



SELECTED  
WRITINGS

OF

Elbert Hubbard

**H**IS Mintage of Wisdom,  
coined from a Life of  
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lovingly gathered by Elbert  
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TO VINU  
AMBOTLAD

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## A Little Journey to San Diego

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AM in San Diego. There is only one.

I have no desire to trespass on the preserve of the ubiquitous Baedeker. All I will do is give a few of my impressions of California, and what I see being done here. In San Diego you get more joyous thinks and thrills to the square foot than in any other place where you can plant your pedals.

I look out of my window to the West and behold the blue waters of the Bay; beyond is Point Loma, where a great woman has built a Utopia of her own; all around are little Utopias; beyond is the Pacific Ocean.

To the South is a long range of hills, and this is Mexico, for San Diego is our most Southern city on the Pacific Coast, and the nearest shipping point on the Pacific to Panama.

To the North and East are mountains.

Things are realized by contrast. Where life is one dull, monotonous ecru, nothing tastes like that which mother used to make. Yesterday I saw the Indians dance at the Pala Reservation; in a few short hours I was dining at the Coronado Beach Hotel, the most luxurious hostelry in the world. The next morning I went fishing and caught a two-hundred-pound tuna. I was very cocky until a boy of twelve, with his eight-ounce bamboo rod, offered me a two-hundred-and-fifty-pound tuna, which he had just caught, for a dollar.

In the mountains we saw snow; in an hour we were talking with a rancher and his wife, and as we talked we walked, and these people showed us fig-trees, olives, almonds, oranges, lemons, grape-fruit, pecans—all bearing fruit. There was a rose-vine clambering over the door. This vine has run up over the roof of the bungalow and nearly hidden it from view. This daring, growing, blowing rose-tree has literally made the whole place a bower

of beauty. The woman took a pair of scissors and snipped us a half-bushel of gorgeous American Beauties, and the vine did not seem to have lost any of its qualities.

And the strange part of it is that three years ago this spot was a desert land, and the little farm was a dream unguessed.

When love and labor collaborate, and water is applied to land in California, the soil is wondrous kind.

Nowhere else in the wide world are acreage yields so enormous. The high cost of living does not touch the people who live in Southern California.

The San Diego Exposition is not a world's fair. It is more than that ☞ ☞

It is a story told in wood, marble, granite, concrete, embellished with the witchery of flowers and fruits, festooned with rare skill, all woven with the warp and woof of genius into an exquisite fabric ☞ ☞

And the title of the story should be, *The Conquering of the Desert* ☞ ☞

In this story there are five complete chapters. First, the Tale of the Aztecs, Incas and Mayas—the people whom we have reason to believe founded our first civilization. Their story is told in rocks, relics, inscriptions, skeletons, implements, and in song, legend, folk-lore and tradition. Second, we get the actual living Indians, as here revealed in houses, homes, gardens, kivas, and the manifold duties of these Children of the Desert played out in unconscious manner right before our eyes.

Third, we have the Spanish Missions. A prosperous, happy period prevails; the Missions grow great, powerful, and then fade from our vision, leaving only broken ruins—pathetic fragments.

To collect, from out the past, pieces of this phenomenon of fate and give us again the Mission with its sacred bells, its orderly industry, its wise economy, its art, and all its pulsing activities in myriad forms, this is a part of this unique Exposition.

The fourth chapter is the modern one—the picture of what is being done here and now by applying love, labor and water to land, so that the desert indeed is being made to blossom like the rose

The fifth chapter is the ideal city of the future, when beauty and business blend, and science and labor join hands. And the net result is the San Diego Exposition, probably the most beautiful exposition ever constructed by human hands.

The great civilizations, dead and turned to dust—Egypt, Assyria, Greece and Rome—were on the Twenty-eighth Parallel.

Time turned a furrow that buried them.

For a thousand years the world slept; then came the new civilization—the civilization of Europe, of Great Britain, of America—the civilization of the Forty-second Parallel.

Fate decreed that the first permanent settlement in America should be on the Atlantic, and where, so far as we know, civilized man had never before found a footing. But in the Southwest there existed, five thousand, ten thousand, twenty thousand years before, a civilization great, proud and powerful.

This is proved by the skulls that are found—skulls that reveal fully as much brain-power as the civilized man of today possesses. Then there are implements, tools, ornaments, that bespeak sentiment, romance, ingenuity, skill, ambition, animation, high endeavor

Long before the days when Egypt ruled the world, America had a civilization great as that over which Rameses held proud sway, and which Moses beheld, fifteen hundred years before Christ, crumbling into ruins.

At San Diego is shown the evolution of man. It is pictured how he once existed, as he now exists, and a tangible example is shown of what he will yet be.

It is a strange thing that the “Dry Country” should have so long been regarded as barren and forbidding.

This fallacy arose from man's inability to cope with Nature. He did not know how to apply love and labor to land, adding by engineering genius the necessary amount of moisture and letting God's sunshine do the rest.

San Diego is not in competition with San Francisco. It has a peculiar mission of its own. This mission is to discover the past, and reveal the present, of America's Southwest, to the peoples of the world.

The exhibition grounds are framed in a park of one thousand, four hundred acres, belonging to the city.

That is to say, here are six hundred acres set down right in the middle of a fourteen-hundred-acre park.

The approaches to the exposition grounds are through this park. Thus the park is a frame or wreath of vines, flowers and trees—strange and curious, such as the beholder can see nowhere else in such profusion in the whole round world.

Around the Exposition Grounds there are no shops, stores, factories, hotels, residences. You just behold this wondrous world of foliage and flowers, filling the valleys, crowning the hills, with the interspersed spaces carpeted with greenery.

The setting is ingenious, skilful, highly artistic, in rare good taste, and is an object-lesson unforgettable.

Here is shown every tree and practically every flower and plant that will flourish the year round in this climate.

You behold this wealth of beauty before you enter the Exposition Grounds, and thus is your mind prepared for further miracles. You pass into the Exposition through a courtyard, where on one side is a church, a replica of some classic of Colonial Spain at her best, historically accurate, rarely beautiful, and your adjectives being already exhausted you repeat to yourself extracts from the *Essay on Silence*. On the other side of the courtway are the long cloistered walls of a monastery.

Monks clad in cowl and horsehair robe, with rope girdle, or amice-

tired and stoled with the sacred tippet, pass to and fro on errand bent, or solemnly conduct the visitor.

Passing through the portals, past the church and the monastery, you find yourself in a city gay with color, bright with beauty. Dancing girls now and then appear, clad in the gay garb of ancient Spain, illustrating their native steps with dignity and grace. Music is heard—the soft tinkle of guitar, or perhaps a concert is being given in an open space.

This ideal city is paved, not with good intentions, but with art tile, brick, concrete. There is no dust. Along each street is a cloistered walk, so visitors who wish to avoid the warm rays of the gorgeous sun may do so. Then along all these miles of cool cloisters are seats where the pilgrim may rest—seats and yet again seats that beckon and invite.

Then there are shady nooks that lure, where tables are provided so one may write to the folks at home, or where we may rest and muse, and pack the silence with the thoughts that are beyond speech ☞ ☞

No warning signs appear. The negative is never used. This whole exhibition is an affirmation. Children and grown-ups who wish to walk over the soft yielding turf may do so to their heart's content ☞ ☞

That people will not destroy their own property is assumed.

This place is yours to enjoy, to use, to inspire, to animate, to instruct. The fruits, flowers, shrubbery, here are safe—it is a world of ladies and gentlemen, each one realizing that he is not only beholding a show, but that he is part of it.

This is a world of friends. He who giveth most, receiveth most.

¶ Guides garbed in the gay costumes of Spain or Mexico, or clad in the subdued dress of monasteries or nunneries, pass by. If you wish their services, they are yours for the asking.

Every guest is a distinguished guest.

Courtesy, kindness, good-cheer, everywhere prevail.

The new time is at hand and to bestow a kindness and extend a courtesy is the constant endeavor.

That smile on the fine face of the Director-General is contagious.

¶ Thus do we get an Exposition with a soul, a gathering of the clans for diversion, instruction and sweet communion.

The whole place is an art-gallery, a school, a playground, a campus, a college, a panorama of the days agone, and a prophecy of the things yet to be.

