

# John Alexander Dowie's Industrial Zion

(Copyright, 1902, by John Swain.)

**F**ORTY-TWO miles north of Chicago, and an equal distance south of Milwaukee, near the line of the Chicago & Northwestern railway, stands a gigantic signboard bearing the legend, "Zion City, 6,500 Acres." Below the lettering there is a birdseye view of the new metropolis. In the center stands a magnificent marble temple—the finest the painter could imagine. About it is a great park and from this radiate broad boulevards, reaching to other parks and crossing at intervals the straight north and south streets and avenues of the city. Lake Michigan is shown in the foreground; on the land lying between the railroad and the lake are great factories—all smokeless—and an enormous central powerhouse, also smokeless.

A year ago this sign stood in the midst of a vacant tract of land, with no house in sight save occasional farm dwellings strung along the Green Bay road, a quarter of a mile to the westward. Today nearly four thousand people live within a mile of the road; some of them in \$5,000 dwellings. Between the railroad and the lake—where then was a bleak stretch of sand dune and wooded peat-bog—stands a structure covering three acres of land, the powerhouse of the picture, and other buildings. Along the tracks are great freight sheds, lumber yards and other indications of business and prosperity. Houses are being rushed up on every side, and the sounds of hammer and saw are everywhere. A station stands beside the railway and a dozen trains a day stop there. The way freight spends from half an hour to an hour switching on the long sidings. A year ago Zion City was a man's dream—which he had communicated to a great number of people who believed in him. Today Zion City is a fact, and the dreamer, John A. Dowie, is its ruler in all matters both spiritual and temporal.

Not since the march of the Mormons across the plains has this country seen so phenomenal a movement as this of a religious body out of the cities and out of other sects into a community of its own.

## Dowie's First American Appearance.

The Rev. John Alexander Dowie appeared in Chicago ten or twelve years ago, unknown to Americans, though rather noted in Australia. He stepped quickly into prominence as a leader of faith healers, having in fact come as a missionary for the "International Society of Divine Healing," of which he afterward became president. Opening his meetings in a tent, he soon drew crowds, made himself notorious and proceeded to found the "Christian

Catholic Church in Zion," an organization which now has 100,000 members, probably recognizes him as its head, and contributes to him, for its maintenance, a tithe, rigidly enforced, of all the financial increase of all of its members.

Eventually he possessed several millions worth of property, on which he must pay taxes, being unable to persuade the assessors of Chicago to view him in the same light as the Roman Catholic church and let his property go free. This is what decided Dowie to found a city of his own. In this new city he purposed to appoint his own assessors and health department, rule his people directly, and have a chance to expand and be great. Incidentally he believes in theocracy; believes that eventually this and every other country will be ruled by God through the voice of the prophet, and that he is the prophet to begin this restoration of an old idea. So he planned his city and arranged to bring in the faithful.

## Preparing to Build His City.

But to plan a city and to build it are widely different things. Here was Dowie, a preacher, pretty rich, to be sure, but not rich enough to buy the land on which to build. For if he would have a good city he must have a good location, and land in good locations come high. And if he were to start buying land in any locality the people from whom he wished to buy would be very likely to jump the prices up. Besides there must be good reason for settlers to come in, or his city would never amount to anything. So Dowie went to work secretly to find a location, arrange for industries and secure the land, before his plans should get out.

In the first place he had to inform his people that the city was being planned. That was necessary in order that the money should come in. He told them about his proposed great city of Zion, site still unknown, but where the law of God should be supreme. He formed the Zion Land and Investment association, and called for subscriptions. Investors had no rights except that of exchanging their "stock" for leases on land which Dowie should buy. The land should belong to him, and as long as they held their stock he guaranteed "dividends" on it. In this way he collected an enormous amount of money.

Then he sent out Deacon Daniel Sloan, formerly a secretary of the Young Men's Christian association, and H. Worthington Judd, a real estate dealer, to select a site. They chose the one on the lake shore which was finally secured. It was an excellent strip of land, rolling, well watered, partially wooded, and for the most part covered with fine farms. It had two miles

of frontage on Lake Michigan and affording every possibility of harbor making. One big railway ran through it, another along its western edge. Five miles away to the south was the prosperous city of Waukegan, where there was a harbor and the lake terminus of the "outer belt" line—the Elgin, Joliet & Eastern railway. There was every facility for this line also to enter the "promised land."

