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WORLD'S FAIR AT NIGHT

An Electrical Display of Wonderful Beauty.

THE SUN-LIKE SEARCH-LIGHTS.

And the Myriads of Lights on the Tops of the Big Buildings—A Display Which Must Be Seen To Be Appreciated—The Great Center of the Solar System.

WORLD'S FAIR, May 19.—[Special.]—This great exposition might be compared in one sense with the universe. It has a horizon of dull ivory outlined by the sky-lines of the huge buildings. It has its stars and other heavenly bodies in the electric search-lights which throw out brilliant streams of light from elevated places. It has a solar system, and the center of this system, the center of light, power and energy, is the mammoth horizontal engine which is the king of all engines and which stands in the center of the Palace of Mechanical Arts. Today this monster was lying still. A dozen or more of his assistants, each a lesser monster, were furnishing all the power needed during the hours of sunlight. It was an hour of rest for the big fellow, and while he rested a very pretty scene occurred. Standing near the base of the foundation which supports the main shaft and the great wheel was a fond mamma and her pretty little daughter. They looked at the belt which runs from the thirty-foot wheel to the dynamo which has power enough to electrocute a whole city full of people were its currents turned upon them. This belt is seven or eight feet wide, and a carriage and pair of horses could be driven over it without danger of collapse.

The little girl in some way had gotten the notion into her pretty head that she wanted to walk out upon the big belt. Her fond mamma, over-indulgent, or inspired by some fancy of the imagination, indulged the idea and appealed to the engineer in charge. Would he object? Would it do any harm? The good-natured master of the monster looked at the pretty little girl and the comely face of the mamma, made more interesting by the soft pleading words and the appealing eyes, and had it not in his heart to say no. So he took the waif in his arms, lifted her upon the giant belt, and fearlessly she tripped out along its broad pathway. Quite a crowd was present—there is always a crowd around the big engine, whether it is in motion or not—and they applauded with clapping of the hands.

"A little child astride the monster," commented a visitor whose long hair and soulful eyes bespoke the poetic instinct; "an angel standing upon the center of the solar system."

A few hours later the breath of the steam was let into the lungs of the monster and the great wheel was set in motion. If one cared to follow out the smile of the solar system with this as its central life-giving agency he would have to let his imagination travel first through the underground conduits which run all through the exposition grounds, carrying the hundreds of electric cables and the magic current in every direction. At night he would find this current manifesting itself in myriads of lights on the tops of the big buildings, in five enormous coronas under the roof of the tent of glass and steel which is the covering of the leviathan Manufactures building, in a circle of brilliant arcs around the central court, in an incandescent dome over the Horticultural building, in dazzling succession of vari-colored rays thrown upon the electrical fountains, in a crown of jewels at the top of the crown-like Administration building, in the sun-like search-lights, he would find nearly across Lake Michigan, and in a thousand ways which would unfold themselves at every step about these marvelous products.

The truth is, this electrical display is, next to the palaces and the architectural effect, the most brilliant and entrancing thing in the exposition. If there were nothing here but the big buildings, their ornamentation of statuary, their water fronts, and the electricity, the show would be worth traveling across the continent to see. There is not a single feature in which the exposition is a disappointment. It is strong in every department. But the electrical display partakes of the marvelous, the sublime, the incredible.

Naturally, it is a thing which must be seen to be appreciated. You never saw an artist who could paint the constellation of the heavens, did you? You never knew a writer who could describe the glories of the firmament? No. Nor could artist or writer, or both together, give you any thing like an adequate idea of the beauty of this electrical manifestation. The most that I hope to do is to impress upon you the fact that it is a spectacle which every man, woman and child in America who can manage to do so should see and enjoy. I sincerely advise sacrifice of other things, of home pleasure, of profits in business, of a share of savings, of time devoted to trade or school, in order to come to Chicago. And if you have but two days and a night to spend here, let one day or a good part of it be put in at the center of this solar system, where the city block of boilers generate the steam that moves the many monsters, where the hundreds of miles of wires are impregnated with the current which produces all these wonderfully beautiful effects.

Spend a night in beholding the brilliancy of the scene about the central court and within the Electricity building. See the mammoth pillar of fire, composed of thousands upon thousands of electric lights. In various hues and with alternating currents our race—things which will thrill and astonish you and fill your mind with thoughts of the almost infinite ingenuity of man and his almost divine control of the forces of nature.

The point that I wish to impress upon my readers is that this fair is worth seeing at any cost within the command of the people. As world's fairs go it will probably be thirty or forty years before this country witnesses another like it. That

will mean the next generation, and now this. Nor is it true that one must spend a small fortune in order to behold the glories of the White City. It is not true one must submit to extortion or robbery in Chicago. Two weeks ago I wrote a letter in which I expressed the opinion that one would be able to secure rooms and board in Chicago at almost any price he felt like paying. I then predicted that an effort would be made by many hotel proprietors and restaurant-keepers to extort unnecessary and unjust prices from guests, but that the fierceness of competition would very quickly lead to reductions. This is exactly what has already happened.