People in the East, looking on the map, imagine that the climate of Southern California approximates the tropics. The fact is, at San Diego, the nights are so cool that woolen blankets are acceptable in August—and in fact the year around. At noon in the sun the thermometer marks a hundred.

“The cool of the day” gives both man and vegetation a rest that Nature seems to require. In electricity, power comes from the interrupted current. The broken current is the secret of the telephone ☞ ☞

Growth in the animal and vegetable kingdoms, is an electric process, as Mr. Edison avers. The variation in temperature here tends to make living a constant delight. Enervation and depression are *ausgespiel* as the hookworm.

The San Diego atmosphere is in motion. Always and forever we enjoy the gentle breeze blowing in from the sea—cool, delightful, refreshing. If there is any place in the wide world where repair equals waste, it is here. Let Col. Ponce de Leon look no further. Today I went horseback-riding with a man of ninety-seven, and later in the day a lad of a hundred and four challenged me to go swimming in the surf, and I accepted.

Here at San Diego live two ex-Secretaries of the Treasury: one was in Cleveland's cabinet, and the other served under McKinley. I knew these men twenty-five years ago, and time has touched them with only a velvet finger. I asked them the secret. “Sunshine,” they responded; “just sunshine and the ocean breeze.”



¶ They are representative types of a good many of the citizens of this very remarkable little city. San Diego has doubled its population in five years' time. The last buildings built are the best. This reveals faith in the permanence of the city.

The opening of the Panama Canal gives an outlet for the products of the great Southwest. San Diego, by way of the Isthmus of Panama, is only three weeks from New York by slow-freight steamer, and four weeks from London.

In Colorado, Nevada, Utah, New Mexico, Arizona and California, only about one-sixth of the irrigated land is under the plow. Forty acres of irrigated land are equal to one hundred sixty acres, say, in the Mississippi Valley.

I saw many little farms, say of ten acres, in California, on which a family of half a dozen were making a good living.

Among other exhibits at San Diego I saw a miniature farm of five acres planted to oranges, lemons, almonds, figs, pepper-trees, eucalyptus, and a variety of vegetables, fruits and flowers that this country has to offer.

It is no imitation farm—just the genuine thing.

You are told how long it has taken to produce these trees, the cost of maintenance, the original cost of the land, the expenditure for labor. The man and his wife who operate this little farm live on the premises, and it is their business to explain to interested visitors every detail of building and maintaining such a successful little ranch ☞ ☞

What one man can do, thousands or millions of others can do. Just to show the wealth of flowers, San Diego has flower-girls giving away bouquets and blossoms galore to every visitor that passes by—and these flowers are raised right here on the grounds before your eyes, clipped while the dew is on! The credit for the original San Diego Idea must go to G. Aubrey Davidson. He is the Papa of the Preserve. His prophetic vision saw it first. The task then was to find the men who could materialize it.

And while credit for the original Idea must go to Mr. Davidson, it was Colonel D. C. Collier—Charlie Collier—who took up the idea and gave it concrete form. Collier is the typical Californian. He is big in body and big in brain, and he has a heart that matches both ☛ ☛

Collier secured the site, planned the buildings, laid out the grounds—and incidentally spent a hundred thousand dollars of his own money in furthering the project. Pressure of private business then compelled him to allow others to get under the burden. But all California honors Colonel Collier, the great original Conquistadoro ☛ ☛

The Director-General of the San Diego Exposition is H. O. Davis, born in Ohio, not of his own volition, evolved in Chicago into a manufacturer and an executive, transplanted by kind fate to California, becoming a Native Son by adoption.

Transplanted products rule the world, said Leonardo.

Davis never says, "It can't be done," or "Whoever heard of doing such a thing as that!" Davis knows what he wants to do, and he does it. He is not handicapped either by plaster-of-Paris precedent or a board of directors, solemn as brass monkeys, who sit on the lid, stroke their whiskers, and mutter in monotone, "Oh, things are not what they used to be and the best of life is gone." ☛ ☛

There is a board of directors, but it is big enough to get the best out of a strong man, as Lincoln got the best out of Grant, by delegating to him supreme authority. Every superior achievement is the result of one-man power. In architecture, divided authority gives us a conglomerate—the Queen Elizabeth front and Mary Ann back—like, say, the modern city where every form and kind of building vagary is represented.

