

CHICAGO'S PART IN THE WORLD'S FAIR.

By Franklin MacVeagh.



It will aid the editor of SCRIBNER'S, who wishes to inform the readers of the MAGAZINE as to the relations of Chicago and the great Exposition, if I state that this article is written at his suggestion by one who has no connection with the World's Fair management; because then it need not be read as if it were the doing of an enthusiast. The truth, however, is that it is much easier to keep within the facts, in this case, than it is to get beyond them, if one has only the usual imagination; and the editor in trying to get an unbiassed article might have saved himself some of his trouble. Moreover, there is probably nothing new to be said at all, which is another protection against enthusiasm; for everything touching Chicago's relations to the Fair has probably been said many times over—both as to her part in making the Fair, and as to how she will care for the people who visit it. But the facts have not been put all together, nor for the general public, in any more deliberate form than news items of the daily press.

In measuring the discharge of responsibilities by Chicago one should be careful to know what her responsibilities are. She has practically taken the work of the Fair upon her hands entire, even, in large measure carrying on her shoulders the Government's own Commission. But strict limitations to the responsibilities of whatever city might be chosen as the place of the Fair, were clearly fixed by the Government. The theory of the law was that the World's Fair should be controlled and administered by the Government's Commission; while the city was simply to furnish, to the satisfaction of the Commission, a site and buildings, and then to conduct the mere business administration. The scope of the Fair, and all intercourse with exhibitors and with foreign nations, and all matters of

award and the general control, were to be in the hands of the Government. To carry out the engagements of Chicago a corporation was formed, the members of which are the shareholders, who fairly represent the entire community, and whose work is done by a board of forty-five directors. There are therefore two executive bodies, admirably contrived for conflicts of authority and general confusion and delay; all of which promised at the beginning, but have been for the most part averted by the uncontrived dependence of the National Commission and its admirable good sense and patriotism, and by the youthful readiness of Chicago to do unlimited work and assume unlimited responsibilities. Perhaps any other American city would have done this, and felt obliged, by the Government's reluctance, to pay the way of its Commission, to discharge its own responsibilities and those of the Government, too. Chicago, at any rate, accepted very willingly the work which threw upon her an almost exclusive responsibility for the success of the Fair. And it has certainly had the excellent effect of unifying the management, by breaking down in practice the double authority fixed by the law. Since the Government would not adequately support it, the Commission had to look to the Directory for a part of its subsistence; and as in all governments the real power goes with the purse-strings, so it was in this. Possibly the power might have resided in the National Commission, if Congress had generously sustained it; and yet, looking back now, it is difficult to imagine the absence of the profoundly individual impress made upon the Fair by the characteristics of the city; nor does it seem possible that the remarkable power, energy, and public spirit which were so ready to devote themselves could have been declined. At any rate in this way, and in this alone, by indefinitely exceeding Chicago's responsibilities, has the World's Fair secured the advantage of the astonishing

individuality of the city. And so favorably has the world been impressed that it is doubtful whether Congress, when it makes an appropriation, will now disturb the situation.

But there is another thing to be said of Chicago's responsibilities. It is generally assumed that the Fair is Chicago's enterprise, and only countenanced by the Government; for it is forgotten that Congress, feeling obliged to celebrate the four hundredth anniversary of the discovery of America, chose to hold a World's Fair, and established it before deciding where it should be held. There was after this a sharp contest in Congress between the partisans of four cities. This is a different thing, and carries very different responsibilities from a proposal by Chicago to hold a fair on its own account, coupled with a request for the Government's endorsement. As I have intimated, Chicago hasn't troubled itself to draw lines about its responsibilities, and it has been prompt to fill all the gaps left by the Government; but if we are to weigh the performance of her duties we must understand what her duties are.

And here, before going on to specify what has been done by Chicago, and what will be done, let me say a word about the finances. I am writing before it is possible to know what action Congress will take; but I have no doubt whatever that, whether Congress contributes or not, the Fair will not be allowed to fail, or even to suffer. Chicago is committed, not to the world—for her responsibilities there are distinctly limited—but to herself; and under whatever hardship or injustice, she will unquestionably raise all the money needed if the Government refuses to participate.* No one who understands Chicago could doubt this for a moment; and if Congress declines the responsibility it will be because she knows Chicago will assume it.

Nothing, however, in my opinion, could be a more unjust hardship. What are the facts?

