair near the geographical center was most fortunate. No unprejudiced visitor to the West can fail to admire many of its characteristics; but cheerfulness in architecture is not one of these. Somberness is rather the prevailing key

in the large business blocks of most of the Western cities. In Chicago there is nothing quite so bad as the rows of brown-stone fronts with which post-bellum taste made large portions of New York hideous, but there is generally a lack of the happy and the engaging. Surely the bright, cheerful buildings of the Fair must have a gladdening effect upon the future of building in the rapidly developing West.

Strolling through this fairy-land of modern enterprise, I often wondered what any one of the intrepid early navigators of this "brother to the sea" would have thought, if, as he approached this shore, he could have seen the White City rising in all its beauty as if out of the lake itself. Of course he would have laid it to mirage, and, having discovered that it was real, he would have had another and perhaps greater surprise on finding out that it was all in honor of Columbus. The latter, by the way, is not very prominent at the Fair. There is a statue of him on the basin front of the Administration Building, and I presume the central figure in the fine group of statuary on the peristyle was intended for him; but as a whole what started out as the "World's Columbian Exposition" has become simply the "World's Fair."

While the Fair lasts Washington will have to yield to it the title of "City of Magnificent Distances." One does not realize how much physical exertion sight-seeing requires until one has spent a day at the Fair. You are so occupied

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SPEECHLESS.



AN UNFRAMED PICTURE.



FROM THE TOP OF THE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, LOOKING TOWARD MACHINERY AND AGRICULTURAL HALLS.

with looking at things that your fatigue does not find a chance to make itself felt until you turn homeward. Then you begin to wonder if you have any legs left. For this reason the wheel-chairs pushed by intelligent beings clad in sky-blue with white piping are a boon. You can "do" the Fair comfortably and systematically, and if you happen to have the same cicerone several days in succession he is apt to become *en rapport* with you, divining your tastes, and pushing you whither these would lead you. Many of the gracious pushers are theological students, a fact which has gradually fastened upon these chairs the appellation of "gospel chariots." The late Mr. Cook, in the earlier days of his efforts to excite the migratory propensities of the human race, was wont to add to his circulars the announcement that "a number of marriages have been among the results of these tours." From what I have observed, I incline to think that several of the "gospel chariot" excursions will lead to equally felicitous results.

The sum of human happiness being to get about without any effort on your own part,

other means of accomplishing this are provided in the electric launches and gondolas. Of these the latter are the more pleasurable, because, as the gondoliers — real ones from Venice — are obliged to work, you are made to feel delightfully lazy, lying back and gliding over the pretty lagoons, and imagining yourself in Venice — providing you have never been there. The illusion continues until your round trip — at an investment of twenty-five cents — brings you near the little wharf from which you started, when one of your gondoliers remarks: "Finis! Gli gondolieri lika some beer!" Among these gondoliers I found an inveterate fisherman, who, when off duty, could be seen dropping a line in the shadow of one of the arches over the lagoon. Even on illumination nights he would scorn the fairy-like scenes, and seek the shadows of the arch. Possibly the fact that he never caught anything made him feel as if he were at home again in Venice.

If you wish to see the buildings from the lake, there are steam-launches which, passing under



A CHICAGO STREET.



A. CASTAIGNE . CHICAGO . 43.

ENGRAVED BY M. HAIDER.

THE TOP OF THE WOMAN'S BUILDING.

