



Canada's Big Fair. As a Woman Saw It.

I wonder how many of those who may read this chanced to be on the steamer *Turbinia* on its trip from Hamilton to Toronto on the night of August 28th. The reason I mention that night is because it was somewhat rainy, so that the performance before the grandstand at the big fair had to be curtailed. As a result the fireworks came on early, so that as the *Turbinia* moved slowly in through the inky darkness her passengers were treated to a veritable dream of fairyland. When you are on the grandstand the noise deafens you and the dazzling glare blinds you, and you are harassed by anxiety as to how you are to get on "that street car" presently, but as you are silently carried in over the still water from out on the lake what a different story! Talk about Venice! Could anything be more beautiful than this? The buildings themselves, outlined with gleaming rows of electric lights, hang like palaces of geni in the darkness of the night. As you drift nearer you gain a fuller conception than ever before of the vast extent of "the grounds." Closer still and you discern the "winking" lights, now so familiar at every fête and catch a glimpse of cars darkling down the roller-coaster. Then the rockets begin to ascend and the heavens are dappled over all the northern sky with balls and gleams and rain-showers of red, and green, and blue, and gold and silver. And so you are glad that you approached the city of the big fair by water, and that the night was damp, and that the fireworks went off early. Perhaps there are disappointed crowds on the grandstand. What reck you? Why didn't they come out here on the lake?

"If you want to 'do' the Toronto Exhibition thoroughly, without walking one hundred miles, do it systematically." This, the advice of an old frequenter of the exhibition at Toronto, we strictly followed. It paid. It paid in shoe-leather, and economy of time, and freedom from aching bones—or is it bones that ache? No matter, the ache is there, even though it be a blissful ache, somewhere in the anatomy of nine people out of ten who rush about the big exhibition—the "Ex." as one hears it called in Toronto—aimlessly.

We began at the Government Building, just a little beyond the fine entrance gates, and from thence circled the grounds, first to the Horticultural Building, then to the main bandstand, then to the Manufacturers' and Women's Building, the Dairy Building, the Applied Arts, the Art Gallery, etc. We didn't see the horses and stock, to be sure, but that was not on our programme, and we left out the Transportation Building, but that did not matter; we don't like automobiles—unless we are in them—and we never expect to own one unless the moon shall fall and dump us some of her silver. . . . No; we don't like automobiles.

After sauntering leisurely over everything on our list that promised to be interesting, we came to the conclusion that so far as "our" portion of the programme was concerned, the Exhibition of Expansion Year really was the very best yet. There seemed to be more system and more originality in the arranging of exhibits; the pictures in the Art Gallery, though fewer in number, were, as a rule, very fine, and the exhibit was not spoiled by a sprinkling of gruesome and horrible subjects, as sometimes happens; the addition of many hundreds of seats in all parts of the grounds made it possible to rest when the flesh became weak, and last of all, there were sanitary drinking fountains

everywhere. Think of the blissfulness of that on a hot day. . . . But now to details:

One of the most popular buildings on the grounds was the "Government Building," that fine, new structure of red brick, just within reach of the breezes from the lake-shore.

On entering at the gate-ward door the first exhibit that met one's eye was a fine one from Jamaica. Is the Dominion especially anxious to establish ultra-friendly relations with our British West Indies cousin?—or has the appetite for Panama hats become so keen in Canada that it must be met?

—Yes, Panama hats. I had thought that they all came from Panama, hadn't you? But there they were by the thousand being passed over counters by good-looking, golden-skinned Jamaicans to eager Canadian hands.

"How can you sell them so much cheaper than the stores here?" I asked of one of the salesmen—one of the luminous-eyed, golden-skinned ones, with pearly teeth and manners to burn. (Oh, to have been an artist just then!)

"But you must know this is a special importation, for exhibition purposes," he said, "and duty free. (Oh, hang duty! thought I). . . . Oh, you have a beautiful country, your Canada. We have never been here before and we love it. It is so interesting."

My companion suggested that it might be much more interesting about the middle of January.

Did you ever know that the cocoanuts we buy really grow inside of big, three-cornered armor-cases as large as a small palm? If not, you learned that at the Jamaican exhibit, and you saw bunches

and all the rest of it, then with a swerve and you are back in Canada, exclaiming over the fine arrangement of wheat and vegetables from Manitoba, with its model of the Manitoba Agricultural College in the foreground, and watching the turning of a mill-wheel pouring wheat from Saskatchewan to feed the world.

Past tempting arrays of fruit from Welland and Lambton Counties, (Ontario, and you come to the educative exhibit of Canadian wools and all connected therewith, instituted by the Department of Agriculture of Canada, and in charge of Messrs. T. R. Arkell, G. T. Willingmyre, and F. M. Jennings. Here you saw model sheep-barns, model feeding-racks, and a model contrivance for sheep-dipping. "How do the men get down into that deep trough to wash them?" asked a puzzled woman, and it was necessary for a bystander to explain that the dipping was simply to kill ticks, that the poor sheep simply had to go down, willy-nilly, into this tank of smelly stuff, then scramble out as best they might up the one straight and narrow way, all unwitting, too, of what it was all for or of the sweet peace to follow. It is said that "ignorance is bliss," but surely here was the inevitable exception.