1. That the sum put in the bill for the city to contribute was five millions.
2. That no higher sum was men-

* This paper had been written before the final action of Congress.

tioned while the contest of the cities was before Congress.

3. That the deliberate judgment of Congress and of the contesting cities, at the time Chicago was chosen, was that five millions measured all a city should contribute in addition to a site.

4. That the bill had practically passed, and simply paused in the hands of a committee while the city was chosen, that the name might be inserted; and at this juncture, and when Chicago had been chosen, one of the unsuccessful cities chose to say it would have provided ten millions, whereupon the committee chose to think Chicago ought to double the amount which Congress had itself adopted. Three Chicago men went before the committee to meet this situation. They thought it would not do to stand upon their rights, and yielded to the pressure. They telegraphed the fact, and received in reply a telegram from leading Chicago financial institutions and wealthy citizens, sustaining them. Perhaps the committee ought to have insisted upon the amount in the bill when the cities contested, and which was part of a moral contract; but they did not, and Chicago, which had not entered a ten-million contest, found itself with its obligations suddenly doubled—doubled in a day—never having before contemplated such a thing.

5. That the committee of Congress itself faltered, fearing Chicago might be promising under pressure more than it could perform. It therefore cross-examined Mr. Gage, the Chicago spokesman, as to how Chicago could get the other five millions of dollars. Mr. Gage made the best answers he could, the new situation being wholly unexpected. He said, "We will raise another million by subscription, and then we will pledge the gate receipts and borrow the other four from our people. We will get it somehow, for we have promised."

6. That as five millions was considered sufficient, no one ever expected that Chicago ought to exceed ten.

7. That Chicago has voluntarily raised the sum to eleven millions, and herself proposes to raise it to thirteen.

8. That meanwhile the National Commission, which had to be made satisfied with site and buildings, and determined

the scope of the exhibits, demanded so much that eighteen millions will be needed to open the Fair. These demands were wise and were heartily believed in by Chicago; but the Government took the responsibility of making them.

9. That Congress has itself pronounced that Chicago has already fulfilled its financial obligation to the Fair, leaving, one might think, nothing to be said.

It is true that Chicago was expected to furnish the site and buildings, but certainly not at a cost of eighteen millions. If Congress refuse to share the wholly unexpected increased expense of her own enterprise, Chicago will beyond any question pay it all. But would it be worthy of the nation to take advantage of a clause in the bill originally associated with a liability of five millions of dollars, and already obliged to include a liability of double the original amount, to make a single city pay eighteen millions in face of the fact that the increased cost has been incurred by the Government itself—and when Congress has formally enacted that Chicago has fulfilled its obligations?

And these financial relations have worked from the beginning other mischief, and have made Congress not simply parsimonious, but unfriendly and unjust as well. No one certainly can deny that it is unfriendly and unjust to enact a great World's Fair and select a city to hold it in, throw the whole expense and responsibility upon that city, and then treat the whole affair with practical hostility. And that has occurred; and Chicago, in addition to lacking the support of certain influential parts of our country, and those the parts most known and listened to by foreign nations, has had to carry the weight of governmental suspicion, hesitation, and indifference. The only thing volunteered by Congress has been an investigation, and its only anxiety has been to escape expense.

And under these not too easy or flattering circumstances, what, speaking now specifically, has our youngest American city done? That it has done wonders all the world now knows; and in this

we may all take pleasure, for it is a national achievement due to national traits in their most national development.

In the first place, then, Chicago, expecting at first to furnish five millions of dollars, has supplied eleven millions, and will certainly supply two millions more; and the other five, if the Government doesn't.

She has also arranged a site for the Fair which in extent, in situation, in plan, and in adornment, exceeds by far anything ever before attempted for World's Fair purposes.

She has provided these remarkable grounds with buildings equally remarkable; which in size, variety (within the wonderful harmony of a general plan), and artistic value, constitute the greatest possible aid to the development of national architecture, and suggest the single regret that they are not to remain always, to interest and instruct the nation.

She has brought sculpture and kindred forms of adornment into generous use to make the buildings more worthy, more interesting, and more beautiful; and has given to sculpture other wide and distinguished opportunities.

She has brought color to its most artistic and refined exterior uses, and protected and defined it to a single large result; so that nothing in the hundreds of acres is too large or too small—neither a building nor a boat—to be brought into a general harmony.

