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THE OPENING OF THE COTTON STATES AND INTERNATIONAL EXPOSITION.

Late in the afternoon of Wednesday, September 18, in the study of his private residence, at Buzzard's Bay, Mass., President Cleveland pressed the electric button which set in motion the machinery of the great Southern Exposition, at Atlanta, Ga. A vast collection of the products of the arts and sciences on a scale like this has at any time or place an intrinsic value as such; but in the case of this Southern Exposition there are circumstances preceding and accompanying it that lift it above the level of the mere spectacular and invest it with a special historical significance and dignity. It marks the coming of age, the ripening into the full strength of robust manhood, of what has been aptly called "the new South." Thirty years ago, on these very grounds where these people have now gathered the fruits of their peaceful industries, they were locked in the embrace of one of the bloodiest battles of the civil war. The landscape gardener, as he smoothed out the green lawns that beautify the Exposition grounds, had to fill in many a rifle pit, from which the advance of General Sherman upon the doomed city of Atlanta had been contested with unavailing courage. From this battlefield, on these very grounds, may be traced the course of that successful campaign that ended in the liberation of the negro and the triumph of the Union. Atlanta, a mass of blackened ruins, was a type of the utter and hopeless chaos that prevailed through this Southern country but thirty years ago.

The recovery has been very slow, but very sure. Political, economic and racial problems have been solved. Warily, and amid heart-breaking discouragements, this sorely stricken country has wrestled with obstacles that would have daunted a less dauntless race. Prejudices and traditions that were old as the hills have been cast aside. The easy indolence, the patriarchal simplicity, of the old plantation life has been abandoned. The true dignity of labor, even labor of the hands, has been recognized; and this great people, freed from the burden of slavery by the rude stroke of war, has of its own free will broken away from the traditions of the past, and has thrown itself into the strife of modern industrial competition, with a persistence, intelligence, and success to which the Atlanta Exposition is an imposing and eloquent witness.

Thirty years ago, when Sherman set out on his famous "march to the sea," he left the city of Atlanta a mass of blackened and smoking ruins. To-day the visitor will find a thriving city of 110,000 inhabitants, replete with every modern appliance for municipal well being, and boasting of a larger variety of manufacturing interests than perhaps any other city in the United States.

This Southern country is no longer merely the land of the cotton plant, the tobacco plant, and the sugar cane. Its vast natural mineral wealth is being rapidly developed. Coal and iron—those most potent factors in the work of building up a people in wealth and population—are being mined in rapidly increasing quantities. Large and expensive plants for the manufacture of iron and steel have been laid down. The extensive opening and development of the coal beds has attracted manufacturers in a large variety of trades; and this to such an extent that the Southern manufactured goods are entering into successful competition in the markets of the North.

The tide of immigration, which of late years has set steadily westward, is now trending to the South. The great cotton plantations embrace vast areas of land that are suitable for a more mixed and more profitable agriculture. This soil is rich, cheap, and favored with a climate much superior to that which obtains on the vast plains of Western America. The farmer of the far West is located at too great a distance from the centers of population to be able to market his produce to the best advantage; and he is completely at the mercy of the particular railroad that happens to serve his district. The large, unoccupied, or practically unoccupied, lands of the South, on the other hand, are all well within reach of the larger cities; and it is seldom that they are held in the grasp of an individual railroad monopoly. These facts are beginning to be realized. From the West and from the North the farmers are migrating in increasing numbers to try their fortunes in this favored country. The infusion of new blood is having a healthy and stimulating effect upon the people; and it is manifest in the social and commercial quickening of the whole of the Southern States.

