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OFFICIAL OPENING ADDRESS OF G. A. DAVIDSON,  
PRESIDENT PANAMA-CALIFORNIA EXPOSITION.

Many of us, who five years ago stood on the sunbaked mesa in this park, arid then and unattractive, and watched our esteemed friend, The Honorable John Barrett, representing the President of the United States, turn the first spadeful of earth, saw in that practical act the promise of a day when our fondest dreams would come true. That day has now dawned. The Exposition is completed and the finished product is even more beautiful than our dreams.

In throwing open our gates, which is equivalent to announcing that San Diego has become the host of the nation and of the world, the officers and directors of the Panama-California Exposition and the people of this community extend a hearty welcome, not only to the people of the states which make up this Union, but to the people of the entire world. And it is to the thousands who will come to San Diego from all parts of the world that the exposition will look for support in this great undertaking. For the kind interest already displayed by different sections of the country a debt of thanks is due, and this debt we hope to pay by a liberal hospitality in dealing with the vast armies of visitors who will come to our gates.

Our thanks also are due to the officials and commissioners of the various groups of California Counties and the several Western states for the beautiful buildings that have been erected on these grounds and for the splendid exhibits that have been arranged. These buildings and these exhibits will go far in making the Exposition representative in its scope and will bring to the minds of visitors

from the East the varied opportunities and possibilities of the vast empire that lies west of the Missouri river.

The presence of so many distinguished persons on this occasion, the personal representative of the President of the United States, the personal representative of the King of Spain, the several Senators, the Governors of many states or their personal representatives, and the Mayors of many Western cities, indicate the wide interest manifested in this Exposition, which expresses the ideals of modern America and the great West. To these distinguished guests and the thousands of persons they represent, we extend a most cordial welcome. At the same time expressing our sincere thanks for the aid given us by the sovereign states of Washington, Utah, New Mexico, Montana, Nevada and Kansas, whose buildings and exhibits go far towards making the Exposition complete.

On this auspicious day, which sees the fulfillment of many high hopes, we must be excused if we felicitate ourselves on what has been wrought in what was, less than a decade ago, one of the less important cities in the United States. No more fitting occasion than this could be found to congratulate the city itself and the band of loyal San Diegans through whose unselfish and untiring efforts the Exposition has become a splendid reality. It is not necessary to mention these individuals by name. The list would be too long, for practically every citizen has felt a personal interest in the success of the undertaking, and men and women from all walks of life have not hesitated to give of their time and money in the supreme effort

San Diego has <sup>made</sup> to fulfill a tremendous responsibility.

The work is finished. Far-seeing men planned a big project; other far-seeing men with wide experience have executed those plans, changing, elaborating and meeting obstinate conditions that could not have been contemplated in the original designs. In the meantime, the people of this community stood by with rare patience, encouraging by their moral and financial support the builders of the Panama-California Exposition. And to this municipality, the average man and woman of San Diego, who, after all, are the real builders of the Exposition, too much praise cannot be given, and to them the officials of the Exposition extend their deepest thanks. The absence of adverse criticism has made the task a pleasure, so much so that what might have been an irksome duty became a happy obligation. And it might be safe to say that the men who built this Exposition, from the highest official to the humblest workman, took joy in the work.

And what does it all mean? What does it mean to San Diego city and county? What does it mean to Southern California? What does it mean to the entire Southwest? It means that a new era has dawned upon this privileged land, this vast territory lying west of the Rockies and south of the Canadian Line, for the purpose of this Exposition was not selfish in that it desired only the development of San Diego. Indeed, the purpose was bigger and finer, being nothing less than the helping of all California, all the southwest, and indeed all of the west, to realize itself. It was meant to call the attention of the world to the possibility of millions of acres of land that have been peculiarly blessed by nature and

that have awaited through the centuries the touch that will transform them into the paradises of the Western hemisphere.

