

# Business and Social Conditions in Santiago

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**S**ANTIAGO, Chile—I want to give you some pictures of Santiago. It is the social, political and business heart of this country. It is the pulse of the nation and the people move as it beats fast or slow. It contains all of the statements and most of the money. It is the center of all great movements, and in fact, it might be called Chile itself. The Santiago of 1914 contains fully one-sixth of all the people inside the republic. It has a population of over 500,000 and has doubled in size in the last fifteen years. It has grown in beauty and modern improvements. It has widened its streets and paved them with asphalt. The Alameda, has become a grand boulevard, with a garden running through the center and driveways on each side. The Costazo park, the gift of the millionaire family that owns the coal mines, has sprung up on one side of the city and a forest park has been created, skirting both of the banks of the Mapocho river. The Quinta Normal has been greatly improved and Santa Lucia, the table mountain that rises straight up out of the heart of the city, has developed into a creation more wonderful than the Hanging Gardens of Babylon.

**Best Public Park.**

I wish I could show you Santa Lucia! No city of the world has a public park to compare with it. If you could drop down into the very center of Philadelphia, Baltimore or Boston a mighty rock with almost perpendicular walls 500 feet high and with a base of 100 acres or more you might have the park as it was at the beginning. To make it what it is now you would have to cover the walls with vines, plants and trees until the whole became one mass of green. This mass would include eucalyptus and palms, tall trees and pines and semi-tropical plants and flowers of every description. The rock is so rough that natural grottoes are formed in its walls, and as you climb your way up you go past fountain after fountain and waterfall after waterfall. You walk through paths shaded by gigantic fern trees and flowers of many colors, the names of which are unknown in North America. Every step upward gives a different view of the city, and at the top a beautiful little park at the height of a thirty-story flat overhangs the capital of the Chilean republic. In the center of this park, right on the top, is a level space floored with tiles, where the city band plays on an evening, and there on a certain stretch across the rock is an open-air cinema picture show, where the people sit out under the clear sky of the Andes, as the doings of other parts of the world pass before them.

**Surrounded by Mountains.**

The view from Santa Lucia shows the magnificent location of Santiago. The town lies in a flat basin or valley surrounded by rugged blue mountains. It is 1,500 feet above the Pacific ocean and in plain sight of the Andes. Around one side of it flows the Mapocho river, further down is the Maipo, and beyond them are the rich farms, orchards and vineyards of the great central valley. The city is right under and all around you. It is a vast expanse of gray roofs, cut here and there by wide streets that catch one another at right angles. In the center is the Plaza de Armas, on which stand the cathedral, the city hall and other great buildings, and a little further over, taking up a whole square, is the Chilean capitol or house of congress, one of the finest buildings in all South America. The capitol building is surrounded by gardens filled with tropical plants, including great palms, the trunks of which are as large around as a horse's head, although they are not more than thirty feet high.

**Paris Bonnets Here.**

The people have changed and the characteristic costumes of the past are tramped upon by the heels of the present. There are Paris bonnets and slit skirts everywhere, and also women and girls clad in black with mantas or black shawls covering their heads, necks and shoulders, so that only the faces show out of the black. This costume used to be common with the rich and poor. It is now dying out among those who can afford the more costly modern clothing, and the rich and fashionable now confine its use almost altogether for going to church. The laws of the church here provide that no woman can come into a religious service wearing a bonnet, and the only acceptable costume is dead black with a manta of black crepe wrapped around the face close under the chin and fastened there with a brooch. Or it may be pinned at the back of the neck with a black pin. Some of the church women are now wearing black veils instead of these mantas and not a few of them have black dresses that are cut rather low at the neck. I have seen girls in mantas wearing shoes of white kid and light colored gloves, but this is not considered good taste.

**Shop in the Morning.**

The manta is often used for shopping during the morning, the better clothes being reserved for the promenade between 5 and 7 in the afternoon, the hours when everyone goes along the chief business streets to see and be seen. The manta has the advantage that it can be thrown on quickly, and also that it hides any slovenly dressing beneath. To my mind it is far better than the headgear of our women and it makes many a homely face almost beautiful, throwing it out, as it were, against the black crepe. It has the disadvantage, however, that it is the common street garb of the Santiago girls who are not so good as they should be. So dressed these little sinners have the appearance of saints, and no stranger would imagine the class to which they belong until a look from the tail of their eyes gave him the wink.

**Stores Have Improved.**

Now we are in the business part of Santiago. Here there are many fine buildings that have grown up within the last few years. There are magnificent stores with the goods of the latest for its fine window displays and its many arcades. The business blocks are large, factories from Europe. The town is noted for the fact that they are not skyscrapers makes it possible to cut these covered passageways through them, roofing the arcades with glass. Often a block containing several arcades will have arcades that cross one another at right angles. Each is a favorite promenade, for the opaque roof shuts out the heat of the sun and at the same time gives plenty of light. The stores in the arcades bring good rents.

**Stores Have Improved.**

I find a great difference in the stores of Santiago over those that I saw here about fifteen years ago. At that time there was no attempt at display. The prices were not marked on the goods, and nearly all dealing was a matter of bargain and sale. Now every large store has its plate glass windows and the price marks are changed from day to day. This revolution was caused about four years ago by the inauguration of a department store. This was a branch of a big Buenos Ayres establishment. It sold goods at fixed prices and had expert window dressers who changed the display every night. The people took to it and forsook the old stores in such numbers that many of them failed. Today a new



The Mercurio newspaper office building in Santiago. Santiago with the Andes in the background.

class of business establishments is going up. The buildings are of several stories, with a more regular sky line than that of our American cities. They are more like the shops of Germany and France than those of North America, and, indeed, in many respects the town is a miniature Paris.

The street scenes of Santiago are a combination of the old and the new. You still see the donkeys and mules carrying their panniers of vegetables and fruits around from door to door. You still see horses close to the sidewalks hobbled by rope around their front legs, and the ox-cart still creates its way through the town. At the same time there are cabs and automobiles everywhere. The street cars have great numbers on them, indicating their routes, and there are motor cars that carry the heavier merchandise and all kinds of building materials.

**Races on Sunday.**

Another social feature is the races, which are usually held upon Sundays. Santiago has one of the finest race tracks in the world. It is outside the city on a plain surrounded by mountains which rise up against the horizon like walls of snow. Above these white walls is stretched a sky of the bluest blue, and in winter, when the best races take place, the weather is as mild as June in Virginia. The ladies come out in their summer dresses and they walk about through the parks and gardens not far from the grandstand. The race track is owned by the Club Hípico de Santiago. This club has done much to improve the breeding of horses in Chile and has made the Chilean horse one of the best in the world. The Chilean horse is a cross between the Flammant and the Arabian horses brought here by the Spanish conquerors, which through the temperate climate and the cold snow has grown into what is an entirely new type. It has great staying qualities, with an extraordinary courage and spirit. Like the Arabian horse, it eats but little, and it has all the endurance of the Arab and the strength of the Flammant.

**Lottery Receipts to Charity.**

A part of the race receipts of Chile are given to charity. The charities are under an organization known as the Junta de Beneficencia, which is one of the richest institutions of Chile. It gets its income not only from private charity, but also from its own properties and from funds donated by the state. It has ninety-seven boards of management, and altogether 122 charitable institutions. Here in Santiago it has a home for children that accommodates a thousand inmates and also a children's eating house that supplies meals at regular hours to poor mothers and children to the number of 1,600 daily. It has orphan asylums, associations for giving cheap homes to working people, tuberculosis hospitals and founding asylums.

Under the care of the Junta de Beneficencia is the cemetery of Santiago, which is one of the most beautiful of the world. It was founded by General O'Higgins, when he was president of the republic about the time that John Quincy Adams was in the White House. Before that the Catholics had their own cemetery and there was no place for the poor nor for the heretics. General O'Higgins believed that death "makes all men of one size" and he established this great burial ground.

**City of the Dead.**

The cemetery is an enormous enclosure, filled with old cypress trees that extend for seventy-five to a hundred feet above the paved sidewalks and courts. It is a real city of the dead, with many vaults and monuments, the coffins being stored away above the ground in houses of marble, granite or sandstone. One of the finest monuments is the bronze figure of a woman who stands on a pedestal with her arms outstretched toward heaven. This is to commemorate the 2,000 women who were burned to death when the church of the Jesuits took fire and was completely destroyed. That was in December, 1881. Santiago had then no fire brigade and the inmates crowded to the doors, which opened inward, and forced them shut so that they could not get out. One of the men who did the most to save the women was the American minister, a man named Wilson. He received a testimonial from the city for

# MUSIC

**By HENRIETTA M. REES.**

**A**NYONE who has any doubts as to Omaha's musical activities in the near future need only to glance over the list of artists of renown who will soon visit us, look ahead to the season of grand opera which is approaching, and feel but not least, to take stock of the number of recitals by local musicians which will take place at early dates, some of which have already been announced. Our season has not only opened auspiciously, but unless something unforeseen occurs, it bids fair to continue the same way.

