Plucky Little San Diego and Her Exposition

A Beautiful and Significant Exhibit

By Rev. Willard Brown Thorp

THE PICTURESQUE ENVIRONMENT

Her population has since more than doubled, and the buildings of her Exposition now stand complete and resplendent in beauty in the center of the great fourteen-hundred acre Balboa Park, which crowns hills overlooking the bay and ocean.

While in point of size and splendor San Diego's Exposition is not to be mentioned with the one at San Francisco, those who have visited both believe it will leave a far more distinctive impression on the mind of the tourist. The architects have been given a free hand to reproduce the typical piazzas of a Spanish colonial city, and probably that type of architecture can be studied here to better advantage than anywhere else. Indeed, every phase of Spanish architecture in America is represented, from the earliest mission form in the curious New Mexico building, through the California mission form with its plain walls and long arched cloisters, to the great dome and campanile of the California State Building, which might be a Spanish colonial cathedral of the most ornate type.

The approach to the group of buildings is across a lofty arched bridge spanning a cañon. Semi-tropical vegetation is seen in profusion everywhere. Indeed, not the least wonderful thing about the Exposition is the way in which the brown hills of the park have been transformed into a paradise of verdure. A model farm, with the orange, the lemon, the grapefruit and other citrus products, is one of the features. The horticultural building is a huge "lath house" of much architectural beauty; for the lath house is the Southern California substitute for the glass-covered hothouses of the East. And from any point in the grounds vistas of surpassing loveliness are seen through the branches of the palm and the pepper, with the ocean, Point Loma or the mountains of Mexico in the distance.

Ethnology has a prominent place. Under the direction of Dr. E. L. Hewett, one of the leading anthropologists of America, huge casts of the mammoth monoliths recently unearthed at Quirigua, Guatemala, are shown to the public for the first time. A whole building is given over to rare exhibits of the history of man from the Smithsonian Institution.

REPRODUCING INDIAN CHARACTERISTICS

But the most popular of the ethnological exhibits is the contribution of the Santa Fe Railroad. It is a faithful reproduction of the pueblo of the Hopi Indians and also, in another section, of the cliff dwellings of the Navajos. As one enters the enclosure one is transported to the "Great American Desert" of the old geographies, with Indian pueblos rising in every direction, and in the center the sacred "kiva" or ceremonial cavern of the Hopis. When I took Professor Cluyt, the Yale anthropologist, through it he exclaimed: "Why did I take the trouble to go all those weary miles to San Ildefonso last week? Here it is to the very life!"

A score or more of Indians are here, assisting in the construction, and living just as they would on the New Mexican desert, whose very colors and outcropping ledges of rock are faithfully imitated. They balked at first at the sight of impious hands erecting the sacred "kiva" to be exhibited to strangers, but were finally propitiated. Mr. Nusbaum, the young architect in charge, is having the opportunity of a scholar's lifetime, being given a free hand to create on the shores of the Pacific and regardless of expense a substitute for the glass-covered hothouses of the East. And from any point in the grounds vistas of surpassing loveliness are seen through the branches of the palm and the pepper, with the ocean, Point Loma or the mountains of Mexico in the distance.

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In its business aspect the San Diego fair has been planned as a practical field of study for the home-seeker, having been so arranged that any one proposing to settle in any part of the great Southwest can study here in graphic portrayals the exact conditions he will find in any locality. He can observe just what land is available and what it is good for, and just how far his house would be from the nearest church and schoolhouse. He can travel all over the Southwest within the circuit of this Exposition and then lift his eyes to the towers and arches of ancient missions, and the acacias and oaks and orange trees of Southern California.

Let no one suppose that the San Diego Exposition is any mere local affair. The money, the enterprise and the energy have come in large measure from the locality. But it was the foresight of our own Congregational layman, George W. Mars-