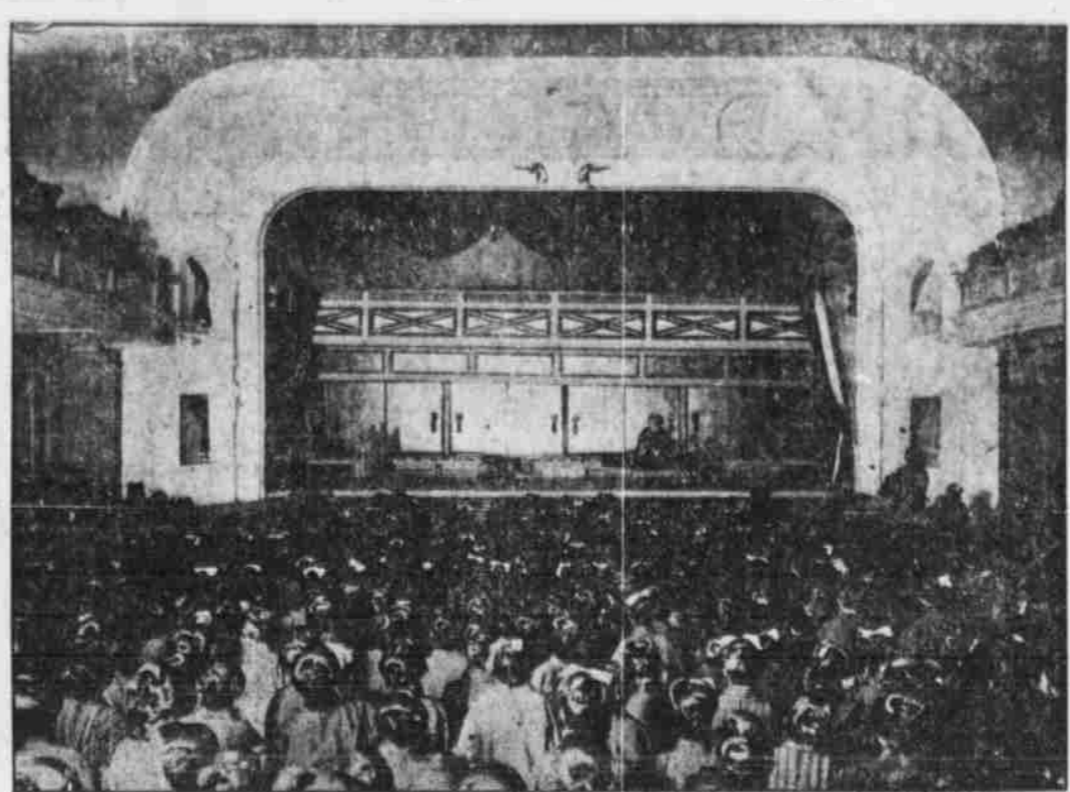
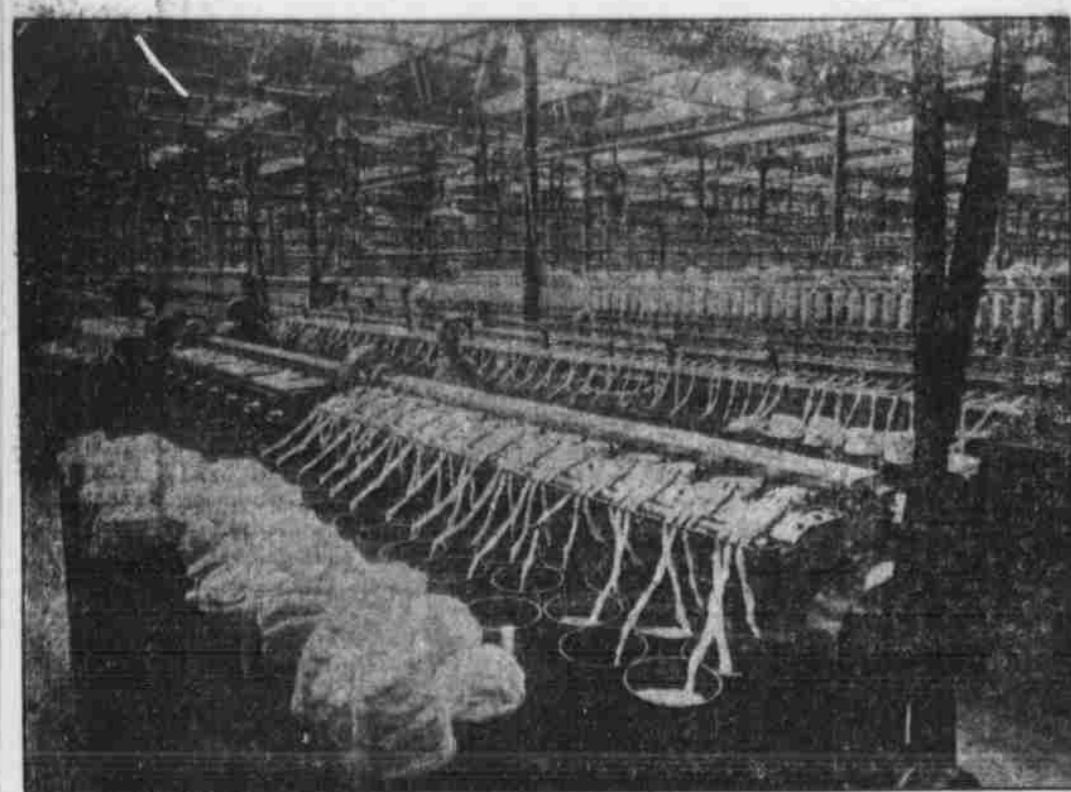