These great effects have been made possible by seeking them with singleness of purpose and largeness of mind. In the first place, politics had to be vigorously excluded; and their complete exclusion and the substitution of pure public spirit in their stead, is one of the remarkable feats of this enterprise. The expenditure of eighteen millions of public money within two years, in an American city, without wasting a penny through politics, and without letting a politician ply his trade for one moment, is a unique achievement, and a very important contribution to American history.

To achieve these great effects, another rigorous exclusion had to be made, and was made almost or quite by instinct—

the exclusion of localism. From the first the directors simply sought out the best things and the ablest men, regardless of where they came from. The architecture, for instance, is by picked men whom all would say represent the best development of that art throughout the United States. The color directors come, one from the West and one from the East. The chief landscape architect is Frederick Law Olmstead, the recognized head of his profession. So in all things else a perfect cosmopolitanism has prevailed.

But more than this, none but the largest and noblest plans and the best ideas have been adopted from the beginning until now. Nothing is inadequate, nothing without great plan, nothing incomplete, and nothing inharmonious; and nothing falls short of "the best that is thought and known in the world." There is no note of provincialism and of localism: all has been excluded but the evidence of unique public spirit, wonderful energy, and the better knowledge of the world.

Another achievement is now assured in the certain completion of site and buildings within the time specified.

And another doubt has been resolved by the unprecedented foreign interest in the Fair. The international character of the enterprise will be more accentuated than that of any previous exposition. The number of foreign countries exhibiting will be not less than fifty-nine, and in many an exceeding interest is felt. What seemed the impossible has been rather easily accomplished; and it now seems as if we had been overlooking the special reasons why both exhibitors and visitors and governments should prefer to get into the midst of a nation rather than to merely reach its coast. Indeed, the justification of the location of the Fair in the interior is now seen to be complete; for not only will foreign exhibitors have access to all of our people, and all foreigners who come see a much greater portion of our country, but our own people will better see our own country and get better acquainted with each other.

But, after all, the best thing that Chicago can boast of is that she is building a Fair that can conveniently be visited

by more of the American people who are not rich than could visit it in any other city. This is her finest justification; and we may be sure she has done this great work with this inspiring thought in her mind. And it can truly be added that, as she has been building for the people, and as politics and mere localism have been excluded, so nothing that is petty or sordid, or any other way unworthy in motive, has been admitted within her plans. She could not have built as she has with sordid motives or a narrow mind. The building of the Fair could not be given over, as it wholly is, to the spirit of art and beauty, and high and wide usefulness, if the men who direct it or the community supporting them felt it to be other than a great public trust, committed to hands that must be kept clean and to minds that must be kept clear. It is right that this should be said, for it is a part of the evidence of how Chicago has discharged her responsibilities, and of how she has dealt with the honor of the nation.

And so, not by magic but through well-considered purpose, hard thought, and hard work Chicago, in acknowledgment of her responsibilities, presents a World's Fair site and buildings that not only surpass what has been done by previous World's Fairs, but equally surpass the expectations of the nation; and at the same time give guarantee that the Exposition will be filled to overflowing with the exhibits of almost the entire world. The outside alone will be enough for any man to see; and the inside will certainly excel that of any other exhibition. Even the more purely intellectual and spiritual sides of exhibitions, contrary to general expectation, will be here more than ever accentuated; and there has again been done what was thought to be impossible, in placing it beyond question that the Fine Arts department will be one of the greatest successes of the Fair. And though the Fair has from the beginning been treated as a vast educational enterprise, the other important end, of making it an entertainment upon a vast scale, has been completely secured. Orchestral and choral music will be beyond doubt at their best; and amusements and nov-

elties will be in such increased numbers over those of other expositions, and of so much greater elaboration, and will occupy so much more space, that they will constitute a new development. And great preparation and provision has been made for congresses of every useful kind; and for the accommodation of these the new Art Institute, now building by day and night in the centre of the city, will be entirely set aside. All these are provided, or all fully assured; and are noted here as chief instances only among the things which Chicago has thus far done in fulfilment of her legal obligations, and her self-imposed duties to the nation and the world.

The other of the two main questions to ask is, what Chicago has done or can be trusted to do to take care of, and make safe and comfortable, the visitors to the Fair.

The facilities for getting to and from Chicago have not been open to question. A railroad centre so phenomenal can easily take the people to and from the city. All of the great railways centring there—and I believe there are more than thirty small and great—are, however, making special preparations. Additional tracks are laid in some instances, and new rolling stock is being generally added. I am credibly informed, too, that every terminal station in the city, except one which has been quite recently built and another which will be entirely new, will have its facilities materially increased. The railroad managers are taking advantage of all previous experience in handling crowds, to provide against all delays and discomforts that can possibly be foreseen.

The transportation of the people from other parts of the city to the Fair presented difficulties which have been completely solved. All excursion trains—that is, all trains with passengers for the Fair exclusively, no matter from what distance, nor over what lines they come—will deliver their passengers over the Belt lines, in the Fair grounds, without entering the heart of the city at all, and will take up their passengers at the same place. The transportation facilities within the city will be these:

1. Surface street-car lines, including

one first class cable line, which has in anticipation just now doubled its capacity by doubling its loop facilities. This line has handled an immense Sunday traffic easily without these extra facilities.

2. A double-track elevated railroad just completing, and therefore a new resource.

3. A boat system from the old city front. This transportation will be in the hands of one very responsible company. The vessels will be large, safe, and well appointed; and the company is obliged to furnish a service equal to at least fifteen thousand passengers per hour.

4. The Illinois Central Railroad Company's right of way runs from the centre of the city almost to the Fair grounds, and consists of six tracks, two of which are for suburban passenger traffic. The right of way is being raised, and four tracks being added for exclusive World's Fair passenger traffic—two for express trains from and to the centre of the city without stops, and two for trains that stop at all city stations. These four tracks will run into the World's Fair grounds, where the terminal facilities will be ample and perfect. The facilities of this line, of course, could be largely increased by the partial use of its other tracks, but that will not in the least be necessary. The line will be protected by the latest and best automatic block system; and it is expected to carry the bulk of the people.

5. The World's Fair is reached from the heart of the city by parkways, and many people will choose to drive. A cheap cab system prevails, and the streets are well supplied with hansoms and other cabs. The cabs will of course greatly increase.

6. Very many people, living or stopping near the Fair grounds, will need no conveyance.

Transportation within the grounds will be all that could be wished. As all the principal buildings are directly reached by the interior water-courses (which have a circuit of more than two and a half miles) three classes of boats will be used—omnibus boats making regular trips and stopping at each building; express boats making round

trips without stopping ; and boats answering to cabs, to be hailed and engaged for the trip or by the hour.

There will also be an elevated railway making a five-mile circuit, and reaching everywhere within the grounds ; and finally there will be the usual rolling chairs that are found at all Expositions in profusion.

But can visitors be comfortably lodged ? It must be remembered that when the numbers of admissions to World's Fairs are mentioned, these do not mean people. Visitors, of course, multiply their visits. But in addition to the multiplication of visits there is to be borne in mind the fact that very many of the visitors at all expositions are the people of the city in which it is held, or who come from distances that admit of excursion trains. This greatly reduces the apparent need of house accommodation. It is a noteworthy fact that Paris (at least as far as I could observe) didn't build a single new hotel, or enlarge an old one, in 1889.

Then the mass of the visitors who will need lodgings will wish moderate prices, and will choose boarding-houses ; and boarding-houses can rise in a night. At Philadelphia there were boarding-houses in profusion, because they could so easily be improvised ; and so it will be in Chicago, where people, as at the Centennial, will turn an honest penny by taking boarders or lodgers just as far as the demand shall exist. And the same is true of restaurants, which, however, are already in very abundant supply. The danger is not that there will be too few restaurants, lodging, and boarding houses, but that there will be too many to be profitable.

But after all allowances are made, there will be great use for hotels, and especially for those of the highest grade. That Chicago has always had hotel accommodations ample for special occasions is quite true, and great gatherings like national conventions have chosen it for that reason ; but lately, and especially in view of the World's Fair, hotels have largely increased in number (and they have also improved in quality). I recall four large hotels of the first grade that have opened since Chi-

cago was given the Fair (besides the Auditorium hotel, also opened about that time), two that are opening now, three nearing completion, and the duplicate Auditorium that is to be ready next spring. There are other permanent ones doubtless built or building not seen by me ; and there are large hotels to be improvised near the grounds, and I think another permanent one about which I am not particularly informed.

Of course all hotels can, if required, increase their facilities by taking on rooms near at hand ; and if there should be need it would then be profitable to temporarily use some of the great fire-proof structures constantly going up. Such extreme possibilities I only mention to show how impossible it is that an enterprising American city could be without accommodation for expected visitors ; but I think it will be clear from the above that no extraordinary provision will be necessary. Certainly one would think not when the experience of Paris in 1889 is recalled. It will, however, allay any remnant of apprehension, if I state, after very good authorities, that there are, great and small, fourteen hundred hotels in the city.

A bureau will be established by the Directors, and another by the Lady Managers, which will systematically aid all who may require their services in placing themselves satisfactorily. These bureaus will have all the necessary information, and will have agencies at all the stations ; but of course a variety of private enterprises will anticipate a great deal of the necessity for these services.

The police arrangements, I am definitely assured by Major McLaughrey, the able chief of police, are receiving the fullest attention, and will be ample and efficient. The force for the World's Fair itself will not tax the general police force, but is a separate body which has been organized and growing with the Fair, under the command of Colonel Rice, of the United States Army. It will consist of not less than five hundred men. The city force has been "taken out of politics," and has been severely reorganized by Major McLaughrey ; and even in its political days it was always effective in emergen-

cies. It will number probably from 3,400 to 3,700 before the Fair opens; and will be greatly strengthened by the new Bureau of Identification on the system of M. Bertillon, of Paris, which is an interesting feature of the preparations. This bureau will have the Bertillon measurements of most of the principal "crooks" and criminals of Europe and America; and the fact that their identification by this dreaded system is easy, will deter many from coming, so that it would not be strange if Chicago should become during the Fair less the resort of the criminal classes than it, or any great city, usually is.

A word now about the water-supply of the city, for the reason that more or less has been rather sensationally published upon the subject, both in England and America, in the way of warning to those intending to visit the Fair. The simple truth is that there will be no trouble with the water-supply next year, as there is none now; for Chicago has now and will have then what it has always had, except for a few brief intervals (which cannot now occur), the most favorable water-supply enjoyed by any of the great cities of the world. The difficulty is to explain how any hubbub has risen against water that is not only not bad, but is good and wholesome and delicious almost beyond comparison. Lake Michigan, which the city faces, is the source of supply, and is a great body of the freshest, clearest, coolest, and purest water that can be imagined. As a source of supply for a city it is ideal. The drainage of the city is, of course, not into the lake, but into the Chicago River, which is also the port of the city and leaves the lake port unused. The course of the river was long ago changed, and is not into but out of the lake, and through a canal to the Illinois, and so on to the Mississippi. Thus the drainage flows westward over and beyond the lake's watershed, leaving the lake itself as pure and clear as when it was an Indian highway.

Then, why is there any criticism? I fear it must be admitted that enough excitement was aroused by the contest over the location of the World's Fair to make criticism of Chicago rather entic-

ing, so that rigid investigation, which might forestall it, isn't held to be obligatory. The starting-point of the story—which could easily have shown itself to be but a temporary accident, against whose effect a remedy was preparing and then almost completed—was a flood in the Chicago River. In this year of singular storms and downpours more than one flood had occurred; and when the flood is heavy enough the devices of engineering, pumping-works, and all are overcome and the current of the river is turned toward the lake. The river drains such a very small district that floods are not frequent and are of very short duration; and it is only the exceptional ones that can carry the river-stream very far beyond the shore of the lake. Now, the water-supply has been taken, since the city grew large, at a point two miles from the shore, considerably away from the direction of the river, and considered to be beyond the possible reach of the waters of a flood. But as it was proven that, under certain coincident conditions of wind and flood, the waters of the river could get that far, tunnels were undertaken *four* miles long, to unimpeachable distance and depth, and they have just been completed; so that the remedy was almost at hand when the criticism arose. The new drainage undertaking, which the city has just entered upon, involving a probable outlay of thirty millions of dollars, confirms the fitness of the present system, of which it is but an elaboration meant to anticipate the demands of a city of several millions of people. When that is finished even floods cannot affect the steady course of the river, but will themselves suffer capture and be sent harmlessly into the valley of the Mississippi. Meanwhile the new tunnels make the water-supply perfectly secure. Doubtless the World's Fair has hastened these tunnels, but they were begun before it was thought of. And it may be said generally that no city could be more careful at all times, or more enterprising or indifferent to cost, in the protection of its water-supply and the management of its drainage; and to this is doubtless due, in large measure, the remarkable healthfulness of the city.