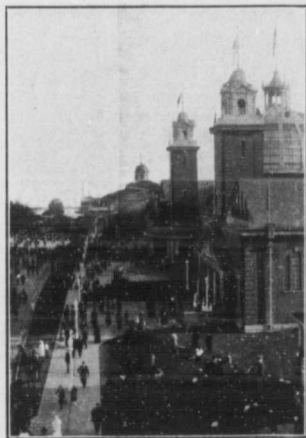


42ND CONSECUTIVE YEAR

FAIRS, or exhibitions, historians tell us, can be traced back to the days of Ahasuerus, who "exhibited the riches of his kingdom for an hundred and four-score days". Almost ever since, down through the ages, they have played a part in world progress and development. In rude and inland countries in the early stages of society, it was necessary, in the absence of shops and transportation facilities, that something of this character should be established to facilitate trade and barter. But in those days fairs were of a purely trade character, and lacked the educational and inspirational motive which is the life of the modern exhibition.



Originally they were associated with religious festivals, or holidays, or popular political assemblages, and, to some extent, in certain countries they still are. The Romans had such marts in all their provinces. In ancient England no fair could be held except by grant of the Crown. Back in 1314 Philip, of France, found it necessary to complain to Edward II. that "the merchants of England had desisted from frequent-

ing the Beaucaire Fair, much to the great loss of my subjects." He entreated his fellow monarch, for the sake of international amity and commerce, to persuade the people of his kingdom to return to their former custom.

In the tenth century fairs for the sale of slaves were common in the north of Europe, and were encouraged in England by William the Conqueror. On the American continent they date from early times under Spanish rule. The great bazaars of the East are essentially fairs.

Always we find the amusement end encouraged, much of the charm and popularity of fairs, back to the ancients, being due to the gathering of entertainers, who assembled in numbers to amuse the crowds, who have apparently always, just as they do at present, demanded that the more serious business matters of the day be leavened with a little healthful recreation and relaxation.

In tracing their evolution, one old authority says: "We find a series of legitimate steps, always advancing in the same direction and tending toward the same grand result—the spread of knowledge among the different peoples of the earth, concerning the advance-