## Industries Picked Out.

Dowie already had his industry picked out. He wanted to get one with which the name of "Zion" could easily be associated. Lacey making was a new industry in this country. An English lace maker was trying to sell his plant and come over to join Dowie. Dowie bought the plant, organized an association with a capital of \$1,000,000 to run it—collecting \$400,000 cash from his followers on his personal equity before he bought a foot of land or laid a brick for the factory, and guaranteeing from 6 to 12 per cent dividends on the stock. He went outside of lace making in his plans and prospectus. He planned—and still plans—a great textile industry, where cotton shall be spun and woven into cloth, where woolen goods shall be made and where lace shall be manufactured—all of the best materials, at good prices, and all to the upbuilding of the "Christian Catholic church."

Dowie had not yet a foot of the land, nor had he then found a man capable of buying it. Had he asked real estate men, they would have told him it would be impossible to buy a tract as large as he wanted—6,500 acres—so near Chicago, without paying fabulous prices for it, even if he could persuade the holders to sell it at all. Failure to buy any single acre of it would be fatal, for he had planned a city in which there should be no liquor or tobacco, and in which these should be forbidden in the deeds and leases. If a single acre of land was owned by an outsider, the owner could set up a saloon or do as he pleased in the midst of the godly community and corrupt the inhabitants.

## Dowie's Great Scheme.

When things go right with Dowie he assures himself and his followers that it is the Lord's doings. When they go wrong the devil has triumphed. In this case the Lord came to the rescue and sent a real estate man named Wheelock to Zion with a proposition to sell another tract of land to them. Dowie and Sloan sized him up as a pretty safe man to work with, and so they made a contract with him to go and buy the land they wanted on a sliding commission. The cheaper he got it the more he made.

"Here is \$25,000," said Sloan. "Deposit

this in the bank at Waukegan in your name, hire a buggy or buy one, and go to work. Get the land. Get three year options on every acre of it. Make the best terms you can. Provide for cash payments where you have to, get mortgage arrangements where you can. Get all the time you can. Let no whisper get out that you are acting for Dowie."

Following these instructions Wheelock moved up and down over the territory, moving gradually westward, paying less as he went away from the lake, till he had covered the whole 6,500 acres and secured options on it at an average price of \$200 an acre. These options alone cost Mr. Dowie \$100,000 in cash. They were on contracts which provided that any time within three years he might close the bargain and take deed. They provided for time payment and also that the forfeiture of any payment would turn back the land to the original owner. The owners retained the right to farm their lands until final deed was given to Dowie.

The highest price was \$500 an acre for lake shore land. That seemed a staggerer to the Chicago people who had "ideas" about the value of north shore land so far away. A little later a real estate man offered Dowie \$500,000 cash if he would step aside and let him assume the responsibility of the bargain. But Dowie refused. The offer was increased beyond \$1,000,000, but he still refused. It was easily seen that with so large and so compact a tract, well situated, he had but to run in railway sidetracks, give away sites to manufacturers, guarantee freedom from taxation and found a boom town of the largest size.

## Big Land Sales.

When he had paid for the first 1,000 acres, he called the faithful to Zion and began his big land sale. Special trains carried thousands to the city, where an odd mixture of religion and business was shown in his plan to "lease" for 1,100 years at prices which would return a profit of \$15,000,000 on the deal.

Chicago expected a colossal failure then, and there were numerous prophecies that Dowie had at last passed the zenith and was descending toward a grand "sunset." But this has failed to happen thus far. The faithful obeyed their leader's voice and flocked in. The city was opened in July of last year. By autumn there were hundreds of houses up. The lace works were running and new buildings were going up for them. Men, women and children came in every conceivable way. I remember seeing in a hollow near a creek, in the back part of Zion City, an encampment of Kansas people who had come all the way in private schooners—just as their fathers

had gone to Kansas—and were awaiting their chance to build. People lived in tents, in shanties, in wagons—any way at all, till houses could be built. Cold weather drove many to shelter elsewhere, but many stayed, some living in tents even with the thermometer at 20 below zero. By spring there were 3,000 people there. By summer there will be 45,000. Already Dowie has paid for and thrown open 3,000 acres of his land.

Dowie's plans have expanded with the city. He is building big schoolhouses. He is planning a university. He has a college already, but he wants a greater school. He plans a great capital. He has followers and settlements all over the country and Zion is to be the head city. He plans to rule from there and his city may be worthy of him. He hopes to see his textile factory covering fifty acres within a decade or less, but he does not expect to see all or much of Zion given up to commerce, for it is to be the intellectual and spiritual capital of the Christian Catholic church.

