

Influence
of
Expositions.

Della Drollinger

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It would not be easy to over-estimate the educational value of the objects of beauty, monumental architecture, galleries of painting and sculpture, and museums that are found in some of the old European towns, for such things stimulate the imagination, increase a thirst for knowledge, and awaken and educate the esthetic faculties.

Much of the marvelous beauty and wealth of public architecture and art in small European towns has been due to earlier political conditions. The town at some time probably was the seat of government of some small kingdom; but in these days of great empires those old time motives have passed away and something new must take their place. The tendency to create expositions

is a valuable part of the outworkings of these new motives.

In our study of history it is obvious to notice the high state of civilization that existed in some of the ancient valleys and peninsulas and then almost completely vanished. This was the result of an imperfect civilization caused by confinement to a limited amount of territory and to an insignificant portion of the inhabitants of the nations involved. The means of preserving and disseminating what was achieved in those days was absent.

The accumulated force of civilization has been deeply impressed upon the nations of the world by the artistic and industrial expositions that have been held in the

last fifty years, for the impressions made by these have not only been indelibly stamped on the individuals but also on mankind as a whole.

These expositions are not new only in a certain sense for in ancient times inhabitants came from far and near to sell and buy at fairs, and thus new ideas and learning was spread to a considerable extent.

The first international exhibition worthy of the name was held in London about fifty years ago. It was a small affair when compared with those held in recent years, but it probably required more original planning than any that have taken place since, for the first step costs the most.

The Prince Consort, The husband of Queen Victoria, was a man of unusual abilities and keen foresight. He gave his most intense energies to the furthering of the Crystal Palace exhibition, for he believed it would give an immense impetus to national trade and in this he was correct. Every other exhibition has had the same effect. This fair stamped upon the eyes of the world the importance of such an institution. Others followed quickly; at Dublin and New York in 1853, at Paris in 1855, at South Kensington in 1863, at Melbourne in 1866 and at Vienna in 1873, as well as others that were not international institutions. None of these impressed the

world as the first. Though the exhibition at Vienna was superior in many respects. It was not until 1876, when an exhibition to glorify the centennial of American Independence was held at Philadelphia that the institution reached its present state of development. As concerns our own interests and those of other nations it would be impossible to overestimate the importance of this fair to the people of the United States. It was the first adequate expression in an international way of the dignity, wealth and resources of the nation. Through the long period previous and even after the Civil War, European statesmen eagerly watched the development of the United States and few

had confidence in its future. When the panic of 1873 came European pessimists again found a theme from which to moralize on the weakness of the nation. They forgot that this nation's wealth lay in the ingenuity, ambition, and perseverance of the people, and in its boundless resources. But in 1876 this nation was able to make an exhibition that astonished itself as well as others.

Among the features of this exhibition were a few of lasting importance. In matters purely utilitarian it was in many respects ahead of others, but in no other branch had it any reason to boast. That which appealed most to visitors and surprised most those who had never had

The advantage of foreign travel was the character of those things that were concerned with public display, personal adornment, and home decoration. The colors at this time seemed absolutely garish and sometimes disquieting but it was not long before the newness wore off, and the visitors saw in the wonderful display of fabrics, decorations, wall-paper, architectural details, and bric-a-brac, an exhibition of beauty in form and color that was pleasing. The result of all this was soon apparent upon the manufactures and upon the tastes of the people. The visitors also gained a practical idea of the way things were done, for the exposition dis-

played the workings of so many kinds of machinery. Many more machines have been exhibited since but not in active operation. The assembling of new and wonderful works of mechanism has a widely and important effect in stimulating the naturally great inventive faculties of young Americans. This exposition also aided greatly in cementing the national spirit, and in assuaging the sectional bitterness that had grown out of the war.

The key note of the Paris expositions has been beauty and in this they have succeeded to an admirable extent. The city of Paris is very industrious, prosperous, and rich, subject to few fluctuations from exceptional dullness to

exceptional prosperity. This is due largely to the ingenious and artistic nature of the industries, giving a high value to a varied product for which the demand is constant and extensive. Thus the Parisians do not seek to turn out cheap wares in vast quantities but to make fine articles with the peculiar impress of style. The French expositions have revealed these characteristics of the industrial life of Paris and have also shown how the schools perfect and advance the industries for which the city has long been pre-eminent.

The Midway exhibit, a feature introduced by the French, forms a sort of microcosm where in, one may see all the nations

of the world more or less
 as they live at home.
 The object lessons given
 in these exhibits have
 contributed much more
 to the general knowledge
 of man than all the
 books in existence.

As a result of the
 Columbian World Fair the
 whole future of Chicago,
 as a centre of enterprise
 and enlightenment was
 changed for the better by
 the concentrated local
 effort to do a great
 and fitting thing. City
 architecture, previous to
 this had been in an
 inharmonious jumble.
 Grand and noble buildings
 had lost their effect
 through the lack of dig-
 nity or harmony in the
 setting and the general
 environment. The "White City"
 gave to millions of Amer-
 icans for the first

time in their lives a conception of harmony in the architecture of buildings placed near one another. This influence is now visible in many of the cities and towns growing up in the prosperous west. This conception was further influenced by the charming arrangement of buildings in the Omaha exposition, five years later and also by the late Pan-American at Buffalo. They have introduced flexibility and beauty into the designs of public buildings - ~~as~~, for example, the new post office at Chicago, which probably owes its architectural ~~influence~~ to the fair held in that city.

The exhibits in the educational line are also a source of much use

and enlightenment. One can obtain a better understanding of the methods and objects of education by two or three weeks study of the exhibits, than by weeks or even months of study otherwise conducted. Another feature of the Chicago fair that made a great and lasting impression was the building designed by a woman, decorated by women and all that was contained in it showed what woman had accomplished in this country outside the domain of cooking and dishwashing, the domain to which the sex had so long been condemned by men.

The chief feature of the Buffalo fair was electricity. It was the mysterious display of

an incomprehensible power that impressed one most, This successful utilization of The Niagara Power.

Thus we see that expositions impart knowledge and arouse the imagination which has a lasting power for good, and stimulates to higher and nobler purposes.