The "Department," by the way, is putting forward strong efforts to encourage sheep-raising in Canada, and this exhibit, coupled with the hints from the instructors in charge, must have done good service throughout the exhibition.

Two other sections equally educative were those conducted by the Agricultural College at Guelph and the Provincial Board of Health.

The O. A. C.—thanks be!—seemed to have more space this year. There you

Mrs. Potter's wax ones—I don't know. At any rate, you saw what a tuberculous liver looked like, and several other equally charming things.

Elsewhere in the O. A. C. exhibit were ideal, sanitary milk-pails, and, at another table, bottles showing the decomposition of milk where impurities had been permitted to enter the milk—surely a striking lesson on the advantages of perfect cleanliness.

Passing a weed, blight and "bug" exhibit, one came to the Board of Health's health department, showing the need of pure milk for babies, need of ventilation in rooms, window tents for bedrooms, tents for tuberculosis patients, etc., all educative, all preaching in their own graphic way.

Passing a revolving cone of fruit and vegetables from Kent County upon one hand and on the other a very suggestive model—arranged by Prof. McCready, of the O. A. C.—of a rural schoolhouse and grounds, one came to illuminating exhibits of the things that are being grown in Northern Ontario, and in British Columbia, with an extensive showing of fish, stuffed, live, and dried ready for using, from the Maritime Provinces.

Various kinds of work from the Normal Schools, and the deaf pupils of the Belleville Institute, cases of stuffed birds and horrible-looking snakes had also a place in the building. For the first time I saw real live rattlers. One restless one kept moving its head against the glass as though trying to get through to the spectators, and darting out its forked tongue. The tongue, as though indicative of the nature of the beast, was quite black.

THE HORTICULTURAL BUILDING.

After a cooling drink at one of the sanitary drinking fountains near the door, we entered that realm of green and quiet spaces, the Horticultural Building. Here, as usual, the most beautiful fixtures were the banks, with a meandering stream below, of ferns, palms, and other green things, all intersplashed with scarlet callas, purple and yellow orchids, crotons and dracaenas all shot with gold and crimson and silver, and dainty little selaginellas like fairy moss. Here one saw huge leaves, like calladium leaves in form, but quite silvered over and splashed with pink. In another place one saw a big plant, five feet in height, resembling nothing more than a fountain of cream and gray-green. Indeed one could not help thinking how often Nature seems to be trying to see what variegations she can invent.

The first prize, \$250, for one of the five huge decorative displays, was taken by Sir Henry M. Pellatt. The second, \$200, went to T. Manton, Eglington.

The most striking feature in the cut-flower department was, of course, at this time of the year, the gladioli tables.

In the vegetable department it was noted that the finest displays came from the Humber Bay district. The first prize for a collection having been awarded to F. F. Reeves, of that place.

THE WOMEN'S BUILDING.

In the Women's Building I noticed little that was new. There was the same enticing display of whitework in all its permutations and combinations, of china and carved wood, tooled leather and woven fabrics, and the same crowds of eager women gathering up hints and "taking patterns." There was, too, the same lack of seats on the fine upper balcony. Why this place is not filled with seats for a rest-room I cannot imagine. On the day upon which I was there this year there was not a single seat in the place. I hope the women who have charge or influence will see that this otherwise delightful spot is not overlooked next year.



The Grand Plaza, Toronto Exhibition Grounds.
(The fountain is a favorite meeting place).

of sarsaparilla roots, and nutmegs and other things in bottles—as picked from the tree, and limes not made up into lime-juice, and strings of beads made of queer red and brown beans, and necklaces made of bright little red licorice seeds. . . . Heaps more things. The Toronto Exhibition is really a fine teacher of geography and the imports business.

Just behind was a perfect model of a steamer, the *Pastores*, built at Belfast, Ireland—against a background of West Indian rums. My companion suggested that the arrangement was suggestive, whereupon I got on my dignity, for I'm a fairish part Irish "meself."

Piles of cotton, sugar from Barbadoes, corals from Bahamas, mango chutney in bottles, cashew nuts, coffee in the beans,

saw right before your eyes the difference in yield from drained and undrained land, with a model of a farm showing drains; the difference in yield from plots with fertilizer and without; the difference in growth where small, poor grain had been planted in one flower-pot, large, full grain in another, and so on; . . . In the poultry section were heaps of eggs from O. A. C. bred-to-lay barred-rock hens, illuminated by the placard above, "150 Eggs a Year," and you straightway felt a soft spot in your heart for barred-rocks. There were models of poultry-houses, too, of fattening-crates and feed-hoppers, moulding-boards for pressing poultry (don't know the name), and samples of chicken foods in jars, and, last of all, cases showing diseased birds—maybe the models were some of