The inaugural exercises of the Exposition were on a scale that was worthy of the event; and, like the Exposition itself, they were marked by features that gave them an interest that was more than spectacular; features that were the visible expression of deep, underlying principles which have long striven for utterance, and have at last found it in certain significant and never-to-be-forgotten events that figured in the programme of this remarkable day. The Atlanta Exposition will be recorded in the history of the South as the day of reconciliation between the whites and

the negroes. It marks the close of a bitter and openly avowed racial war; and inaugurates an era of fraternal toleration and mutual confidence that will consolidate and enrich the South in the years to come. In the parade that marched through streets that were gay with the stars and stripes a detachment of negro soldiers marched in procession with the citizen soldiers of Georgia and Louisiana. Later in the day a negro stood upon the platform of the auditorium, surrounded by the illustrious orators of the day, and with native eloquence pleaded for the recognition of his people, amid the united thunderous applause of his white and colored audience.

Conspicuous among the many buildings of the Exposition stands one that has been expressly built and set apart for the exhibit of the progress in the arts and sciences of the colored people. So that, just at a time when alarmists were foretelling the disruption for a second time of these Southern States upon the negro question, we find that they have taken hold of the problem in a spirit worthy of the best traditions of the Constitution; and, realizing that "all men are created equal," they have lifted their unfortunate brother to the same platform of social, political and humanitarian rights as themselves.

If the Atlanta Exposition of 1895 should serve no other end than this, it will have done a noble work. On the page of history it will stand out as one of the great milestones which mark the onward progress of our country toward the perfect fulfillment of the dreams of its liberators and of the founders of its Constitution.

THE SECOND-CLASS BATTLESHIP MAINE.

On Tuesday, September 17, the new battleship Maine was placed in commission, and the moment she flew the stars and stripes from her peak she took rank as the most powerful fighting ship in the new American navy. It is true there are ships in the builders' hands, such as the Illinois and the Oregon, that will far outrank the Maine on every point of comparison, except that of speed; but of the ships in our navy that are fit and furnished for battle, the Maine easily takes first place.

She was built at the Brooklyn navy yard, her keel plate being laid on October 11, 1888, and the launch taking place November 18, 1890. Her dimensions are: water line length, 318 feet; breadth, 57 feet; mean draught, 21 feet 6 inches; and displacement, 6,648 tons. The twin screws are driven by the usual type of vertical, triple expansion engines, and they develop 9,000 indicated horse power. This should give a sustained sea speed of 17 knots an hour. On her trial trip, which was run before her heavy guns were on board, she realized the high speed, for a battleship, of 18'37 knots an hour.

In armament and disposition of armor, the Maine is similar to the Chinese battleship Chen Yuen, which acquitted itself so creditably in the fierce battle of the Yalu. The main battery consists of four modern 10 inch guns, mounted in two turrets. The turrets are plated with 8 inch steel, and they revolve within barbettes of 12 inch steel, which serve to protect the hoisting and turning machinery. These barbets are carried down to the level of the water line belt of 12 inch steel. This gives an unbroken wall of protection from the guns to the water line. The turrets are arranged diagonally amidships, and the superstructures are so disposed that all four guns can be fired at once, either ahead, astern, or on either broadside.

The secondary battery includes six 6 inch guns, of which three can be at any one time trained ahead, astern, or on the beam. They are protected with 2 inch shields. There are also eight 6 pounders, eight 1 pounders, and four Gatling guns. The water line armor belt is 180 feet long and 12 inches thick. The Maine carries four torpedo tubes, one ahead, one astern, and one on either broadside.

Battleship construction is a matter of compromise. On a given displacement the designer has to harmonize all the elements that call for recognition, such as guns, armor, speed, coal supply, giving so much to each as shall not necessitate undue reduction in the others. In this respect the Maine is apparently a distinct success. She has a powerful main battery that is well protected; a numerous secondary battery; a good armor belt at the water line; effective torpedo service; and, best of all, high speed. That all these points should have been embodied in a ship of only 6,648 tons displacement is greatly to the credit of the Naval Board.

THE COLLAPSE OF THE COLISEUM BUILDING, CHICAGO.

They evidently have object lessons in Chicago, as well as in New York, as to what not to do in the construction of large buildings. The fall of the Ireland building, in this city, has impressed, or should have impressed, the municipal authorities with the necessity for stringent building laws as a protection for the lives of the citizens that live beneath their rule. This time it is in Chicago that unskilled design and