Japanese Spinning Mills Are Paying Big Dividends to Stockholders



WILDERNESS OF WHIRLING SPINDLES.

AUDIENCE OF GIRLS AT FREE THEATER FOR MILL HANDS.

BREAKING COTTON AT THE KANEGAFUCHI MILLS.

(Copyright, 1909, by Frank G. Carpenter.)

KOBÉ—(Special Correspondence of The Bee)—If you want to see how wide awake the Japanese are, come with me and take a look at the Kanegafuchi cotton mill, which lies on the outskirts of Hiogo. It is the biggest spinning establishment of the empire, and it belongs to a company which has a capital of 7,000,000 yen and paid last year a dividend of 22 per cent. The company has altogether fifteen mills in operation and in course of construction. It has already more than 200,000 spindles at work; and the four new mills, now building, will add to this 80,000 more. It is putting up mills for weaving as well as for spinning; and when all are completed it will still have 500,000 worth of working capital to go on.

The company began its work twenty years ago by erecting a spinning mill at Tokio. It has now two there and is building a third. It has silk mills at Kyoto, which are rapidly approaching completion, and it will soon have 10,000 spindles in operation there.

Japan's Biggest Cotton Mill.

Of all the establishments of this big corporation the one here at Hiogo is the largest. It covers many acres and employs 4,000 hands. Its works run day and night, and they turn out cotton yarn by the thousands of bales annually. Much of the product is consumed here in Japan, but a great deal goes to the rapidly developing market of China, where it competes with that from our country.

Hiogo is the native city for which Kobe is the port. It has, all told, more than 300,000 people; and in going to the cotton mill, our Jhrinkishas take us through several miles of Japanese stores, over a bridge which crosses the river and almost into the country. We can see the great smokestack. It rises high above the low warehouses and spinning mills, and its dense volume of black smoke poisons the air. The smokestack is made of iron, instead of brick, as in the United States. This is that it may the better withstand the earthquakes which occur here every few days, and which at times are so great that they might send a tall brick stack to the ground. For the same reason the large mills are almost all one story. They are built of brick and are so walled with glass that they are splendidly lighted.

I do not know the acreage, but I went through a wilderness of moving pulleys, whirling spindles, cutting machines and other works of various kinds, which took more time than a Sabbath day's journey. Single buildings seemed to reach on and on till one could hardly see the end, and in all was the busy hum of machinery and the Japanese men, women and children working away.

I have seen many of our great mills in the United States, but none in which the cotton is more rapidly and efficiently handled than here. I doubt if we have any in which the work is done with less labor. The finest up-to-date machinery is employed, and when it wears out it goes to the scrap heap. In some rooms, covering an acre, no more than two score men were at work, and one little girl was tending to every machine. In the spinning and reeling rooms there were more, and in some I saw hundreds of girls and women at work.

Steam Engines, Home-made.

I asked whence the machinery came and was told that some was from the United States, but that more came from England. Japan has not yet begun to manufacture cotton machinery, although it is experimenting with work of all kinds. For instance, the engines which run these big works were constructed at Tokio. One of them is of 1,500 horsepower, and it is as fine as any engine of the kind anywhere.

