

KEEPING UP APPEARANCES

When the San Diego Exposition project was launched several years ago, conditions were such as to warrant the success of this enterprise in 1915. Since then, there have occurred three great surprises in the world; first, the Turko-Italian war; second, the Balkan war; and third, the present great European war.

The Turko-Italian war had a serious ~~economic~~ effect upon the economic conditions of Europe; but the effect did not spread to America. When the Balkan war broke out, and financial chaos was precipitated in all South-eastern Europe, so great was the drain upon the finances of Europe as a whole that the effect spread clear to America, and the severe depression in this country, beginning in the latter part of the first half of 1913, was a direct result.

While the whole financial world of three countries was in a condition of depression, the terrible European cataclysm occurred.

Now, from one end to the other of the United States, the existence of a condition of depression and uncertainty in the business world has never been equalled in the past.

There is not a city, nor a small community, nor even a citizen who has not been severely and injuriously affected.

Millions of people have had their incomes reduced, while millions more are in danger, or think that they are in danger, of suffering a loss in both income and capital.

Thousands and tens of thousands and perhaps even more thousands of those who would have been possible visitors to the coast and patrons of our exposition under normal conditions, are compelled, or think that they are compelled, to exercise great economy. About the first item of contemplated expense that would be abandoned by any individual, would be the cost of a long and comparatively expensive journey for pleasure's sake.

However successful our exposition may be, under these present conditions, we can all be sure that it would have been many times more successful under normal conditions.

San Diego, at an enormous cost to itself, has prepared a great entertainment for a great national public, and it is unfortunate that many, many thousands of our would-be guests have had to forego our hospitality.

Under these conditions, and face to face with the conditions what should the city do in the matter of its exposition? Shall we try to keep up appearances and carry on the exposition on the same scale of expense that we should have been warranted in doing had the unexpected not happened? Or, shall we candidly acknowledge our misfortune and make the best of it?

We have our exposition; we should and must keep it open; but is it worth our while to keep up the bluff—that is to say, keep up the appearances of a prosperity that everybody in the city and everybody all over the country knows to be only keeping up appearances? By doing this, we may be only unnecessarily adding to the great cost that has already been incurred.

Would it not be better, right at the beginning, of the enterprise, to so reorganize it as to permit no further loss?