The Panama-California exposition was conceived as a fitting method of celebrating the opening of the Panama Canal, an undertaking which has astonished the world, an achievement which has been the dream of adventurers, travelers, pioneers and scientists for nearly four hundred years. This gigantic task has been accomplished, a waterway has been carved through the backbone of the hemisphere and the far points of the earth brought closer together because the continent has been separated and the earth's two vastest oceans made one. The heritage of the ages has fallen to this favored coast and the dwellers on the Pacific slope suddenly find themselves the custodians of commercial possibilities never before dreamed of by any people.

In order fully to grasp these opportunities the San Diego exposition was conceived and carried to completion. It was deemed wise to call the attention of the entire United States in a striking manner to the tremendous latent possibilities in the millions of acres of undeveloped territory which is rightly called the back country of the Pacific slope. Today that country is barely tapped and a careful analysis of government figures show that there is approximately 44,000,000 acres of arable land in the southwest that can be converted into rich farm lands. Some 8,000,000 acres are under partial cultivation, the revenue from which in farm products alone is \$143,000,000 a year. With the cultivation of the present undeveloped land this revenue can be increased from farm products alone to the astonishing figure of \$743,000,000 yearly. This has

been the inspiration of the makers of this Exposition, the building of an empire where millions of human beings will be prosperous and happy in the new era which is dawning for the West.

Has any city ever been confronted with a more stupendous prospect? Has any city ever more nobly responded to the task than has San Diego? Is it too much to hope that this official opening of the Exposition is but the harbinger of greater things when this city shall become the center of vast activities, activities that mean the creating of conditions for the growth of the human family along wiser and more liberal lines? Is it too much to hope that settlers will come from all parts of the United States and Europe to make a teeming garden of the now waste places of the southwest?

The back-to-the-land movement is now more than a phrase. Experiments are being made in all parts of the country for the best means of wresting the maximum of results from the soil with the minimum of effort. These experiments are proving of wonderful value. The science of agriculture as taught in colleges and universities has revolutionized the methods of developing the land. The southwest will profit by all these efforts and when men turn their eyes to the place where land is still available, they will look towards the west for agricultural comfort and fortune as the pioneers turned to California in the '40's in the mad romantic quest for gold. Greater value than gold will be taken from the soil by the better trained and more systematic pioneers who will till the teeming acres of California, Arizona, Nevada, Utah, Oregon, Washington, Colorado and New Mexico, and Montana.

And so a new kind of exposition has been builded. Not an expo-

sition of results so much as an exposition of promise. We have attempted to show the visitor to this Exposition, not the products of industry but the processes by which the products are made. There is no haphazard piling up of exhibits, but you will find the fruits and flowers and vegetables of California actually growing, as on the thousands of ranches throughout the state. You will see a model intensive farm in operation. You will see an actual orange grove with the trees full of the golden fruit. You will see tractors, plows and harvesters at work on the land. You will see cereals and grasses sown and grown in the field. You will see not only the actual work in a citrus orchard but the operations of farming on a large scale.

And these things will constitute the appeal to the man with sufficient brawn and brain who will be inspired to work the virgin miles of the land of the great Southwest. It will be these things that will cause men to invest their money in growing of grapes, of fruits, of timber forests, of nuts of all kinds, of pasture lands for the nourishment of large herds of sheep and beef, of the creating of larger poultry farms and dairy projects. This is our boast, that we have arranged an exhibition of living and working enterprises which must become the inspiration of all who are tired of the futile grind of city life and who will turn to the west to work out the realization of their hopes and aspirations. From these new pioneers of the future will the great southwest be built up and made of San Diego, California, and the great West, a new and better center of civilization.

Not only is the opening of the Panama canal commemorated by the

San Diego exposition, but it commemorates as well the coming of the cross to this coast, which in those early days meant the coming of civilization. Although apparently slow in coming to its own, striking deep roots and rearing wide branches, with the substantial growth of a vast oak, the history of the Pacific coast is co-incident, synchronous with the history of the Atlantic seaboard and, except for ineffectual raids of the Norsemen in the eleventh century, the history of development along the Pacific is earlier than that of the Atlantic.

