

Exhibits From the Land of the Filipinos

Government Has Interesting and Picturesque Showing of Conditions.

ONE enthusiastic writer calls the Philippines a magnificent rosy of glowing islands that nature has hung above the heaving bosom of the warm Pacific. The combination of mountain and plain, lake and stream, everywhere rich with glossy leafage, clustered growths of bamboo and palm, fields of yellow cane, groves of banana, great reaches of growing rice, and groves of verdant coffee resulting from an abundant rainfall, a rich soil, an even climate, and a warm influence of equatorial waters, tend to make a picture richer by far than nature ever painted in the temperate zone.

Few Americans have ever had the opportunity of seeing this picture on the far-away shores of the Pacific, and most of those who have saw also unpleasant features. Death and terror reaped a harvest, and bloodshed reigned supreme when most of the citizens of the great West got their first glimpse of the masterpiece of the Eastern sea.

But today the picture is itself again, and many of us will see it for the first time, while most of those who saw it before will fall to recognize the newest lines in brilliant colors. The busy hum of industry and commerce have drowned out the crack of the carbine and the clash of the saber.

The exhibit for the Philippine Islands has been made by the War Department in the east building on Government Island, along with Alaska and the great North country. Half of the structure has been set aside for the representation of the wealth and possibilities of the Philippine Archipelago.

Compared with the areas of certain of the United States, the Philippines are larger than the State of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Delaware, and nearly twice as large as the six New England States. Measured by the square miles contained in most of the European countries, the Philippines become one of the most important political divisions of the globe.

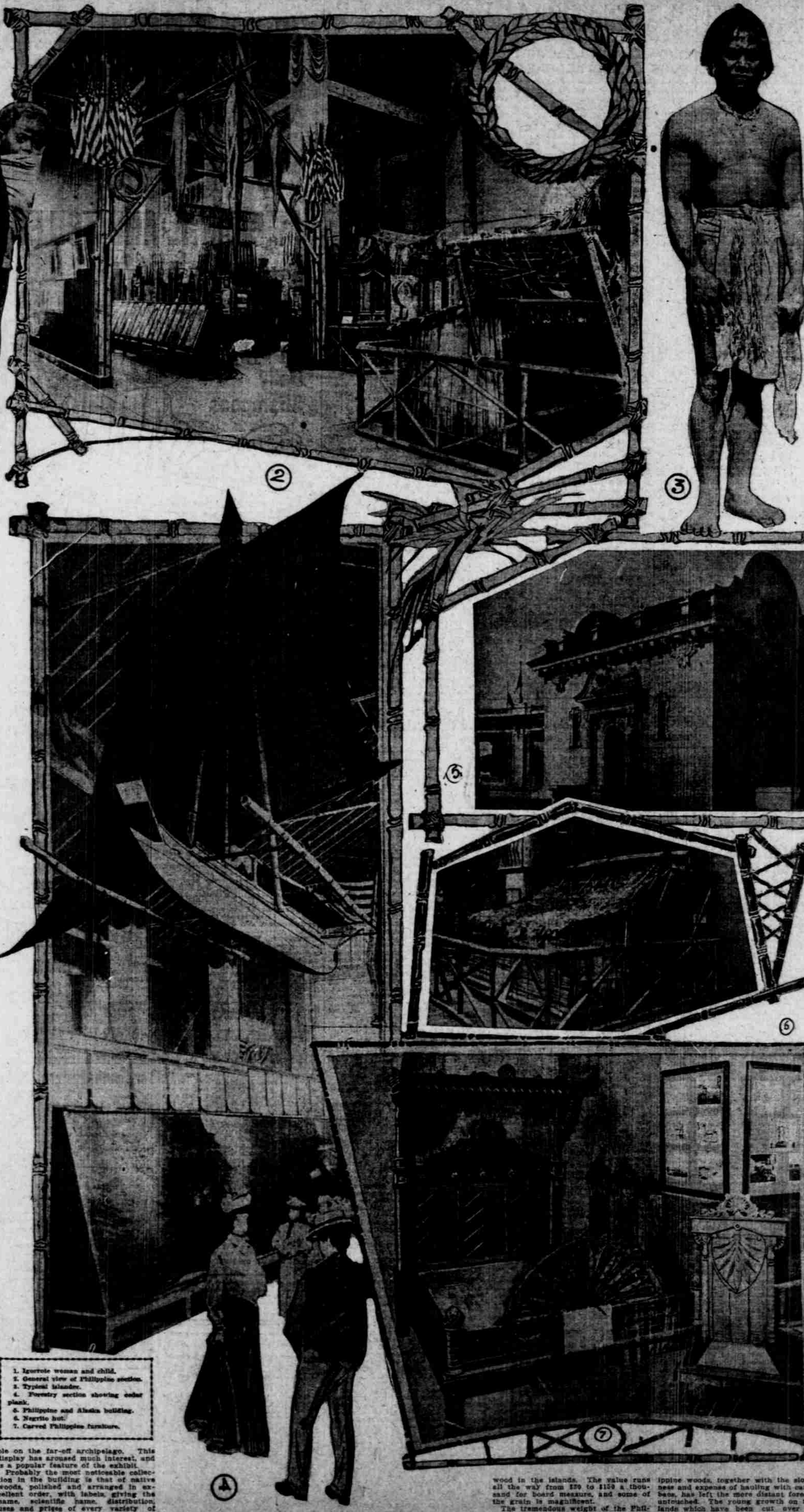
Notwithstanding the fact that it is almost 400 years since the flag of Spain was first raised in Philippine territory, and its metes and bounds have been traced upon the maps of the world, the archipelago is practically a new country. It is true that Hernando de Magellan, sailing on and on without chart, on what must have seemed an illimitable ocean, sighted the island of Cebu, but that island has not yet been surveyed nor thoroughly explored. It is true that nearly 50 years later the white-winged fleet of Miguel de Legaspi, with canvas belled with variable tropical winds, in devious course wended in and out among the Philippine Islands, and in 1571 proclaimed Manila to be the capital, yet during all these centuries that have elapsed there has been but little more thorough exploration accomplished than the coast lines and the more important river valleys. Large islands remain unpopulated, and the interior of others as unknown today as the territory around Lassa, the capital of Tibet.

