

THE ATLANTA EXPOSITION

President Cleveland Starts the Machinery in Motion.

A GREAT DAY FOR THE SOUTHERN CITY

The Grand Procession the Finest Ever Seen in the South— Speeches at the Opening of the Fair.

ATLANTA, Ga., Sept. 18.—President Cleveland, at 6:54 o'clock this afternoon, touched a golden button at Buzzard's Bay, and instantly the wheels of the machinery at the Cotton States and International Exposition, 1,000 miles away, leaped into life. Cannon blazed and thundered, 60,000 people cheered, a thousand flags fluttered from the tops of the many buildings, and the great South's industrial exposition was officially opened.

Atlanta is alive with people. Strangers have been coming in for two weeks to be present at to-day's exercises, but they were as nothing in numbers compared to the thousands who arrived last night and this morning. The city is profusely decorated with bunting and the National colors. The crowds are good natured, and, as in old carnival times, "everything goes."

The list of distinguished personages and historic organizations here is a long one. New-York, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Vermont, New-Jersey, Maryland, Virginia, Illinois, Indiana, Arkansas, California, Texas, Alabama, Florida, South Carolina, and Ohio, and many other States are officially represented, either by the Governor or members of his staff, or a Board of State Commissioners. Many of the larger newspapers of the country are represented by staff correspondents.

The parade of civic and military bodies, which acted as an escort to the officials of the exposition and its guests to-day, was the most imposing procession ever seen in the South. Several thousand Grand Army members came down from Chickamauga and were conspicuous on the streets. They received marked attentions from the citizens. One of these—Lieut. Franklin Berry—brought down from Massachusetts the identical flag which waved from Kennesaw to Allatoona, the famous signal on which was written the song "Hold the Fort, for I am Coming." The Lieutenant went upon Kennesaw Mountain to-day and about the time the exposition was formally pronounced open waved the same signal which he received thirty-one years ago from Gen. Sherman and waved to Gen. Corse.

Much has been made of the Washington Artillery of New-Orleans, and all along the route of the parade to-day the artillerymen were cheered.

Address by Judge Speer.

When the parade reached the exposition grounds, the official party proceeded to the Auditorium. Judge Emory Speer of the United States Court at Macon delivered the address of the day. He said:

This is, indeed, a happy day for the country. Cold and dull must be the nature of that man who is insensible to these convincing proofs gathered that the world may see the advancement of our people, on all the paths trending toward a more perfect civilization. The spectacle is, indeed, auspicious. The astounding manifestations of the energy of modern nations exalt, while they amaze, the understanding. The substantial magnificence and beneficent humanness of this vast undertaking was possible only to the resolution and activities of a free people.

Here the liberal and inspiring purpose is the advancement of our country. It kindles the imagination of the projector when the bright conception dawns upon his teeming fancy. It reminds the capitalist that economy, in its broadest sense, is a distributive virtue. With free hand, then, he makes his wealth a willing servant of public honor. It animates the genius of the architect, and his airy fancies become a thing of beauty and a joy forever. It gives precision to the trained eye, and power to the nervous arms of the artificers.

Here over the mountain waves of the ocean have been brought the treasures of other lands. From the Gulf of Mexico to the Straits of Magellan our sister republics proudly come, bringing with willing hands of the bounty the God of Nature has bestowed upon them. But there is one whom we would gladly welcome, and who is not here—beautiful Island of Cuba, queen of the Antilles. The dim religious light of her hoary cathedral falls softly over the sacred ashes of the discoverer. She has ever been, and is now, endued with the abounding sympathy of the people of this land of freedom. It is the plain duty of our own Nation to see to it that the "sphere of influence" of European nations shall not further extend to any foot of the soil of that Continent discovered by Columbus. We owe it to the traditions of our glorious past, and as well to the peoples who from us have caught the inspiration of popular government. We owe it to the countless millions of self-respecting and freedom-loving people, who are to inherit America when we are gathered to our fathers. "America for Americans" should be the animating principle of every administration which wields from Washington the moral power of the American people.

International exhibitions are among the most beneficent means for the advancement of the people. Society in this has its accounting. It takes stock of its assets. A nation, like a business house, must know how it stands. It must make its exhibition to the world.