Connected with the establishment is an experimental weaving mill, which will soon be increased to 400 looms. As it is now the cotton comes into the mill in bales, being imported from China, India and the United States, and it goes out in smaller bales of cotton yarn, ready for weaving. In the near future much of it will go out in the shape of cotton cloth for the markets of Japan, Corea, Manchuria and China.

During my visit I went through twelve great cotton warehouses which are packed full of bales, from the ground to the roof, and the manager tells me that at certain times in the year he has as much as \$5,000,000 worth of raw cotton on hand. The greater part of the cotton used comes from India, although much is from the United States. Kobe, which is one of the chief ports of the empire, lands about \$40,000,000 worth of cotton every year; and of this, \$20,000,000 from China and over \$10,000,000 from the United States. Our cotton is the best; but the Indian product is cheaper, and the two are mixed in the making of these yarns. The manager complained to me about the bad packing of our American bales, and showed me some of them side by side with bales from Bombay. The latter were beautifully put up and so wrapped that no cotton could be lost. Our bales were broken and torn and the lint was falling out.

With the Cotton Hands.

As I walked through the mills I asked as to wages and hours of work. There are two shifts, one during the day and the other at night. The hours of actual work are ten, and there are rest hours at 9 a. m., at noon and 3 p. m. The rest times consume about two hours, and with them the working day is twelve hours long. This company does not work on Sundays, as is common with many of the industries of Japan. It believes in night work. Its manager tells me that almost

all the cotton mills work both day and night, and that this custom is a great benefit to the spinning industry. As it is now, the demand for cotton yarn is so great that night work is a necessity, but in times of depression it is possible to stop the night work until the demand requires it again. By this double work the Japan mills are producing twice as much, per capital and machinery, as mills of other countries where day work only is used. This fact may be one of the reasons for the big dividends which nearly all the companies are now paying.

I asked as to wages of the mill hands and was told they are from twenty-two to sixty-six cents a day. This means from eleven to thirty cents of our money, or from a little more than one to three cents for each working hour. At that they are higher than in some other mills; the general wage of cotton spinners throughout this district being about twenty-one cents for women, thirty cents for men and six cents for children.

As I went through the mills I saw a great many children at work and many of the child workers were under fourteen. I had a photograph made of myself standing beside some little almond-eyed tots who could not have been more than ten.

According to the government reports, there are now three hundred and twenty-five thousand hands in the textile factories, and of these almost two hundred and sixty thousand are females. There are also twenty-six thousand girls and two thousand boys who are under fourteen years of age. This is not a large proportion of children and the number grows less from year to year.

Two-Cent Meals.

From here I went to one of the large dining rooms, which the company has established for its employees. Here several hundred men and boys were eating with chopsticks steaming rice, vegetables and fish. They were enjoying the meal and were apparently satisfied. As I looked the manager told me that they furnished board at a little less than cost price, and that the men were given three meals for 5¢ cents per day. This is not quite 2 cents per meal, nevertheless they work all day and grow fat. The manager told me that they lose about 2 cents per day on each man in thus feeding them, and when I asked whether the food was uniformly good the reply came quickly: "Of course it is, and we have to keep it so or we should soon hear from the men."

The company has also a store where it furnishes its employees such merchandise as they want at cost price. This store handles all sorts of Japanese goods, though the men may buy else where if they will. It has food, clothing, notions and everything that appeals to the taste of such people.

Well Treated Workmen.

This company is anxious to keep its men in a good humor. It trains its employees for its work and does all it can to make them loyal to the establishment. It takes great pride in the fact that it has some of the best workmen in Japan, and leaves no stone unturned to increase its reputation in this regard. Among the special institutions at the mills is a theater with a large stage and a full equipment of scenery. The house will seat, I should say, about 1,000, the audience sitting on white mats on the floor. There are galleries with similar seats, and the floor rises under them, so that the people can be uniformly well seen. The company brings actors and lecturers here at its own expense, in order to amuse its employees.

There is also a two-story school building in the works, a large part of which is given up to a kindergarten for the little children whose mothers are employed in the mills, and there is a technical school, where picked boys are taught the scientific theory of cotton spinning and practical mill work under competent teachers. This is with the object of supplying intelligent overseers and foremen for the future. Another institution which all the Kanegafuchi mills have is a first-class hospital with a corps of physicians and nurses, who attend the sick without charge. The

hospitals have spring beds and are thoroughly ventilated and lighted. The one here had a laboratory connected with it for the study of microbes and the investigation of special diseases. The company proposes to build a sanitarium at Takasago, one of the seaside resorts, for its convalescent operatives; it has appropriated \$15,000 for the building, and this is now under construction.

In addition to the above, these mills have a pension fund which now amounts to \$12,000, a fund for the welfare of the employees of more than \$100,000 and a sanitary fund of \$25,000. The workmen have also societies organized under a company for mutual relief and for the promotion of the general interest of the members. One of these societies has a large income from its members' fees, including a subsidy from the company, and another has a capital of \$100,000.

SOME OF THE CHILD WORKERS.

Japan are doing well. In addition to the establishment which I have described there are many others which work day and night and which propose to increase their capacity and to extend their trade throughout the far east. They look upon China as their especial market and say that Kobe with the big ship canal almost all the Chinese rivers. The demand for cotton goods at home is steadily increasing, and there a great effort will be made to push the trade in Corea and Manchuria.

At present there are 118 mills in the country devoted to spinning alone; and these have more than 1,500,000 spindles. They

make almost 1,000,000 bales of cotton yarn annually; and have a profit therefrom of \$2,000,000 or \$10,000,000. I have before me figures showing some of the dividends paid. In 1905 every cotton mill in Japan paid from 10 to 40 per cent, and in 1906 there were ten companies which paid all the way from 16 to 45 per cent. In 1907 there were two which paid 50 per cent; and the Tokio Grand Yarn company has paid as high as 70 per cent. Nearly all these companies are adding to their surplus and are charging off good amounts to the depreciation of their buildings and machinery.

Cotton Weaving.

So far the Japanese had not done a great deal in weaving cotton, but they are now making enough sheeting every year to carpet a road as wide as Pennsylvania avenue, in Washington, for a distance of 6,000 miles. Such a carpet would reach twice around the world at the equator and leave more than enough over to cover a similar pathway through its center. There are now a number of large mills with something like 10,000 looms. They grew rapidly during the war with Russia, for the army needed quantities of goods, and the prices rose. The cost of blankets went up 100 per cent, and some of the mills were kept busy making kakis. Of what the war required it is estimated that Japan supplied 70 per cent and only imported 30 per cent.

In addition to the work of the weaving factories, an enormous amount was done in the houses on hand looms. There are now almost 1,000,000 homes in which weaving is carried on, and there are hundreds of thousands of people who work there. The number was more than 1,000,000 ten years ago, but it is gradually decreasing and more and more of the work is being done in the factories. It is this household weaving industry which consumes a great part of the cotton yarn manufactured here, and it is on the hand looms that most of that which is exported to China and Korea is woven. Many small mills are springing up, some worked by steam and others by water power and electricity. The center of the weaving industry is about Osaka, which is also the center of the spinning industry. That city has more than 20,000 houses in which weaving is done. It has scores of large factories and the smoke from their stacks makes the town seem more like Pittsburgh than any in Japan. Osaka is now as big as Philadelphia, and it has grown greatly within the past few years.

Japanese Matting.

This region is the center of the matting industry. There are many factories about Osaka busy here in Kobe. It makes millions of mats for home consumption, millions of mats for home consumption. The Japanese do not use matting like that exported to the United States. The most common carpet here is made up of white straw woven into mats an inch thick, a yard wide and two yards long. These mats are the unit of surface measurement for

almost everything. The rooms of the houses are rectangular and their sizes are estimated at the number of mats it takes to cover them. When a man orders a house built he directs that it be one of so many mats, and the cost of construction is based upon that estimate. These mats are bound with black cloth, and, as they fit closely, the floor is covered with a number of these white rectangles surrounded by black. Japan uses over 11,000,000 such mats every year, and also 3,000,000 or 4,000,000 pieces of ordinary matting of the same shape. The value of the whole is several million dollars.

As to the matting for export, the manufacture of that began less than twenty years ago, and it now brings in something like \$5,000,000 a year. Almost the whole of this export is to the United States, our purchases of Japanese matting annually amounting to something like 20,000,000 yards. The most of this is cheap and coarse, but other varieties are as fine as a Panama hat. They are now making new patterns with raised figures. I have just ordered a roll sent home, which looks like broadened silk woven of straw.

This matting is made out of a reed which grows about here. It has no knots and is much like rice, although its seed has no value. It is planted and cultivated in the same way, and is well dried and bleached before it is sold. The matting is dyed with aniline colors. It is woven like cloth, but all the pieces have to be put in by hand. The work is tedious and of the finer varieties two men and an assistant can make not more than three rolls per month.

Native Cottons.

The most beautiful cottons made here are intended for native consumption. They are not much more than a foot wide and are artistically printed in designs far different from the loud figures used on the goods intended for the United States markets. The cotton crepe for home use is beautiful and it would have a big sale in the United States for curtains if it were sent there. The Japanese use it for their every-day summer kimonos.

Another interesting manufacture of cotton is that which the native people employ here for traveling. These have gay figures printed in white and blue. Every firm has its own design and not a few of the native hotels give away towels of this kind to their guests. Within the last few years quite a craze has sprung up among the foreign ladies visiting Japan to make collections of these towels, and I know many who buy pieces of them for use as fancy tablecloths and napkins.

FRANK G. CARPENTER.

Helena Modjeska's Wonderful Career on the Stage

HELENA MODJESKA, actress and patriot, had a larger acquaintance in Omaha than almost any other woman on the state in her time. This was partly because she came to this city in 1877, and partly because her son, Ralph Modjeska, practically began her engineering work which was to lead him to a position as eminent in his profession as his mother occupied in hers.

Thus it came about that Mrs. Modjeska always stayed as long in Omaha as her engagement would permit, and while her son was living here for two years, his mother came at times when she was not actively engaged in dramatic work.

Modjeska was not a young woman when she first came here, and neither was she so old in this year 1909 as many would have thought. She was born in 1844, in Cracow, Poland. At that date this portion of her country had not yet been absorbed by Russia, and Mrs. Modjeska, born a free Pole, remained one in spirit all her life.

She first saw Omaha in 1878, the year of her first trip across this country as an actress, and it was upon the occasion of this first visit that she and the late Edward Rosewater became acquainted and formed a friendship which lasted until his death.

Mrs. Modjeska was an actress of renown in Europe before she came to America. It had been an amateur theatrical experiment which first directed her toward the stage. In the year 1861 she was visiting in Bohemia, in Austria Poland, and with some friends essayed a little play in behalf of charity. She herself took the stellar role. It was a successful venture, eminently so, and the little company decided to turn professional. In three years Mrs. Modjeska was engaged to play the leads for a new theater in Cracow, and it was now that the European world began to know her.

For eleven years the Polish woman continued to play in Warsaw and Cracow and her fame spread all over the continent. Meantime her husband, the brilliant M. Chlapowski, had become persona non grata to the Russian government through taking part in the ill-starred revolution of 1863 and was forced to suspend labor as a newspaper man. His wife, torn by sorrow for her native land and worry at the enemy of the government toward her husband, at length broke down.

self to the study of English, and at the end of that time secured, after some difficulty, a hearing at the California theater in San Francisco. "Adrienne Lecouvreur" was the vehicle and Mrs. Modjeska scored an instantaneous and complete success as she had on first appearances in Warsaw and Cracow.

She was immediately engaged for an appearance in New York and at the Fifth Avenue theater in December, 1877, she repeated her California victory. After that her career was one of unbroken successes. She made twenty starring tours across

the country in the course of which she played fifteen Shakespearean roles—Juliet, Rosamond, Viola, Beatrice, Portia, Imogen, Ophelia, Julia, Desdemona, Lady Constance, Queen Catherine, Hermione, Isabel and Lady Macbeth. It is of course as the last named that she is best known, but it was not her favorite part. Best of all she liked to play Mary Stuart in the "Schiller drama," she had better luck and kept it in her repertory for some years.

Illustrious as Mrs. Modjeska was professionally, she will be longest remembered by those who knew her best for her noble character in private life. A never-failing spring of energy and inspiration in a professional way to her associates on the stage, she was by these and other friends beloved as few men or women in any age have been loved for their nobility.

Her son, Ralph Modjeska (his name ends with the masculine "i") was sent to Paris to study at the Ecole des Ponts et Chaussées. He graduated at the head of his class and soon came back to America to practice engineering. His professional work, begun in Omaha, has served to place him in the very front rank of civil engineers who devote themselves to bridge designing. His work in Omaha lasted through 1885 and 1886. It had to do with the widening of the Union Pacific bridge, Assistant engineer of the Union Pacific at that time, he rose rapidly thereafter. He became consulting engineer of the Illinois Central and has since designed among others the great bridge at Thebes, Ill., the Willamette bridge over the Columbia in Oregon, which will take the Northern Pacific into Portland, and a great suspension bridge at Louisville, Ky. Two honors have come to him recently of the highest rank. One is his appointment as a member of the international commission of three to rebuild the bridge over the St. Lawrence at Quebec. The other is his selection as consulting engineer for the new structure to replace the Williamsburg bridge across the East river at New York.

During his two years in Omaha Mr. Modjeska occupied a residence on Burr street near North Twenty-third. In later years he became a warm friend of Clement Chase of this city, whose wife has been a friend of Mrs. Modjeska from before the time that her mother made her debut in Adrienne Lecouvreur. Mr. and Mrs. Modjeska and Mrs. Modjeska have been frequent guests of the Chases in Omaha and the actress always stayed at the Chase home when her company played here. Mr. and Mrs. Chase named one of their daughters after the Polish woman.

An empty coffin rested on a truck on the Atchison depot platform one day this week, awaiting the Kansas City down. Out of the coffin crawled into the coffin box and drew the lid down. No sooner was he concealed than a young colored man with a jaunty swagger and tuneful whistle came along and wishing to rest settled comfortably on the casket. He fell asleep and was awakened by a distressing moan. The moan was repeated, and then somebody said:

"That Was Going Some." Tired in undelighting, two pairs of trousers, a heavy outside-flannel shirt, stockings and rubber boots, Ervin Leonard was working about a revolving shaft in his Farmington saw mill, near Westfield, Pa. Suddenly he was picked up by the belting, whirled around the shaft many times and hurled many feet. He was nude save for a little strip of undelighting around one wrist and one ankle.

Companions who ran to pick up his lifeless body were amazed to see him open his eyes and hear him say: "See whiz! but that was going some." His hips were dislocated and he received numerous bruises, but with these exceptions he is as good as new. Ervin Leonard, the top of the shafting and the beam, which he was crowded through, is not more than twelve inches high.

Wife May Nag at Home. It may be very unpleasant for a husband to listen to the nagging remarks made by his wife. She may accuse him of all sorts of things, but as long as she confines her remarks to the four walls of their home the husband cannot sue for a divorce. That is the opinion, at least, of Judge Hacker of the circuit court of Bartholomew county, Indiana. He was called on to decide a demurrer in the divorce case of Aaron Wildman, and he sustained the demurrer to the complaint.

Wildman declared in his complaint that he had been treated in a cruel and inhuman manner. Then he specified that the treatment consisted in his wife making mean remarks to him, accusing him of unfaithfulness, wishing him bad luck and all that sort of thing. He did not allege that she had ever struck him or used any sort of violence except with her tongue.

Quaint Features of Life

"Oh-o-o! Please get off my dead body." The negro granted the request at once. With a blood-curdling yell he leaped into the air and sped away. He attempted to cross the bridge, but Cy Smith, fearing that quite a craze has sprung up among the foreign ladies visiting Japan to make collections of these towels, and I know many who buy pieces of them for use as fancy tablecloths and napkins.

Roosevelt's Macabre Memory. Somewhere in the White House files is a letter from Senator Lodge, relates Collier's. The senator had been dining at the White House, and the letter refers to the talk of the night before. It begins: "You are so deplorably exact about dates that when you said Hiroo was a century after Alexander I simply climbed down and wondered how I came to make such a blunder as to put him before Alexander. Looking the matter up, I find my excuse. There were two Hiroos. Hiroo I reigned 475-467. It was his date I had in my head. Hiroo II was born before 306, not very far away, but he had a long reign, and lived to an enormous age."

Someone introduced Edward Clarke to the president. "Oh," said Roosevelt when he heard the name, "you wrote a monograph on the 'prebotomy warbler.' You studied him in the Kankakee River country."

Electrical Effects in Water. The electrical installations at the Alaska-Yukon exposition are so far advanced as to permit trial illuminations. One of these just held proved that the cascades, which are the central feature of the exposition, will cascade a most beautiful spectacle. The cascades extend for a length of 200 feet through the central court of the exposition grounds. They carry 4,000 gallons of water a minute, and when this tremendous volume plunges over them it is broken into millions of rainbow fragments by submerged electric lights. The submerged lights are protected by heavy heads of colored glass, so arranged that they shade from lighter tones to the center of the stream to darker colors at the outer edge. As the stream plunges over the series of dams in its downward course, it takes on the varied colors of the lights. The cascades end in Geyser Basin, where the "Old Faithful" Geyser of the Yellowstone is re-produced, spouting jets of water 150 feet in the air at intervals of a minute. The basin, like the cascades, is illuminated by submerged lights which make of the jets of water thousands of iridescent sprays.



HELENA MODJESKA. (From an autographed portrait presented to Edward Rosewater in 1909.)