Those who have had the exhibit in charge have done their best to make it both interesting and instructive, and to what extent they have succeeded may best be judged by Exposition visitors. From every side are heard words of praise for the completeness of the exhibit, and the excellent manner in which it has been installed.

Bamboo and other Oriental woods have been used with considerable success in preparing the exhibits. Near the entrance to the building is a handsome collection of carved furniture of very interesting workmanship, and a bamboo house of a Negrito chief. The wood has been split into slats, which compose the sides, while the roof is a thatch of palm leaves. This hut represents the type in general use among the Negritos, who are the remnants of the aboriginal tribe of the islands. They are the smallest and lowest type of people in the Philippines, are nomadic and live in dense forests. They are pagans and refuse intercourse with other people of the islands.

Along the north partition have been arranged a multitude of photographs and other interesting articles from the Philippines calculated to give the Exposition visitor a good idea of the characteristics of the country and the people on the far-off archipelago. This display has aroused much interest, and is a popular feature of the exhibit.

Probably the most noticeable collection in the building is that of native woods, polished and arranged in excellent order, with labels giving the name, scientific name, distribution, uses and prices of every variety of



1. Igorote woman and child.
2. General view of Philippine section.
3. Typical islander.
4. Poverty section showing cedar plank.
5. Philippine and Alaska building.
6. Negrito hut.
7. Carved Philippine furniture.

wood in the islands. The value runs all the way from \$75 to \$150 a thousand for board measure, and some of the grain is magnificent. The tremendous weight of the Philippine woods, together with the slowness and expense of hauling with carabao, has left the more distant forests untouched. The young growth on the lands which have been cut over is

largely composed of the inferior species, which is the natural consequence of the native custom of cutting only the most valuable timber.

The most beautiful specimen in the exhibit is a plank of Philippine or Spanish cedar, 35 feet long, five feet wide and four inches thick. It has been polished like a mirror, and is a magnificent red shade, with fine grain. It took two men seven days to saw out the plank by hand, for modern logging machinery is unknown to most parts of the islands.

