

DAZZLING ATTRACTIONS SET THEIR CAPS FOR VISITORS



VIEW OF THE TRAIL FROM AMERICAN INN AND THE PLATEAU UPON WHICH THE MAIN EXPOSITION BUILDINGS ARE SITUATED.

Important Session of Librarians

In the matter of the use and abuse of public libraries, the West is going to learn something from the East this summer. On the other hand, the East is going to learn something from the West. The Convention of the American Library Association, to be held in Portland for five days, beginning July 2, promises to mark an epoch in library promotion. For the second time in its history of 29 years this National association will meet in the Pacific Coast country. For the first time it will meet in the Pacific Northwest. Fourteen years ago the association held its convention at San Francisco. But many things have happened since that date, in library as well as other lines. The development of libraries throughout the United States since 1891 has been remarkable. Since that year the Carnegie-ization of the bookless public has come about, and where Mr. Carnegie has not thrown the enlightening rays of his bookish benefactions, the library under state or municipal fatherhood has found a

footing in hundreds of cities and towns, and even in villages. Twenty years ago, even 15 years ago, a person moving to a town of 10,000 people or less, anywhere in the United States, except perhaps in Massachusetts, might have wagered with more than an even chance of winning that he would not find a public library in the town. Now the chances are largely in favor of his finding such a library, if the town has 1000 population or more. For a decade past, with constantly increasing fervor, the people in the smaller cities have clamored for public libraries. This clamor has been awakened by the knowledge that Mr. Carnegie stands ever ready to go any town half way in the establishment of a library. But the desire for such beneficial institutions was merely dormant; it existed, and only a reasonable hope of achieving success was necessary to stir it into action. Since 1891, when 83 members of the American Library Association met at San Francisco, thousands of free public libraries have been established. At that time the Middle West and the

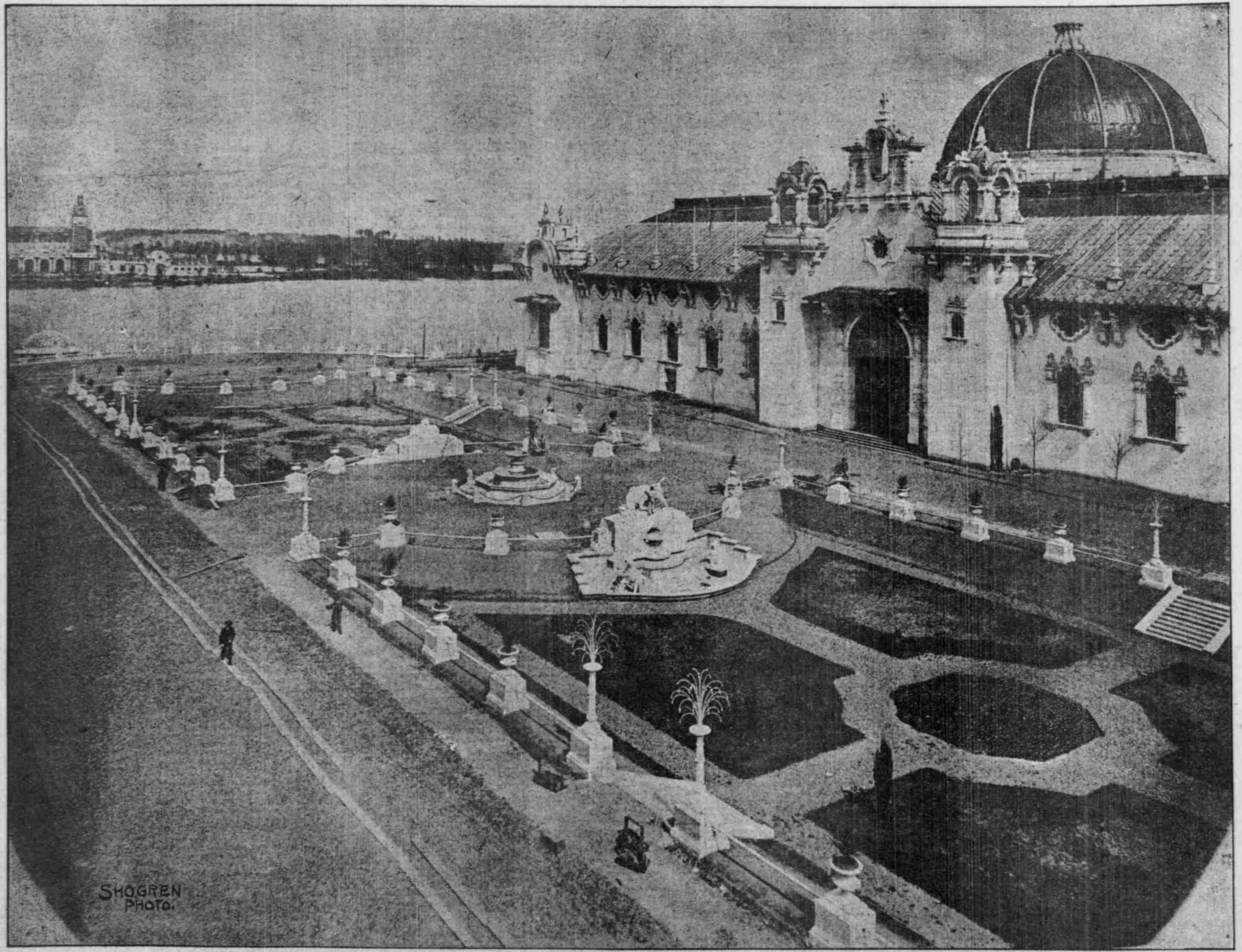
Far West were just awakening to the possibility of such institutions, except in the older and larger cities. New England had almost a monopoly of the small-town public library. Westward the course of the free library, like that of empire, has taken its way. Until very recent years the American Library Association has been deemed primarily a New England institution, inasmuch as the majority of its membership hailed from that section. But now we find that the secretary, a very important officer in the association, is a Western librarian, Mr. J. I. Wyer, Jr., of the University of Nebraska library, and the official reports of the association bear a Lincoln imprint when published. The Western membership has increased largely within the past decade. In New England the free library system is fostered by the several states. In Massachusetts, for instance, practically every town has a public library, founded and maintained under a state law which provides that if the town will maintain the library and raise a certain specified sum to aid in its establishment the state will do the rest. Connecticut followed Massachusetts closely in the enactment of such a law. The result is that in both those states the public library is an institution that is considered quite as necessary and as important as the town hall or the police court; and, as a rule, the inhabitants point with as much pride to their handsome library building as they feel when they point out the house where George Washington slept when he passed through town to fight the British. The plan of state fatherhood of free libraries is just in its inception in the Pacific Northwest. The Oregon Legislature recently passed an act creating a public library commission and appropriating funds for its maintenance. It is believed that this commission ultimately will formulate plans for the fostering of free libraries, which will appeal to the people of the state with such force that the Legislature will follow up its good besting by emulating the example of Massachusetts and Connecticut. Portland already has a free public library, housed in a splendid stone building, with more than 40,000 bound volumes on the shelves and a reading-room where all the standard periodicals are on file. Miss Mary Frances Isom, the librarian, is the local member of the American Library Association. It was the Library Association of Portland which, in conjunction with the Lewis and Clark Exposition officials, secured the convention of 1905 for the Western World's