San Diego is keyed. In it there is a motif, and a recurring theme. Also, there is forever and always the dominant sixth. It is a symphony in architectural efficiency and beauty.

In all former Expositions, while there was a supervising architect, each particular building was worked out by some one man according to his own sweet will—this quite independent of the general scheme — —

Architecture has been called "frozen music." And much of the exposition architecture of the past looked as if it were chilled with fright. Also, in all of the expositions that have been given for the last fifty years in America and Europe, there was an apostolic succession. Orthodoxy prevailed, and each World's Fair was patterned after the one preceding, modified sometimes, sand-papered, but imitation always and forever.

In San Diego, one architect drew the plans, and this one man stood by and has personally superintended the completion of every building.

This man had a definite idea as to what he was working out. With his inward vision, he saw the completed result, and today his whole Utopian conception looms large, beautiful, poised, self-sufficient, asking not even for your commendation. In it there is no apology. The work holds together. It has a oneness and a unity never before realized.

The Director of Works of the San Diego Exposition is Frank P. Allen, born in Michigan, and evolved in Chicago under the kindly tutelage of Burnham, Wright, and others of supreme genius; then transplanted to the kindly climate of California. Here his genius has bloomed and blossomed. But Allen is an artist and is perforce filled with a noble discontent. After every achievement he hears the voice crying, "Arise and get thee hence, for this is not thy rest."

An ideal accomplished, ceases to be one. Nevertheless the San Diego Exposition is, to me, the Celestial City of Fine Minds—the ideal made manifest, and materialized by the marriage of hand and brain.

And the world will come here and pay its tribute of admiration

to the skill and talent and genius of Frank G. Allen, and the man will live in history as one who has planted a great white milestone on the path of progress. Then there is another man here who has builded himself a monument, and set a standard in well-doing that is bound to make his name deathless.

That man is Jesse L. Nusbaum, born in Michigan, educated in Denver, graduated into the Desert, and given his Ph. D., his A. M. and his Phi Beta Kappa key from the Hopis and Zunis in joint council assembled. Nusbaum is an ethnologist, a naturalist, a man of mountain and plain, and a builder.

With the aid of the Indians, backed up by the Santa Fe Railway Company, and the kindly encouragement of Davis, he has reproduced here two cities of the Desert. One of these Indian habitations will house a hundred people. Tier on tier scrapes the sky, built of stone, wood, adobe, thatched after the manner of Indians of the olden time. You reach it by ladders. The place is wild, weird, strange, and represents the rudimentary survival of a civilization fast becoming but a memory of things that were.

The business of this Exposition is to seize this relic of times gone by, to restore it, and give it to the people of the United States as a heritage in history, forever.

Here we see the Indians, old and young; the babies; the youths; the strong, slim, sinewy men who can run eighty miles before breakfast; the skilful, competent, motherly women, suffragettes in well-doing, who have had the ballot for a thousand years, all without argument or civilized militancy.

We see how they weave their blankets, prepare their food, make their artistic ornaments, eat, sleep, work; and we see how they worship the Great Spirit, the Great Intelligence, in which we are bathed—this to use the pregnant phrase of Emerson.

We hear their music, listen to their songs, behold their graceful dances, witness their religious ceremonials in the strange underground kivas—those frat houses of mystery, devised a thousand

centuries ago. Three hundred years before Christ, Aristotle of Macedon, teacher of Alexander the Great, and in many ways the most efficient man that has ever lived, said this:

“The land that will produce luscious fruits, beautiful flowers, useful cereals, will also produce a greater crop; that is, it will produce superior men and women, because man is a partner of all he sees and hears and grows through what he does, and the victories over unkind Nature are his.”

And to me, the finest results of the San Diego and San Francisco Expositions will be an improved race of men and women.

Here in California, East and West, North and South meet. Here the Occident joins hands with the Orient.

Here the words of Isaiah the Prophet, uttered in Assyria eight hundred years before Christ, are fast becoming a fact:

“The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. In the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the glowing sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast go up thereon, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.”