Hemp is the shredded leaf of the abaca, and is the principal product of the islands. The plant grows wild and cultivated, and the hemp is used for a variety of purposes. A large collection of hemp products is shown in a large case, which forms an attractive display. In another part of the exhibit, rope made by natives in Manila is on display, a product that compares very favorably with the American-made article.

The question of extracting the abaca fiber is an important one, and has received considerable attention for many years. Quite a number of machines have been invented that apparently solved the problem, but after trial they have all been abandoned and the old primitive methods are the only ones employed at present. These methods, however, are so crude, so slow, and involve such a percentage of loss, that it will indeed be strange if, when American brain, brawn and capital become interested in the subject, some better way is not discovered.

A people that invents the cotton gin and the numberless other appliances for planting, cultivating, harvesting and marketing crops, will not allow themselves to be defeated by the difficulties presented by the pulping of the abaca. A successful machine that will extract in good condition a larger percentage of the fiber and at the same time be economical in operation would more than double the value of all the land in the Philippines adapted to hemp-growing.

The mineral exhibits show that the islands are possessed of valuable deposits of coal, lead, gold, silver and other mineral substances. The coal is mostly of the lignite variety, and a good article for the purposes of the islands. There is said to be great opportunity for modern mining methods in the islands.

The past history of coal mining by the Spaniards is a long record of ignorance, avarice and mistakes. They attempted to mine coal as though it were a precious metal, and indeed it became equivalent to it in some instances when measured by the cost of

production. At one time the government was so impressed with the value of this industry that it was for a while a monopoly in which the government was interested, but as a business venture it was not a success. On the whole, the coal deposits of the archipelago offer opportunities for investment which may well invite thorough investigation, and, should they be developed on an extensive scale, will soon solve the fuel and power questions which at present are prominent among the serious problems confronting those interested in the development of the rich virgin resources of the archipelago.

Manufactures and education bring a close to the exhibits. Among the former are several beautiful silver articles wrought by workmen of Manila. For elaborateness of design and beauty of workmanship they are the equals of anything of a similar nature in this country.

The school displays are full of interesting exhibits, and show conclusively that the natives are capable of learning the English language. Well-written lessons in grammar and spelling show that the native mind is fully as capable of mastering these subjects as his whiter brother. Mechanical and architectural drawing have many beautiful specimens of workmanship by Filipino lads.

Fuller knowledge of the condition of the Philippines with respect to language seems to justify the decision formed in the beginning to make English the language of the schools. The great majority of the Filipinos are ignorant of Spanish. This is particularly true of the children. Those who profess to be able to use this language have but an imperfect command of it. The native dialects are numerous and so unlike that no one of them can be employed as the common medium of communication. There are no books in any one of them that could be advantageously used in a system of public instruction. The few newspapers that are printed in the native dialects furnish but little of the intellectual guidance or stimulus needed by the inhabitants of the islands in their aspiration to be counted among civilized peoples. Of such papers there are only five in Tagalog, two in Visayan and one in Ilok, but none in any of the other six dialects of the civilized tribes.

The Philippine exhibit will go a long way toward dispelling a few illusions that are now deep-rooted in American minds and will show the true conditions that exist in the islands today. The display will serve its purpose, and prove to Exposition visitors that the Philippines are not wildernesses peopled with savages.

T. M.

Belgian Lacemakers' Wages.

U. S. Consular Reports.

Belgian female workers on handmade lace earn but from 25 to 30 cents per day of 12 to 15 hours' work. In Eastern Flanders the wages are still lower, ranging from 15 to 20 cents per day. Girls from 6 to 8 years of age are instructed in lacemaking in schools superintended by nuns. A few years ago the earnings of lacemakers in East Flanders averaged only from 7 to 8 cents per day, as the lace was then sold direct to dealers. A philanthropic woman, Miss Minna Damsart, of Hasselt, took hold of the matter and by selling the lace direct to customers, excluding agents and dealers, secured the full proceeds of the sales to the producers. This woman has also established working schools and greatly improved the industries of the district.