Fair city. Mr. A. L. Mills, of this association, is chairman of the committee of arrangements, and the programme of entertainment will be vivid with interest. When the librarians from the East come to Portland they will be surprised to find such an excellent public library, and it may surprise them further to learn that the percentage of fiction taken out by readers has been reduced to 60 and is constantly decreasing, thus showing that Portland people read books of solid intellectual nourishment. Salem, Pendleton and other Oregon cities also have free public libraries. In the State of Washington there are several high-class public libraries, notably those at Seattle, Spokane and Tacoma. California has a large number of public libraries. Each of the Pacific Coast States has a library association, and these bodies have planned to meet with the National organization at Portland. The American Library Association was organized at Philadelphia in 1876, and was a direct outcome of a meeting of 105 librarians at the Centennial Exposition. Only 18 attended the next convention, held in New York City. In 1893 the movement became international for the time being, but the convention held in London was a failure in point of attendance, only

twenty-one librarians being registered. Boston, the next meeting place, attracted 182. The conventions since that date have gradually increased in attendance. It is believed by the officers of the association that the attendance at Portland will be fully as large as that at St. Louis last year, by reason of the compelling attractions of a trip to the Pacific Northwest, the low railroad rates and the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition at Portland, which will open its gates June 1. The librarians have in store a grand treat. They are to remain in Portland five days, seeing the Exposition and the sights of the city and its environs, and attending the daily sessions of the association, to be held in the First Unitarian Church, just across the street from the headquarters at the Portland Hotel. Eminent librarians will read papers at the meetings, and the discussions, it is believed, will be of great value both to Eastern and Western library workers. A special train carrying the librarians, their families and friends, is to leave New York about the 14th of June. Delegates will be picked up at Albany, Buffalo, Pittsburg, Chicago and other points along the route. The train will consist of two sections, aggregating 16 coaches; when it arrives in Portland, via the Ca-

Canadian Pacific Railroad. At Banff, the great scenic point in the Canadian Rockies, the train will stop an entire day, thus affording the tourists an opportunity to view some of Nature's grandest works. A side trip to the famous Yellowstone Park is also one of the features of the librarians' tour. On the homeward trip the delegates may go either by the Union Pacific or the Southern Pacific. Those going by the latter route will have the privilege of stopovers at California points. Dr. Herbert Putnam, Librarian of Congress and an ex-president of the association, is one of the distinguished librarians who has signified his intention to attend the Portland convention. Officers of American Library Association are: President—Ernest C. Richardson, Librarian of the Princeton University Library, Princeton, N. J. First vice-president—Frank P. Hill, Public Library, Brooklyn. Second vice-president—L. E. Stearns, Public Library, Madison, Wis. Secretary—J. I. Wyer, Jr., University of Nebraska Library, Lincoln, Neb. Treasurer—G. M. Jones, Public Library, Salem, Mass. Recorder—Helen E. Haines, Library Journal, New York City. Registrar—Nina E. Browne, Boston.

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SUNKEN GARDENS AT THE LEWIS AND CLARK EXPOSITION. TO THE LEFT IS THE LIBERAL ARTS BUILDING AND IN THE DISTANCE THE GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS.