

EFFECTS OF AN EXPOSITION

Good that Comes from Gathering Together Many Diverse Interests.

VIEWSPRESS BY PRESIDENT WATLIES

Holding of the Great Show in Omaha Will Do Much Toward Developing the Great Trans-Mississippi Country.

Asked if he noticed any increase in enthusiasm in support of the Transmississippi and International Exposition among the business men throughout the country, President Gordon W. Watlies said:

"I think the friends of the exposition are becoming more numerous and determined every day, and with each step forward some of those who opposed the enterprise from the start are following the lead. The sentiment seems to be growing that we must do something to start this city and transmississippi country up the grade again, and that the first and best thing to do is, if possible, to attract capital and immigration in this direction. At the first mention of this exposition a few men saw in it a great advertising scheme for Omaha and for the entire west. Many said it could not be made a success on account of the times; that congress would do nothing for it, and when the proposition was made to raise \$250,000 by subscriptions to stock, it was generally regarded as a business man's undertaking such a task. But when congress did pass an act, authorizing the expenditure of \$200,000, and when the business men who had not seriously considered the proposition before, became its active supporters. When the committee secured over \$400,000 in subscriptions, with numerous large interests yet to hear from, which would swell the amount to at least \$600,000, many more doubts came over with the hope. But there are some yet who, while in favor of the exposition, doubt our ability to hold it. This has been true of every exposition or other great public enterprise in Chicago, and there were many who opposed the World's fair and used the same arguments we now hear against the exposition. They said the city was too poor, the streets were not in proper condition; there were not a sufficient number of hotels, and all these things would be a hindrance. At San Francisco all these arguments were urged with double force, and yet they did make a great success at both those places. At San Francisco they opened their gates eight months after the Midwinter fair was first mentioned. It was originated and carried out during the greatest panic this country has ever seen. Over 2,000,000 people passed through its gates, and over \$60,000,000 were received in the treasury after all obligations were discharged."

OF OTHER EXPOSITIONS.

Asked as to his opinion as to the results of the exposition on the transmississippi country, Mr. Watlies said: "I can only judge by what similar exhibitions have done for other sections. The World's fair did not particularly advertise any locality. It was a great educational success. In architecture, science, mechanics, electricity, and even music and religion, it marked a new epoch in history. To Chicago and the lines of transportation centering there the greatest financial benefits were derived. The city of Chicago gave \$5,000,000 in bonds to the exposition. The assessed valuation of the city increased nearly \$200,000,000 in one year, and the taxes on this increase alone for two years would pay all the bonds they gave for the direct benefit of the city. It is estimated that \$1,000,000 daily was expended in the city by visitors during the entire exposition.

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DISCRIMINATING AGAINST OMAHA.

Objections to Action of Exposition Directors Prescribing Home Talent.

OMAHA, Jan. 11.—To the Editor of the Bee: I notice in the press reports that the directors of the exposition have introduced a resolution last Saturday which was adopted by the exposition directors, authorizing the employment of an engineer and landscape architect to report upon the relative merit of the proposed sites, such engineer and architect to be a resident of Omaha. This, it is claimed, is an exclusive one. It is not a metropolitan city of 150,000 population is after all a village and that it has not one competent professional man capable of determining the most ordinary problems of municipal engineering or that there is none sufficiently honest to be trusted with the honor of an exclusive one. It is not a metropolitan city of 150,000 population is after all a village and that it has not one competent professional man capable of determining the most ordinary problems of municipal engineering or that there is none sufficiently honest to be trusted with the honor of an exclusive one.

The introduction of this resolution a few years ago denouced the subscriber, who was then in Omaha, before the Treasury department as an engineer and landscape architect, because, in deference to the written request of Hon. John M. Thurston, Alvin Saunders and other prominent citizens, he had accepted of the various proposed postoffice sites with an abstract of their relative merits, from an engineering point of view, which amounted to a long list of names of architects and engineers, containing the statement that if selected the sixteenth street site would require an additional expense for piling under the foundation of about \$100,000. The measurements made indicated that water would be struck thirteen feet below the grade surface. In view of the general facts, and the government expert sent to Omaha, returned to Washington with a report that his statements as to water profiles were absolutely correct.

After this site was selected, in place of manfully admitting the truth and providing for a proper foundation, the architect appointed on the recommendation of General Manderson, persistently denied the existence of a water stratum, willfully misrepresented the facts, claiming that the water was only a few feet below the surface, and proceeded with the construction just as if a uniform foundation existed. Had it not been for a timely change in architects, this building would have been wrecked before it was two-thirds up. After the change, the entire new framework within was stayed and modified at a very large expense, so as to insure an uniform bearing as possible, and a drain ditch is now being constructed under contract at an expense of about \$5,000 to draw the water from the building foundation, while a pump is kept constantly running to keep it at a low level. Thus the structure is kept in a sort of sickly physical condition, with the probability of future uneven settling and cracking due to this irreparable neglect.

In this case, an honest engineer is really wanted for the analysis of the proposed sites. It seems to have been intimated that local engineers should be disqualified from serving because they are liable to be prejudiced. Upon that theory local attorneys should not be selected for judges in our courts, but should be selected from neighboring states. As a matter of fact any local, reputable engineer is more liable to give an honest abstract of the merits and demerits of respective sites than any non-resident who would solicit the brief employment, as the latter, if inclined to be dishonest, come "for what there is in it," and having nothing to lose locally, are more prone to yield to the insidious influence of interested parties, while, on the other hand, the resident engineer would find the honor and the respect of his community at stake.

I do not wish to be understood as objecting to the employment of any reputable engineer who is competent, whether resident or non-resident, but I claim that the discrimination against Omaha engineers and architects upon such flimsy grounds as have been cited is unequal and that the alleged reasons are unfounded and infamous. If the exposition directors prefer the employment of other than local talent it is their privilege to go to Chicago, New York, Paris or elsewhere for such help. What is the object of the spreading the net, and publishing it broadcast that Omaha engineers are to be specially proscribed from employment in the Transmississippi Exposition? It is to injure the local talent it is their privilege to go to Chicago, New York, Paris or elsewhere for such help. What is the object of the spreading the net, and publishing it broadcast that Omaha engineers are to be specially proscribed from employment in the Transmississippi Exposition?

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