



VIEW OF MAIN BUILDING, JAMAICA EXHIBITION.

## JAMAICA EXHIBITION BUILDING.

As seen from the bay the above bears a resemblance to a semi-Moorish building, and, in certain details, to the well-known Crystal Palace at Sydenham, London. Its size, appearance and huge dome make it a prominent landmark.

That same afternoon I made it my first visit. Its great size, extent and classic proportions grew on me as I neared it. The approaches are pretty and convenient—tram and carriage ways on both sides. Opposite the main entrance—the latter in its arm of building making a cross—are two flag-staffs. One bears the flag of Old England, and on the other floats the Royal Standard, the latter a souvenir of the opening day, January 27th, when H.R.H. Prince George of Wales opened the Jamaica Exhibition with great *eclat*.

Within the entrance, to the right and left, are offices of the managerial department, and facing one the turnstiles, guards, &c., and just beyond the full beauty of the scene meets one. The main building is 510 feet long by a breadth of 81. It is cruciform in shape. Over the central section rises the Moorish dome, so familiar to all travellers on the Spanish Main and in Spain. It is 114 feet high, and the minarets are 74 feet high. Once within, the long central aisles or passage ways are seen extending 510 feet. They run due east and west, and between them, or in the exact centre of the long axis of the building, are the exhibits from almost everywhere. On the right and left of these aisles, under the vast galleries, are the side courts, or alcoves, likewise filled to repletion with exhibits. Over the latter are the galleries or balconies, likewise extending due east and west for 510 feet; end galleries connect them, giving an all-around promenade, either on their inner or outer aspects. From within a magnificent view is obtained. Looking outwards, are the grounds and Exhibition buildings; they are backed by the Blue Mountains. These balconies have added greatly to the space for exhibits and wall space. Literally there was not a foot to spare. The wall exhibits alone occupied thousands of feet. Over the central portion rises the arch, making the roof. Its centre is about seventy feet above the main floor. Apart from the great dome, at the end and sides of the main building (for there

are several), there are several pretty minarets of the true Spanish type, or, to be strictly accurate, of the Moorish type left in Spain, and since reproduced everywhere. From them, and flagstaves innumerable, floated the flags of the great nations of the earth. By night the minarets were illuminated by powerful electric lights, as was the building within, when the combined effect from the lamps, coloured glass, &c., was indescribably fairy-like and grand. The building without was painted in tints pleasing to the eye, and that added to its effectiveness. Its lines are beautifully proportioned, the whole blending in a lasting picture of architectural grace and Asiatic luxury. The view from the front of the building was attractive, and there mental photographs without number could be made by simply looking in one direction or the other.

Now for a very brief and imperfect sketch of the interior: On a perfect tropic morning I took a chair and sat me down on the eastern balcony, near the office of the Canadian Commissioner, Mr. Adam Brown. Below me, on a scroll extending across the point of the gallery, one reads:—

THE DOMINION OF CANADA.

Over that eastern gallery floated a chaste banner, inspiring to all Canadians. On a field of pure white were the arms of the Dominion; and below, the following inscription:

CANADA.

*Britain's Premier Colony Welcomes the Grandson of Britain's Sovereign.*

This proud and accurate inscription was supported by the flags of great Britain and the Dominion, bannerets, festoons of flowers, &c., an effective background to the whole being the glass end of the eastern balcony. Sitting there, below and beyond me was the following vista or scene—but I must anticipate my effort at description by stating that it will end in a mere attempt; my doing justice to that fairy-like and poetic picture is simply impossible. No mere word-painting can convey an accurate idea of the beauty of the scene, in the early and clear light of a tropical morning. Below, was the main floor, extending, as I have already stated, over five hundred feet. The aisles below that were broad—they nar-

rowed into mere lines in the far distance. The whole central part was divided into courts, as they are termed in exhibition parlance, and allotted to various countries. Those near were the Dominion of Canada, Scotland, Italy, Germany, the British West Indies, &c.

The whole was intersected at short intervals of space by passageways connecting with the main aisles, flanking the central exhibits. Equi-distant from my viewing ground and the western end was the short arm of the cross—to which I have already referred—or the miniature cruciform feature of the building. There, in the exact centre, in the Jamaica court, graceful palms in all their exuberant tropical health and beauty formed a fitting *entourage* to two fine oil paintings of Our Gracious Queen and that great and good man, the late Prince Consort.

On the particular day to which I refer a part of the floral exhibition was in the central part, or Jamaican court. The variety was endless and beautiful; a real tropical flower-show alone would repay a visit to Jamaica. There was surfeit of Dame Nature's choicest offerings, clad in tints and hues all her own.

On the right and left of the central aisles, or the long axis of the building, are the sides extending under the galleries. Down a series of graceful arches the space seemed to resolve itself into distinct alcoves or courts. The heads of the columns forming them were covered with flags, bannerets and scrolls, and over many of them were festoons of artificial flowers. All the courts were crowded with exhibits, so great had been the demand for space.

Above all these, and on the level where I sat attempting to make a fair mental photograph of the beautiful vistas about me, were the galleries, likewise broken into courts or alcoves by the same happy arches of the true Spanish type. Their columns and capitals were also decorated. Not a single harsh or inartistic effect was anywhere discernible.

The building is built wholly of wood and glass. It is painted within of light tints. Huge flags, bannerets, scrolls, &c., hung from the roof, Chinese lanterns and electric lights by night flashed everywhere, and a thousand and one things produced an artistic picture. It was a poem of the true tropical variety, ever varying, ever pleasant to the eye and senses—a wealth of colour on which the eyes rested gladly and contentedly. In short, it was one of those things that have to be seen to have justice done them, and when seen,