Last Tuesday evening the opera committee of the Arab Hotel of Thacker Temple A. O. N. M. S. entertained a number of musicians, literary writers and prominent business men at a dinner at the Royal Hotel, about the coming appearance of the San Carlo Grand Opera company, under the auspices of the Shrine. The dinner was a great success, and impromptu speeches about the enterprise followed. Mr. Herring acting as master of ceremonies. The committee of the Shrine brought out the point that it realized in presenting this company, it was presenting an attraction of high musical standing, and they had adopted this means of bringing it before those present, whom they recognized as people of influence in regard to musical matters in the community and whose commendation would be valuable in aiding the undertaking. It has been the custom of the Shrine to give some manner of social entertainment each year for the benefit of the ladies, and this year they decided to bring this body of singers and players to the city and allow the public the privilege of attending also. As they are not presenting the company as a money-making venture, but more as a cultural entertainment for the benefit of the community, they have placed the tickets at a surprisingly low price—\$1 for membership for the four performances, which allows the holder to reserve a seat from 10 to 25 cents for each performance.

Many points concerning the artistic standing of the company itself were brought out, a company which aims not so much at maintaining one or two well known singers who earn fabulous salaries, as it does all around general excellence, with singers of high merit in all parts, but who may not be so well known as some of the favored few (we sometimes do not hear). In other words it will present opera upon its own merits and not upon those of some one or two popular singers.

Different members of the musical profession were called upon, and Mrs. Welpfen, Mr. Simms, Mr. Landberg, who spoke for Miss Minchhoff, and others gave their hearty endorsement of the plan. Mr. Gillan of the Auditorium made a few remarks upon the advancement of musical culture as shown by box office receipts for concert. Colonel T. W. McCallough gave some sound advice based upon the experiences of similar enterprises, and Mr. Louis Nash spoke briefly from the point of view of a business man. Mrs. Hayes, former president of the Woman's club, also made a few favorable remarks.

The general opinion seemed to be that it was a fine thing for the lodge to do, and the guests highly appreciated the compliment paid to them in being invited to the dinner. Shriners who spoke were Dr. Whitcomb, Charles Black, W. A. Rhodes and F. J. Hale. Lucius Pryor, who is managing the enterprise for the Shrine, also made a brief talk.

The announcement of the prize winners in the Los Angeles \$1000 opera prize contest was made during the week. Horatio T. Parker wrote the music and Brian Hooker the text. The title of the winning opera is "Fairland." This is the second prize of \$1000 won by the composer, in collaboration with Mr. Hooker, his "Mona" winning the Metropolitan Opera house prize some years ago. "Mona" has been said to be an artistic but not financial success. Judging from the title there are many possibilities for an attractive opera to be developed. Five operas were submitted. Full particulars in regard to its selection have not yet been made public. The winning opera will be staged with "Mona" and it is to be hoped it will more than fulfill anticipations of success.

Mr. George Hamilton, tenor of the Chicago Grand Opera company, will be heard at the Brandeis theater on Thursday afternoon, November 5, at 5 o'clock in a song recital. Mr. Hamilton has been offered to sing in European concert tour, which was to have kept him busy till February, and has located in New York City, from where he will fill American engagements throughout the season. This concert will be under the direction of Miss Evelyn Hopper, who also announces for November 5 a joint recital by Alma Gluck, soprano, and Ephraim Zimbalist, violinist. Miss Gluck made her first appearance here last season and a most excellent impression. She has since become the wife of the famous Russian violinist, and the early part of her season is said to have been devoted to joint recitals.

The announcement is made that Madame Gerville-Beache, the wonderful French contralto, will give a concert at the Auditorium Saturday evening, November 7, under the management of Miss Blanche Sorenson at popular prices. Madame Beache, an actress of her marvelous voice, wonderful histrionic ability and great beauty, has risen rapidly to the position of one of the greatest operatic contraltos of the day. When she appeared in Omaha three years ago in a recital she held her audience spellbound, and those who were fortunate enough to be present pronounced it the greatest concert that had ever been given in Omaha. Mary Learned, critic of The Bee, devoted a whole column to a review of the evening, saying: "The singing of Madame Gerville-Beache was more than just singing; it was the outpouring of a soul bent on its highest expression. And those who went, attracted by the fame of the singer, heard such a concert as has not been heard in Omaha in a long, long time. It was one of the 'biggest' events, musically speaking, the city has ever taken place here, for Madame Gerville-Beache is not only the possessor of a wonderful voice, but has the skill to direct and taste to exhibit it to the best advantage. She sang many songs that have been heard here before, but as they were never sung before, she has the ability to really do what others have only tried."

**Musical Notes.**

Miss Luella Anderson will give a violin recital at the First Methodist church in South Omaha, Thursday evening, October 23, assisted by Mrs. Jennie Callias, soprano, and Mrs. Huxia Clark, reader. Miss Anderson will be accompanied by Mr. Sigmond Landberg. Among her numbers will be two movements of the Mendelssohn concerto, "Legende" by Wieniawski, a group of shorter numbers, including some novelties, and a closing number by Pugnini Kreisler, which has never been played in Omaha or vicinity. Miss Anderson will give a recital in

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