Besides, who can doubt the educative effect of such proofs of human advancement as this exposition. A lad can walk through these halls and acquire knowledge of which Sir Isaac Newton or Sir Francis Bacon were ignorant. He may behold dainty products of all lands for which Lucullus might have sighed in vain. He may watch the noiseless operations of engines a Watt or a Stephenson could not even conceive; models of ships which would have been deemed impossible by Nelson or Rodney, by Bainbridge or Decatur; arms and munitions of war the mention of which Marlborough or Frederick, Wellington or Napoleon would have pronounced the dreams of a madman. This exposition, carefully studied, will be a liberal education for thousands who attend it.

Westward has been the inspiration of our history, and, since the westward shore is reached, the tide of strong and resourceful men, "strong-backed, brown-handed, upright as the pines," must pour downward through many channels to the fruitful and opulent land which, in their westward progress, they had passed with but a glance. There were grave reasons which diverted this army of civilization from the soil of the Southern States. Slavery was here, and the toiling masses from other lands could not, or would not, compete with the slaves. But when slavery had been abolished, the obstacles to healthful immigration were scarcely less insurmountable. What was termed the "negro problem" was ever present. There was never the slightest danger of continued negro control in the local affairs of a Southern State. Those who apprehended it had done well to consider that of all the American Union, the Southern people present the largest percentage of the old Anglo-Saxon stock.

I here declare that the so-called "race question" does not exist. There are millions of colored people who live and who will live among many more millions of white people. Why shall any one forge a race issue? Honest and decent men will accord to the negro that just measure of favor as a member of society the laws afford him and which his conduct deserves, and the long process of time will determine whether his presence is a benefit or an injury to himself and to the land to which he is now as warmly attached as his white neighbor. There is one thing since his emancipation the South has ever guaranteed to the negro; that is, no matter what his trade or occupation, the privilege of earning his living. It is a common spectacle upon structures of every character to behold numbers of white and negro mechanics working side by side. I have regretted to learn that this is not true in the Northern States. I was informed by the President of a technological school in Philadelphia, a man of great intelligence and great benevolence, that they yearly turned out numbers of colored youths trained, skillful in the trades they had mastered, but that if one of these men should be employed as a skilled laborer on any work every member of the trades unions would quietly gather up his tools and quit the job. No such feeling has existed here.

The truth is, after making due allowance for our disadvantages, the world should awaken to the fact that no other land lighted by the sun in its diurnal progress around the world affords such attractions as a home for men with lives before them as do these Southern States of the Union.

Moreover, the people of Georgia respect and enforce the laws. I have had the opportunity to know the truth. I say with absolute sincerity what I have repeatedly asserted elsewhere, that I never knew a failure of justice in a Government case, or in a suit by or against a non-resident,

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because of the failure of duty on the part of the jury. Our Government has afforded the most graceful recognition to the undoubted loyalty of the Southern people. Our Southern people know and appreciate the fact, and let no military staff of other nations, when it is taking into account the military power of this American Union, fail to estimate the full fighting strength of the men who wore the gray and the sons of their blood.

A Colored Leader's Speech.

Judge Speer was followed by Mrs. Joseph Thompson, Chairman of the Woman's Board. Then Booker T. Washington of Tuskegee, Ala., one of the leading colored men of this country, spoke on behalf of the Negro Board. He said, in part:

One-third of the population of the South is of the negro race. No enterprise seeking the material, civil, or moral welfare of this section can disregard this element of our population and reach the highest success. I but convey to you, Mr. President and Directors, the sentiment of the masses of my race, when I say that in no way have the value and manhood of the American negro been more fittingly and generously recognized than by the managers of this magnificent exposition at every stage of its progress. It is a recognition which will do more to cement the friendship of the two races than any occurrence since the dawn of our freedom.

Not only this, but the opportunity here afforded will awaken among us a new era of industrial progress. Ignorant and inexperienced, it is not strange that in the first three years of our new life we began at the top instead of the bottom; that the seat in Congress or the State Legislature was more sought than real estate or industrial skill; that the political convention or stump speaking had more attractions than starting a dairy farm or truck garden. There is no defense or security for any of us except in the highest intelligence and development of all. If anywhere there are efforts tending to curtail the fullest growth of the negro, let these efforts be turned into stimulating, encouraging, and making him the most useful and intelligent citizen. Efforts or means so invested will pay a thousand per cent. interest.

As we present to you our humble effort at an exhibition of our progress, you must not expect overmuch; starting thirty years ago with the ownership here and there in a few gulls and pumpkins, and chickens, (gathered from miscellaneous sources,) remember that the path that has led us from these to the invention and production of agricultural implements, buggies, steam engines, newspapers, books, statuary, carving, paintings, the management of drug stores and banks has not been trodden without contact with thorns and thistles. While we take just pride in what we exhibit as a result of our independent efforts, we do not for a moment forget that our part in this exhibition would fall far short of our expectations but for the constant help that has come to our educational life, not only from the Southern States, but especially from Northern philanthropists, who have made their gifts a constant stream of blessing and encouragement.

The wisest among my race understand that the agitation of questions of social equality is the extremest folly, and that progress in the enjoyment of all the privileges that will come to us must be the result of severe and constant struggle, rather than of artificial forcing. No race that has anything to contribute to the markets of the world is long in any degree ostracized. It is right and important that all privileges of the law be ours, but it is vastly more important that we be prepared for the exercise of these privileges. The opportunity to earn a dollar in a factory just now is worth infinitely more than the opportunity to spend a dollar in an opera house.

In conclusion, may I repeat that nothing in thirty years has given us more hope and encouragement, and nothing has drawn us so near to you of the white race, as the opportunity offered by this Exposition; and here, bending, as it were, over the altar that represents the results of the struggles of your race and mine, both starting practically empty-handed three decades ago, I pledge that in your effort to work out the great and intricate problem which God has laid at the doors of the South you shall have at all times the patient, sympathetic help of my race; only let this be constantly in mind—that, while, from representations in these buildings of the product of field, of forest, of mine, of factory, letters, and art, much good will come, yet far above and beyond material benefits will be that higher good, that, let us pray God will come in a blotting out of sectional differences and racial animosities and suspicions, and a determination, even in the remotest corner, to administer absolute justice, in a willing obedience among all classes to the mandates of law, and a spirit that will tolerate nothing but the highest equity in the enforcement of the law. This, coupled with our material prosperity, will bring into our beloved South a new heaven and a new earth.

The Dedicatory Ode.

Albert Howell, a prominent member of the Atlanta bar, read a stately ode written by Mr. Frank L. Stamton, the South's best-known poet of to-day. It was as follows:

Behold to-day the meeting of the lands
In pride and splendor, from far foreign strands,
Great State with State clasps hands!
Here, on this Southern soil, supreme and free,
Meet now no hostile hands;
But all flags wave where one of Liberty
Shakes stars down like the sanas!
And from sky-cleaving towers
Time strikes the thrilling hours
Of golden promise, for the years to be!

Behold to-day these towers, these temples! Yet,
More than the starriest dome or minaret
Near skies of azure met,
That which shall live while ages roll along—
Too glorious to forget—
States once at war, in union high and strong,
Whose sun shall never set!
And be this picture wrought
Upon the age's thought:
How of man's sorrow God makes heaven's own song!

Here, though a city opens wide her gates,
This is no day of cities, but of States,
Supreme and crowned with progress! Here all
Time
Gathers its glories in Georgian clime,
And sea to sea replies,
And from the farthest skies
The answering bells in one glad chorus chime:
"No North, no South—but a vast world sublime!"

Here where the cannon thundered, lo! the white
And royal rose of Peace, in living light!
See! how above the black breath of the guns
Flashes the splendor of serener suns!
Behold the fields, once desolate, renewed
With loftier life! The lordly land imbued
With statelier spirit! Cities (where the clods
Were trampled red by the avenging gods)
With skyward-pointing steeples! Every leaf
Is tinctured now with glory—not with grief!
And the new South, brave-risen from the past,
Wears on her brow the diadem at last!
She speaks for Peace and Progress: She would
say

To all the world: "Behold the morning's ray—
The black night rolled away!
Behold where Freedom with her sceptre stands—
Behold her and—obey!"
And with her richest jewels in her hands
She welcomes worlds to-day!
And not one breathing clod
But sends a prayer to God
To bind the Nations close with kindred bands!
She calls from fields where glad the toilers reap—
From hills thick-veined with treasure—o'er the
deep

Where all the brave ships keep
Their foamy way in commerce with the world—
Where wild the sea-winds sweep:
"Let not the sails far from my shores be
furled—
Let not the captains sleep
Till o'er the billows white
Shall flash the welcome light
Of my glad shores in splendid peace impeared."

