

THROUGH A MONOCLE

ONTARIO WEEK IN TORONTO.

TORONTO EXHIBITION is like nothing else of the kind in Canada; and, if I were not afraid of encouraging Toronto to augment its already exalted opinion of itself, I would have said "in the world." For I know of nothing exactly like the Toronto Exhibition anywhere else. Other cities have had far greater Expositions but they do not attempt them annually. Where they are annual, they are not—to my limited knowledge—as ambitious. The Toronto "hardy annual" is very properly a growth and not a creation. It began as an ordinary Fall Fair; and it has grown and added to its girth and multiplied its attractions until it has become a baby World's Fair—or rather the Fair of a baby world. But it has gathered to itself such World Fair features as an imitation of the old Midway Plaisance; and it assembles a grand stand performance from the four corners of the Toronto conscience. But its most striking effect is probably the marvellous manner in which it collects Ontario in its Capital City for the festival. It is Ontario Week in Toronto; and the average Ontario citizen would feel as badly treated, if he were to miss the Fair, as the small boy does when he is cheated out of the circus.

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THE toughest task before the Fair management is to beat its own record. Yet it always insists that this is done. No matter how fine the Fair is this year, we always know that it will be better next year—the impartial makers of the Fair being themselves the judges. They never climax—they are always climbing. I thought long ago that they had reached the last word in the way of pasteboard architecture for pyrotechnic effects; but they are going to beat it again this year. I know because the management say so. I wonder what the Fair management would do to me if I were to say that I think they are on the wrong track in the development of their fireworks. They insist on making their fireworks look like a spavined and dislocated imitation of something impossible or unknown. They have given us Sieges of Pekin that looked like a fire in a fireworks factory, and there is a family resemblance between the capture of the various fortresses they depict which ought to reduce military operations to an exact science.

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NOW the real and only purpose of fireworks is to be beautiful—not to be erroneously instructive. The fireworks contributed by the British warships to the Champlain Tercentenary last summer

did not teach anything. They did not even try to give us a prophetic picture of the "Battle in the North Sea." But they filled the night sky with beauty and the hearts of the thousands who saw them with wondering admiration. Out at Versailles on the night after the playing of the great fountains in the gardens they furnish a pyrotechnic display which attracts thousands of sophisticated Parisians; but it does not pretend to be anything more than it is—simply a painting of vivid pictures on the velvet dark of the sky with quivering lines of light. Possibly Toronto audiences must have something solid even with their most evanescent spectacles. They call a favourite iced confection a "Sundae"; and I was quite disappointed when I discovered that they did not spell it with a "y."

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HOWEVER, this is no time to be carping at this great National Exhibition. At the present moment, it is "first in peace, first in (imitation) war and first in the hearts of its countrymen." A man might as well question the supreme goodness of the Queen City as to criticise its unparalleled display of all its works from high art to low vaudeville of a "high kicky" description. And it is a great Exhibition. There is no sense in being mealy-mouthed about it. It has the defects of the environment in which it grew up; but so have the rest of us. For all that, it is something of which not only Toronto but all Canada is proud; and those who have not seen it with their own eyes, have one of the sights of Canada yet to enjoy. It takes rank with Niagara Falls and the Montreal City Council and the Western wheat crop and Sir James Whitney-in-action and the Lachine Rapids and the "Bore" at Moncton—the "bore" in the river, I mean—and the Rocky Mountains and the Fielding estimates and Longboat and all the rest of our celebrated institutions.

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ONE thing to be remembered, however, is that it is the people who make the Exhibition. If the people stopped going, there would be no Exhibition. At the present time, the people of Ontario "have the habit"; but they could lose it if the management became too insistent upon the educational features of the "show." After all, it is a sort of holiday to most of the visitors, except the newspaper reporters; and holidays are usually quite distinct from school time. I have no doubt that the able and enterprising management know this better than I do; but every now and then I notice that some public-spirited Toronto citizen gives them bad advice about being "better" and taking a more serious view of their responsibilities. If they ever do, they will learn the truth of Mark Twain's saying—"Be good and you will be lonesome."

THE MONOCLE MAN.



The Canadian Cricketers who defeated the United States Team at Montreal by 143 runs in a three days match for the International Championship. From the left standing: H. Ackland, G. Ferreber, O. Wallace, C. B. Godwin, F. C. Evans, Mr. Hainsworth (Umpire). Sitting: D. Cordner, H. J. Heygate, W. C. Baber (Capt.) G. H. Southam, A. H. Gibson, W. Johnston.

Photo by A. A. Gleason