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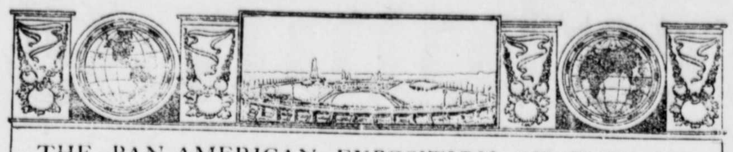

THE PAN-AMERICAN EXPOSITION AT BUFFALO

By WILLIAM I. BUCHANAN, Director-General

BY COURTESY OF COLLIER'S WEEKLY.

IF THE people of the republics and countries of Central and South America fully realized to how great an extent misinformation with regard to their several countries exists in the United States and Canada, the Pan-American Exposition would be taxed beyond its limit to provide space for the exhibits that would come from those countries to enlighten the people of the United States and Canada concerning their neighbors to the southward. If, on the other hand, the people of the United States and Canada knew to any appreciable degree of the wide opportunities for the profitable investment of money and energy which offer themselves in Central and South America, they would not require such exhibits to awaken their interest, nor would such opportunities long remain unknown or unpossessed.

The Object of the Exposition.

The ideal had in view by those who planned the Pan-American Exposition and toward the accomplishment of which nothing is being left undone that energy and effort can bring about or suggest is that in all that appertains to the industrial and intellectual development of the countries of the Western Hemisphere the Pan-American Exposition shall occupy the position of a great International "Information Clearing House." While interesting millions as a beautiful spectacle, it will afford an opportunity to the peoples of the three Americas to become better acquainted with each other, and it will prove a very prominent factor, too, in developing a proper and just appreciation in each country of the industrial wants and trade possibilities of their neighboring countries of the Western Hemisphere.

While their view of the duty and task imposed upon them in this regard has been broad the generosity and public spirit of the promoters and management of the Exposition in providing for the setting of the Exposition a magnificent, fairylike spectacle in landscape and building effects and in arranging for the sumptuous, intellectual entertainment of visitors within the grounds have been broader. It is safe, I believe, to now risk the assertion that as a result of all this the verdict of those who visit Buffalo next year will be that in certain phases, and in not a few, the Pan-American Exposition will be justly entitled to rank in history as the most beautiful and successful of American Expositions.

DIRECTOR GENERAL BUCHANAN.

No one who has approached the subject of Industrial Pan-America seriously believes that the artificial trade conditions now existing between Canada, the different Central and South American republics and the United States—as they affect and restrict commerce and communication between the different countries—can long continue, nor can it be controverted that great changes for the better in these regards have taken place during the past few years. Indeed, a greater advance has been made during the past ten years in the countries of the Western Hemisphere in all that counts for the better than during the 50 years preceding. This statement, made broadly, can be verified in detail. It applies to everything that has tended toward stability of government, toward the betterment and improvement of the people of the different countries, toward the building up therein of permanent national wealth and in the direction of utilizing to a greater degree than heretofore the products and resources of these countries.

Governments and Export Products of South America.

It is true that exceptions to this statement can be easily pointed out; but, broadly speaking, it will bear investigation and will be found to be correct. For example, with few exceptions the seemingly unending boundary disputes—all of which, by the way, came down from the old Spanish regime as an inheritance and which have been for 70 years the source of untold expense and of constant irritation and oft threatened war between practically all of the republics of Central and South America—have been amicably concluded. The closing days of the century find that chief source of trouble in Latin America happily reduced to a comparatively small point. It is but just to these republics to say in this connection that due credit should be given them for the fact that in reaching this result they have consistently recognized the theory of arbitration to be the proper and true method by which such international disputes may be solved. Today no boundary difficulty of any kind affects the peace of the east coast of South America, and but two such questions are still to be adjusted upon the west coast. Stable government, well administered, has been reached in very many of the republics south of us. In some—notably in those toward the extreme south of the continent—the most striking and rapid advances imaginable have been made during the past ten years in their material development and in the prosperity of their people.

This has been especially true of the Argentine Republic and of Chile. Fifty years ago the latter supplied flour to the entire west coast of South, Central and even to that of North America. The development of California and Oregon, however, changed this, and today the latter not only supplies their own wants, but as well a large section of Central and part of Western South America with breadstuffs. Chile on her part has become the world's nitrate producer and notably so in copper, while her vineyards have increased with each year.

In the Argentine Republic the changes that have occurred are even more striking, because they relate to things with which we of the United States and Canada are more familiar. It is, for example, relatively speaking, but a few years since the United States was shipping flour to the Argentine Republic and to Uruguay. Today, as a result of the immigration that has poured into those republics, but principally into the first country, and as a result of the application of North American farm machinery to the great alluvial basin of the River Plate, the Argentine Republic alone exports to Europe 35,000,000 bushels of wheat and half that amount of maize each year. Not content with having thus become the competitor of the United States and Canada in the Old World in the exportation of breadstuffs, the same republic has also become their competitor—and a strong and growing one, too—in the exportation of meat products. Few have any idea of the growth of this industry in the River Plate republics. Thirty years ago Great Britain imported less than 300,000 pieces of frozen mutton. Indeed that was the beginning of that industry. Today there are killed, frozen and exported to Europe each day from the province of Buenos Ayres alone, in the Argentine Republic, 13,000 carcasses of as good mutton as the world can produce, while innumerable square miles of alfalfa fields dot the republic and furnish rice, cheap fattening material for 30,000,000 or more of cattle possessed by the country.

The advantages the people of the United States and Canada might obtain by grasping the true meaning of the above facts would appear to me many and their value very great.

If they would, for instance, but realize the significance of the one fact that a well bred, fat steer can be and is being produced in the Argentine Republic and exported to England at a total expense at least $15 less than it is possible to do the same thing in either the United States or Canada—while a great advantage lies with the producer of River Plate mutton—they would realize the strong appearance of probability to the often quoted statement made by some that the not distant future would bring River Plate mutton to our tables in the United States.

Great Cattle Zones in the South.

Many public men in South America believe this will occur, reasoning as they do that the conditions in the United States are such and their development in manufactures is so pronounced that it can be looked upon as altogether probable that within the next ten years meat will be profitably exported to the United States from the great cattle zones of South America. They also believe that the turn of the tide that has carried the United States into the position of a lender of money rather than a borrower will then carry the well known aggressiveness and zeal of American financiers and industrial operators into South America, where a highly profitable field would be found for the employment of capital in the development of many of the smaller industries now in existence there and in the consolidation and operation on a large scale of the meat producing plants there and in the handling of breadstuffs and all their related industries.

Millions of acres of tillable land, in an excellent climate, with every facility except immediate transportation, await those who will seriously look for it in South and Central America, and it was the earnest wish and purpose of those who formulated and planned the Pan-American Exposition that in all the above fields they might, through the Exposition, do something tangible toward bringing to all a better knowledge than now exists concerning the countries of the Western Hemisphere and that there might result from the Exposition something of value in the direction of a wider dissemination of that practical knowledge of our surroundings and of our future industrial outlook so much desired by all of us and so essential to a proper realization on our own part of the problems of trade and of commerce that are in store for us and for our children to solve, that through it the people of the Western Hemisphere might more clearly appreciate than they now do the enormous resources of the Western Hemisphere and the possibilities it contains for the building up of an enormous industrial empire, containing, as

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