Unto the North she cries: "Thy sister—I!"
Unto the East: "Above us bends one sky!"
Unto the West: "In union live or die!"
And for that closer union still she pleads—
Ready with heart and hand and noblest deeds,
In peace—in strife—
For death—for life,
Loyal to follow where Love's banner leads!

Sing it, ye seas, whose billows kiss the sky!
Sing it, ye mountains, from your summits high!
Sing it, ye dells and far, melodious vales!
Ring it, ye bells that echo on the gales.
Sing of a loftier and a larger life!
Sing of a world united after strife!
Sing of the light that dawns upon the blind!
And be this day, this hour
Pregnant with that high Power
Which closer brings the union of mankind!

Work of the Exposition.

An address by Gov. Atkinson of Georgia was read by George Brown. President Charles H. Collier of the Exposition Company then reviewed the work of building the exposition. He said:

The Cotton States and International Exposition owes its existence to a movement which was inaugurated at the most inauspicious period for such an enterprise to be found in the record of many years. Eighteen months ago the practical problem for almost every community seemed to be how to save what it had, rather than to acquire new elements of strength. The whole country was in a state of depression and anxiety; business was almost stagnant; the pulse of industrial life beat low.

Fortunately for Atlanta, however, she had among her sons many whose faith in her and in the country had remained unshaken, even in the severe conditions that then prevailed, and in confident anticipation of a better day soon to come they suggested and set on foot the movement which has led up to this event. The courage, the zeal, the defiance of difficulties, the indomitable energy which have ever characterized this people were exhibited in scarcely higher degree when they so rapidly rebuilt Atlanta from the ashes of war than they are in the history of this exposition.

But the unanimity, the ardor, and the liberality of Atlanta alone could never have made possible what we behold to-day. To the co-operation of many States and cities, to various foreign nations, to industrial, scientific, and social organizations, to individual enterprises and inventive genius, to thrifty manufacturers far and near, to artists and artisans, to the tireless devotion and exhaustless ingenuity of heroic women, to the powerful aid of the press and the generous favor of the Federal Government we must attribute the variety and splendor of this exhibition. The occasion demands a special acknowledgment of our debt to the press. The newspapers throughout the United States have given their cordial and incessant support to our undertaking.

To the Federal authorities we are also greatly beholden. When the indorsement and aid of the Government were sought there was a response which proved that though we are divided geographically into States and sections we are in heart and purpose an indivisible people.

The advancement of the race and the adoption of truer ideals have enabled us to profit in-

estimably by that expanding force in our civilization—the genius of woman. The part it plays here is large, and the way for women who must needs struggle with the world will be widened by the triumphs of feminine capacity and skill which are here arrayed.

In justice to ourselves, as well as to them, we have invited the co-operation of our negro fellow-citizens. They have accepted the responsibility of a department of their own, and have filled it with proofs of the progress they have made as free men. While the city which originated it and enlisted the support necessary to its realization will naturally be its chief beneficiary, the effects of this great industrial demonstration will be confined to no city, to no State, nor to any one nation.

The work begun beneath the frown of adverse fortunes has reached its completion under the smile of heaven upon our common country. Everywhere plenteous harvests, reviving commerce, industrial activity, restored confidence, capital busy in new enterprises, labor abundantly employed and reaping increased rewards, all sections of the country welded together in the bonds of common interest and the ardor of a broad patriotism. Surely we have a propitious hour for the beginning of this great triumph of peace to which we have invited all mankind.

When Mr. Collier concluded his speech, he called Gray Gables, which had direct wire communication by the Western Union line with the Auditorium. This was the signal that all was ready. President Cleveland touched the electric button, and the electric spark started the ponderous engines in Machinery Hall. Then a pandemonium of noise followed, and the exposition was formally open.