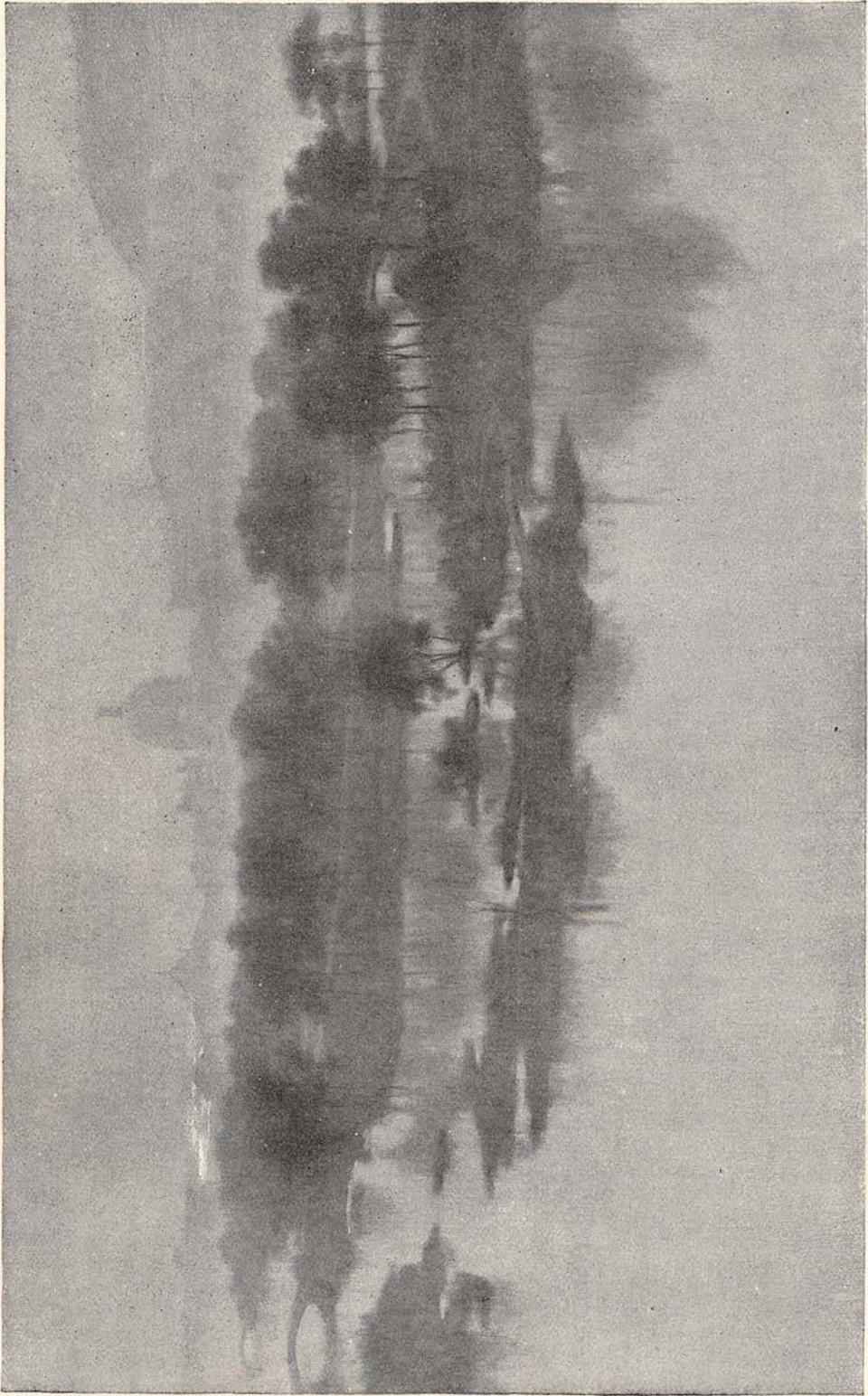


THE CANAL, LOOKING SOUTH. (EVENING.)

the arches of the peristyle, run out to the end of the long steamer-pier, and then, turning north, convey you to the pier from which you can board the brick battle-ship *Illinois*. This is probably the most complete naval exhibit ever made by any country, and it attracts great attention. But I saw one man who did not go aboard. He was not allowed. "Ephraim," exclaimed his wife, "you don't know nothing about ships. It might sink, or it might sail away with you." And Ephraim wisely adopted the advice of his better half, and sailed away with *her*. By the way, I am always struck at expositions of this kind with the fondness of mankind for implements devised for the destruction of mankind. This battle-ship, the models of war-ships in the Transportation Building, the Krupp guns, and the guns shown by our own Ordnance Department, seemed to me the most popular exhibits. The superb guns shown by our Ordnance Department must have created the impression that our forts are as well armed as those of any country. As a matter of fact, each gun exhibited was unique—the only one of its kind at the disposal of our army, except that we have a few more of the fine modern field-pieces, an example of which was shown.