## Dowie Now a Political Power.

Incidentally Dowie has become a political power in Lake County. In a few years he will be stronger and will loom up in Illinois. That is because Zion City votes as Dowie directs. It has a municipality, and Dowie kindly "steps aside" and allows a mayor chosen as he pleases to do so. But both candidates, or all of them, are members of his church and of his cabinet, and his views rule Zion through whoever may be elected.

Nor is there a great deal for the mayor and his council to do, for Zion is ruled largely by the leases on the land, which provide that no person shall sell liquors or tobacco, pork or oysters, or drugs, nor shall any one living thereon practice medicine, surgery or dentistry. If these clauses are violated the land reverts to Dowie, or after his death to trustees of the church, to be disposed of as they see fit. One need not belong to Dowie's church to lease there, and the believer in medicine may call in a doctor from outside. He can use drugs if he buys them outside and need not pay his tithes into the church if he is not a member. If one is willing to obey the ten commandments plus Dowie's additions and to live according to the sanitary code of the old Jewish law, he will find Zion City a home among a kindly and industrious people, who, because they spend nothing on drink and tobacco, are unusually prosperous.

In fact, the most amiable of goats might live happily with a whole flock of sheep. But if he is unwilling to follow the leader he would be apt to feel extremely lonesome.

JOHN SWAIN.

# Zoological Garden of a Live Western Woman

**M**RS. MARY ELITCH is the only woman keeper of a zoological garden, and her name is known in this regard among people interested in zoological gardens the world over. Elitch Garden is one of the features of Denver, where, since 1893, it has been the most popular of all summer resorts. Considering all the circumstances, Mrs. Elitch's success there has been nothing less than phenomenal. She started in the panic year, when Denver was prostrate financially. She was entirely without experience, not only in that, but in any business, a big debt overhung her and she had only fourteen weeks business in a year.

During the lifetime of her husband Mrs. Elitch had lived the conventional life of a woman of means, coming in contact with few outside her own exclusive circle, and devoted to art, of which she was very fond. Mr. Elitch died leaving the garden heavily encumbered and his business affairs in bad shape. Mrs. Elitch leased the garden first to an amusement company formed of some of the leading business men of Denver. They could not make it pay, and to save it from the hammer she assumed charge of it herself. Her methods are a good illustration of a woman's way of running things. She

moved out to the garden and took up her residence in a tiny lodge on the grounds. Then she began to take care of the garden as she would a house. She knew if there was a board loose anywhere. She learned to mix paint and apply it to fence or summerhouse. She learned everything that had to do with the bedding of plants, the making of lawns and the care of the large fruit orchard that formed one of the attractions of the place. She learned how to buy nails and lumber, wire fencing and stationary. She learned how to plan pretty corners in her vine-clad arbors and new attractions for each season. She learned how to manage a force of 100 men, and get all the work out of them that they could do. She informed herself next as to the way to deal with concessionaires and how to run a theater so that it was jammed every night of her fourteen weeks' season.

The last feature of the business which Mrs. Elitch took up was the zoological collections. She found herself losing valuable specimens from time to time, although she was paying a high-priced attendant, who resented any attempt at suggestion from herself. She discharged him, hired a boy who would do as she told him to, and assumed charge of the animals herself. She

studied them as if they were children, watching the effects of different kinds of food and care. She read everything that could be found on the subject, corresponding with well known keepers, and visited the large cities for the purpose of talking with the heads of zoological gardens. When her lions began to die she sat up with them night after night and hardly slept or ate until she found and remedied the cause of the disease. As a result her collection became healthy and successful, and the baby lions and other interesting inmates of the animal houses became valued friends and acquaintances of all the small boys and girls of Denver. From time to time she added fine specimens. She established a seal pond, and her ostrich, harnessed with flowers, and drawing a smart little trap, was a feature of the floral parades in some of Denver's annual fall festivals.

For some years, while she was learning the business, Mrs. Elitch labored under the most crushing financial burdens. But eventually, as she stopped leak after leak, and learned more and more how to cater to the popular tastes, she rolled them off and began to accumulate money, until she is now in an enviable position.