Just after the opening of the fair a cry went up in the columns of eastern papers that Chicago was trying to rob the people. The Chicago papers were compelled to take the matter up and make investigations. They found that in many instances these charges were well based. But it must be said to their credit that they condemned extortion wherever they found it and exposed the guilty parties. The men who started out to get rich in a few weeks by charging enormous rates soon found that not only was public sentiment against them but they were cutting off their own noses. There were so many other places in which guests could find entertainment at reasonable prices that their exorbitant establishments were soon deserted.

Already we find conditions settling down here. We are now able to ascertain approximately what it will cost a man or a party or a family to come to Chicago and see the fair for five or six days or more time. By good management, and suppression of the great American weakness



ON THE BIG BELT.

of pride, one may make his expenses just what he can afford to pay. For instance, he may go to one of the first-class hotels, either those of the city proper or of the World's fair district, and live at the rate of from \$8 to \$30 per day per person. Or he may go to the more moderate houses and obtain rooms at prices ranging from \$1 to \$3 per day per person, and take meals wherever he likes at a cost varying from \$1.50 to \$3 per person. Between these limits one should be able to satisfy himself.

It stands to reason that living at the hotels will be more expensive than in private houses. The hotel-keepers represent large investments and large expectations. They want big profits. But in thousands upon thousands of private houses there are rooms to rent, with or without meals, at prices which every visitor will be able to please himself with. In looking about I have seen plenty of good, comfortable rooms within a short distance of the fair gates, which may be had at a cost of \$1 to \$1.50 per person per day. By exercising economy these visitors may get their meals at \$1.50 more per day. Of course they will have to keep away from the high-priced restaurants, and should take as few meals as possible within the grounds, where everything is more expensive than it is on the outside.

A friend of mine in Ohio, a man who has but a moderate income and who is a prudent financier, wrote me a few days ago as follows:

"We want to see the fair, but we can't afford to go to Chicago to be robbed. Won't you look about for me and see what you can do in the way of accommodations for myself, wife and two grown children? I am willing to pay reasonable prices for comfortable, cleanly accommodations, but economy is a consideration with a poor man such as I am. We might leave the children at home, but rather than to do that I shall stay at home myself."

I was glad to go out and see what I could find for my friend. I applauded his practical spirit, and also his determination to bring his children along. If a man can afford to come to the fair at all he should bring all of his children who are old enough to appreciate the show and to profit by it as one of the grandest educational institutions ever organized in the world. After a day's search I reported to my friend as follows:

"Have found you two nice rooms in a new house, well kept by a woman of good character, about half a mile from the gates of the exposition. There are two beds and you may have a cot or small bed also if you like. There is running water in the rooms, and a bath and other conveniences are in the hall adjoining. The house has a porch and a pretty yard. For these two rooms you will pay during the ten days of your stay \$4 a day. You may have breakfast in the house and I am sure from what I saw of the woman that the breakfasts will be satisfactory—at \$2 per day for your family. A light luncheon at the exposition and dinner at a restaurant near your rooms will cost you for the four persons about \$1.25 for the luncheon and \$2.50 for the dinner. Your admission to the fair will be \$2 a day. If you add to this about \$2 a day for incidentals, admission to the specialties in the pleasure, catalogues, rides on the intramural railway, etc., you will find your expenses footing up about \$14 a day during your stay here. By economy you will be able to cut this down \$2 or \$3, or if you feel disposed you may make it two or more dollars more."

This is for a party of four, and it will be observed that the expense is a little more than \$3 per day per person. As a result of this inquiry I unhesitatingly say to inquirers that if they will be careful of their expenditures they may come here and stay at an expense of \$3 a day each, though in order to do this there should be two or more in the party.

As to the time required for a satisfactory view of the fair, a month is better than a fortnight, but even so short a time as a week will do fairly well. In six days and evenings—for the grounds are open till near midnight—one may see all the principal objects of interest without, of course, stopping to examine everything in detail. If I could come for only four or five days, and thought it necessary to reduce my expenses to \$2 or \$2.50 a day while here, I should still come. It is the universe spread out here for one's inspection, and it is worth seeing at any cost or sacrifice within reason.

ROBERT GRAY.

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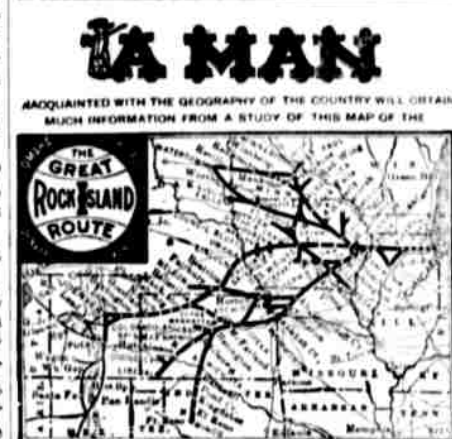
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