Speaking of the Transportation Building reminds me of the general subject of transportation to the Fair, and suggests an incident which has a decided Gilbert-and-Sullivan flavor. The Exposition managers were from the start anxious to have the railroads make a low rate to Chicago. Accordingly they appointed a committee on transportation which consisted entirely, I believe, of railroad men whose lines come into Chicago. In their capacity as committeemen these gentlemen passed a resolution requesting their respective railroads to make reduced rates during the World's Fair months. On receiving this resolution by mail the next day at their respective offices, they, in their capacity as railroad managers, wrote letters to the transportation committee denying the request which, as members of that committee, they had made.

The Transportation Building is one of the few instances of color in architecture at the Fair. Its prevailing tone is terra-cotta, and along its frieze, done somewhat after the manner of illumination in old missals, is a line of angels. This frieze is highly artistic, yet the idea of painting angels on the outside of the Transportation Building always had a humorous aspect to me—it was so suggestive of the



THE FAIRY ISLAND.



JUST FROM THE RANCH.



HARD TO PLEASE.

kind of transportation we are all anxious to avoid, yet (there was a touch of the grim in this) are perhaps most exposed to when we use modern means of transportation. The golden arch which forms the main entrance to this building is probably the architectural detail most admired by the general public.

France figures in a dual rôle at the Fair. She not only makes an exhibit, but shows the other nations of the world how to make an exhibit. After passing along the rows of sar-

cophagus-like show-cases in which the American textile exhibit is made,—an admirable exhibit so far as the goods are concerned,—it is a positive relief to come within view of the handsome façade with which the French have surrounded the space reserved for them in the Liberal Arts Building. Between the arches of this façade, fronting on the main avenue, are alcoves for the exhibit of furniture, costumes, and other articles requiring an interior for their most effective display. Through the main arch of the façade one enters an apartment hung with rich tapestries, and suitable mural decorations make the *entourage* of the section as artistic as the exhibits themselves. You leave the glare and heat of the rest of the building to find a subdued light and cool shade in the French section; for the French have made ceilings of cloths—some of them with borders or centers cut in lace patterns—to keep out the glare and the heat. Throughout their section they have placed comfortable settees, which are simply a boon to the weary. I have seen exhausted women throw themselves down upon these settees and fall asleep. The French section has become widely known as a place of refuge for those in need of rest. How many of those who admire the setting of this French section, and the humanity which prevails in all its arrangements, realize that it is simply the gracious expression of a national art-sense? Here was a lesson that to be great a nation need not be brutal. When I first arrived in Chicago a feeling of suppressed grief seemed to pervade the ranks of the French employees—even of the marines who stood guard in this section. I wondered what was the matter until I accidentally learned that one of the subordinate American employees in the Art Building had pasted a small label on one of Meissonier's paintings.

The Lyons silk exhibit—which has a “coast-line” of about 1000 feet of show-cases—is in the gallery. For the stairways which lead to the gallery in other parts of the building the French have substituted a broad and easy flight of steps, and the floor of the space occupied by this exhibit has been specially carpeted. The Soieries de Lyon attract a vast amount of attention from women; and, indeed, some of the silks are beautiful enough to be called woven music. This exhibit must equal in money value that of the combined textile exhibits of all the other nations. To show what a Frenchman can do with a loom, I may mention a piece of silk which represents a stretch of sea with sunset colors above it. It is not a set woven picture, like the woven copy of Gilbert Stuart's portrait of Washington, but a piece of delicate fantasy. Strange to say, the one blot on the artistic arrangement of

the French section was in this Lyons exhibit. The cases had been "dressed" about as prosaically as was possible. As an expert dry-goods man said to me, they could n't have been worse if the goods had "just been chucked in for a fire-sale." Yet so beautiful are these silks, that the men who usually rebel at the length of time they are compelled by their wives to remain among the textiles lingered willingly enough here. For myself, I prefer the small but exceedingly refined exhibit of hand-made laces made by the *Compagnie des Indes* down-stairs, the cheerful human toil which enters into the delicate products giving them an interest which no machine-made fabric can possess.

I happened to witness one rather funny incident in the American silk exhibit. A concern which manufactures spool silk has as a special feature a mammoth artificial silkworm. Under the case is an electric mechanical contrivance by which raw silk is made to pass into the worm at one end, and spools of silk are caused to drop out at the other. A woman, after watching this for some time, exclaimed, "Well, I can understand it all except how it manages to get the silk colored!"

In the Midway Plaisance is probably the greatest collection of "fakes" the world has ever seen. The proprietors thereof rejoice, however, in the proud title of "Concessionaires." Whenever I grew tired of formal sight-seeing I would stroll down the Plaisance (which was so popular that everybody soon got the knack of pronouncing it correctly) to the Egyptian temple. Here was the greatest fakir of them all. I am proud to say he was an American. In Egyptian raiment he squatted in front of the temple, and delivered his speech as follows:

"This, ladies and gentlemen, is the temple of Luxor, the tomb of Rameses II. You will find his mummy about¹ the fifth one on the right. On the left the mummy of King Solomon's father-in-law—also his sister-in-law. The sacred dances are about to begin."

To discover, after all this, that the mummies at which people were gazing so reverentially were dummies was an unmitigated joy.

One evening after the Egypto-American above mentioned had delivered his speech about the temple of Luxor and the mummy of Rameses II., a man in the crowd turned to me and asked, "Is this the German Village?"

The personnel of the Plaisance shows reminded me of Thackeray's inventory of passengers in the *White Squall*. There are innumerable Oriental dances—Turkish, Algerian, Persian, and Egyptian, the latter in a theater annexed to the "Street in Cairo." These dances are supposed to be very suggestive, but I think most people must find them simply ugly, and

¹ A most delicious inflection of the voice on this word.

wonder if they really convey the Oriental idea of grace in motion.

Much more interesting is the dancing in



A VETERAN.

the large Javanese village, and in the theater of the South Sea Islanders. The former is really graceful; the latter is the best dancing in the Plaisance. It makes no pretense to grossness, but is simply downright savage. There is a certain indescribable charm about the Plaisance with its varied life; and the crowd which it attracts is an added feature of interest. Not far from the Plaisance was Buffalo Bill's



(A) 930

WONDERFUL!

Wild West Show with its Deadwood Coach, "which, ladies and gentlemen, has carried more royalty, and more royalty at one time, than any other coach in the world—Colonel Cody on the box!" It costs about \$30 in dimes and quarters to do the Plaisance. But the fakes, including the Beauty Show, are often seen in procession through the grounds.

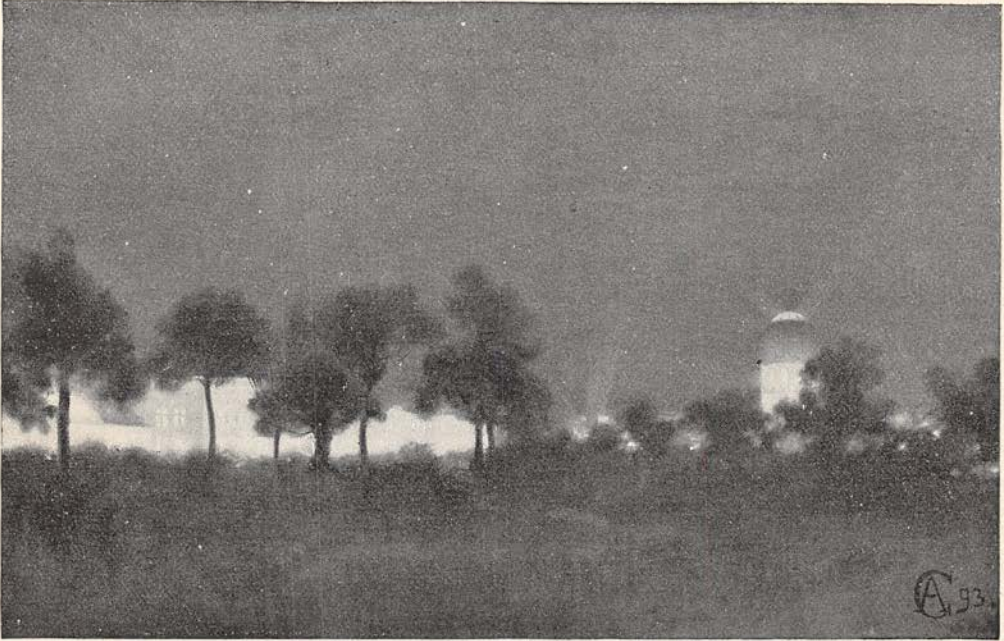
Very little has been said about the music at the Fair, but it is an important "life" ex-

hibit. I do not refer to the playing of the wind-instrument bands on the out-door stands, but to the concerts in the music and festival halls. At the head of the department of music is Theodore Thomas, who still conducts with his old-time grace and significance, and can get more music out of his orchestra with a simple wave of the hand than many conductors can with hands, arms, head, and body. He is assisted by Mr. Tomlins and Mr. George H. Wilson, the latter being in charge of the arduous duties of administration. Mr. Thomas has a permanent orchestra, which can be brought up to 150 by drawing in some of the players from the bands, who for this purpose become, temporarily, musicians. Choral and instrumental concerts, many of them free, are given nearly every day, and the results cannot fail to be far-reaching.

When I laid emphasis on the importance of the Fair as an exhibit of landscape-gardening and architecture, I had in mind the unusualness of those features as compared with the exhibits as a whole, among which there are necessarily few surprises. The great firms have done about what might reasonably have been expected of them; but those strokes of genius by which individuals hitherto unknown attain on occasions like these immediate and lasting fame are not strikingly apparent. Nor should I say that outside the Art Building and the United States Government Building, residents of our large cities see much that could not be found at home. It must be remembered that our great trade bazaars—which have come up since the Centennial—draw on nearly all industries and all parts of the world, and are really world's fairs. For this reason the location of the Fair in Chicago was fortunate. It has brought things which are familiar to us in the East, where our town

and rural population often gets into the large cities, to the cognizance of the great West. Thus exhibits which, perhaps, strike the visitor from a large city as nothing more than rows of show-cases are veritable revelations to the vast majority of visitors.

I have seen many descriptions of the World's Fair, but none has quite expressed what seems to me its most valuable characteristic. That is neither its size nor its magnificence, but its gra-



VIEW FROM THE ISLAND AT NIGHT.

cious beauty and engaging loveliness, which linger in the memory like the remembrance of a pleasant dream. We Americans are apt to boast of the bigness of various things American;

but here we have something as beautiful as it is big — nay, more beautiful. So let us for once overlook its size, and let the world know that we have something that is simply beautiful.

Gustav Kobbé.

STORM-VOICES.

THE night grows old; again and yet again
 The tempest wakens round the whistling height,
 And all the winds like loosened hounds take flight
 With bay and halloo, and the wintry rain
 Sweeps the drenched roof, and bears the narrow pane.
 There is a surging horror in the night;
 The woods far out are roaring in their might;
 The curtains sway; the rafters creak and strain.
 And, as I dream, o'er all my spirit swims
 A passion sad and holy as the tomb;
 Strange human voices cry into mine ear;
 Out of the vexèd dark I seem to hear
 Vast organ thunders, and a burst of hymns
 That swell and soar in some cathedral gloom.

Archibald Lampman.