Summer after summer she has been offered exorbitant inducements to grant concessions for the selling of beer and alcoholic drinks, but has invariably refused. Every summer, too, every child in the charitable institutions of Denver is given a free outing in her garden, and the aged inmates at the Old Ladies' Home, nearby, all have season passes. Indicating that business success is not incompatible with generosity and high principles. Mrs. Elitch is a beautiful, charming, elegantly gowned woman, the last in the world whom one would suspect of being at the head of a great business.

## Edison and Airship

(Continued from Third Page.)

Newton and the ordinary textbooks of the day, the swallow would have to be as strong as a man. Professor Langley has demonstrated the contrary by interesting experiments which any one may reproduce. He attached a plate of brass to a spring registering apparatus and fastened it to a long arm which easily could be set in motion. When the arm was at rest the brass registered one pound, but when the arm was revolved the spring, instead of being drawn out still further, was contracted until it registered less than an ounce. The weight then seemed to float in the air and it was found that much less power was required to move the plate rapidly than at a low rate of speed. It seemed to run over the air much the same as a "skipping" stone runs over the surface of

the water and does not sink until its momentum is gone.

Mr. Edison's plan of solution was apparently so different from that of Santos-Dumont that I asked the aeronaut how he regarded the matter.

"I don't think our ideas are so far apart," he replied. "He told me I was on the right track. I don't believe in doing away with the balloon entirely, yet, but I am making the gas bag smaller and increasing the motive power all the time, so perhaps after a while I shall come to Mr. Edison's plan. Unfortunately, what he says about the reward of the inventor is true, but I have never cared for that part of it. I never tried to get a patent on my part of my airship and do not intend to. Whatever money I get in prize I shall devote to further experiments in the airship line.

"I was glad to talk with Mr. Edison. He is a practical man. He has promised to give me the first battery he turns out of his factory and I shall use it on my airship for the purpose of lighting the gasoline engines with an electric spark. This is the safest and quickest way, and of course the battery will be so light that it will add value to my equipment without adding unnecessary weight."

## It Sounds Dreadful

Chicago Journal: Colonel Sam Reed was breakfasting at Delmonico's. After looking over the French menu he said to the waiter:

"You may bring me some eggs blushing like Aurora and some breeches in the royal

fashion, with velvet sauce, and for dessert be sure you bring a stew of good Christians and a mouthful of ladies."

The astonished waiter said: "Sir, we don't serve such dishes." "Yes, you do," said the guest, pointing to the bill of fare. "Oeufs a la Aurore—culottes la royale—saucque velouté—compote de bon cretiens—saucque de dames." "All right," said the waiter; "ready in two minutes, sir."

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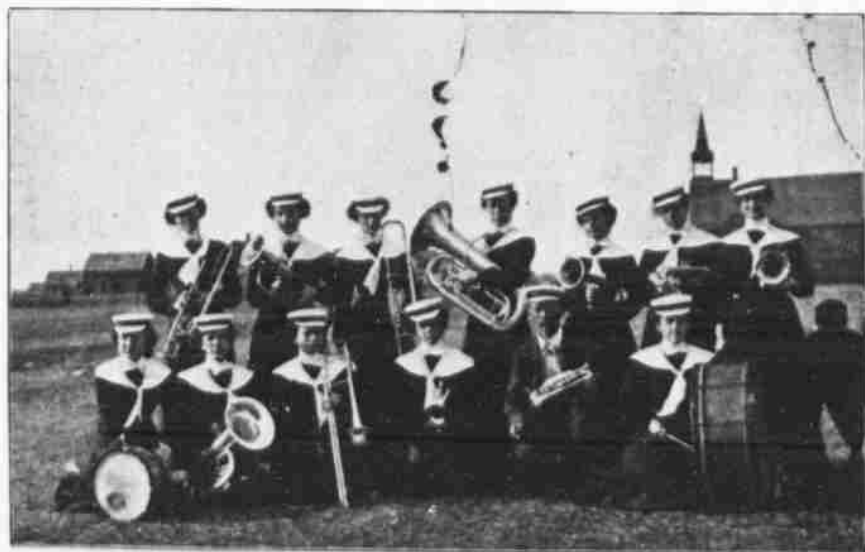
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PHOTOGRAPHY

Phone 303, Omaha.



Standing: Bertha Marsh, Minnie White, Martha White, Edith Heck, Marion Mason, Jessie Whittemore, Ida Lamb.  
Sitting: Irene Pigge, Florence Hoel, Grace, Cliff, Lena McKnight, H. A. Hall, Lena Nichols.  
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