Over 400 years ago Balboa crossed the Isthmus of Panama and "stared at the Pacific." In 1542 an expedition under Juan Cabrillo sailed north in search of new lands and eventually anchored in the harbor of the sun. Later came Viscaino, whose party explored the west coast before Champlain navigated the St. Lawrence, before Hudson entered what is now New York harbor and before the Pilgrims had established their English colony at Plymouth.

But these men, although bringing with them some elements of the culture of Europe, were for the most part daring spirits of adventure whose mission was not so much to build as to discover. But with one of them, with Portola, came an humble but gallant priest, and with him came the seed out of which has grown California and practically all of the Pacific coast civilization. This priest, whose labors at the time seemed so futile, has since become the most prominent figure in the history of the state.

The name of Fray Junipero Serra is one to stir men's hearts to nobler efforts in all parts of the civilized world. He has a part in the glory of the coast and is especially cherished in San Diego where his little band began to make headway among savage conditons

and where his first mission was erected.

It was here that the first mission was finished, which became the starting point for the series of missions that stretch the length of the state along El Camino Real. From that expedition the famous friar never returned, but his spirit remained and today the kind of Christianity he represented, the Christianity of labor and self-sacrifice, is symbolized in the noble group of buildings which have been erected on this site.

These buildings of this Exposition have not been thrown up with the careless unconcern that characterizes a transient pleasure resort. They are a part of the surroundings, with the aspect of permanence and far-seeing design. They might endure for a century and still appear the things of beauty which they are. Time will hallow them with its gentle touch. Here is pictured in this happy combination of splendid temples, the story of the friars, the thrilling tale of the pioneers, the orderly conquest of commerce, coupled with the hopes of an El Dorado where life can expand in this fragrant land of opportunity. It is indeed a permanent city and every building fits <sup>into</sup> the picture.

The idea of the exposition came to the people of San Diego like an inspiration, and with what seemed the power of a magic wand, not only the spirit, but the entire outward aspect of our city underwent a change. By that inspiration we have increased our population nearly threefold. We have transformed what was a town into a city. Hundreds of homes have been erected in new residential sections. The occupied area of the city has spread in all directions. Waste places have been made beautiful habitations where thousands of people



live under pleasant conditions. Modern schools have grown up as by magic with educational facilities that compare with the best in the world.

What was some 650 acres of arid and unsightly mesa and canyon land has been made over into one of the most beautiful parks in the country. Scores of new streets have been laid out, graded and paved. New systems of lighting and sewage have been completed. And what is of more importance than all else is the work commenced to develop our harbor and waterfront, to make of it a port which must some day be the city's greatest single asset when the commerce of a peaceful world will come to the shores of the Pacific.

What are the lessons to be learned from an exposition of this nature? The chief lesson is in beholding what can be accomplished by any community which will work in harmony towards a common ideal. The ideal in this case was the creation of an exposition totally different from any hitherto held. This achievement has been brought about in the face of unbelievable difficulties. At first there was nothing more than the intention of building a fair. There was but little money in sight and it seemed impossible that the vast sum necessary for its realization could be obtained. But the splendid optimism of San Diego has triumphed and what only a few years ago seemed an impossibility is now a living reality. This is the principal lesson of the exposition, that with a good working organization anything can be accomplished. The San Diego exposition will remain a type of what can be accomplished as well as an inspiration for future endeavors.

The Exposition might also be pointed out as a pattern for the development of future Southern California counties. Here the desire

for beauty and the practical working out of such a community went hand in hand, with the result that the aesthetic results obtained are practical results, results possible of repetition by any community that will set before itself an ideal and will work willingly for its realization. It is not too much to predict that Southern California communities will take this lesson to heart and build in the future with the idea of obtaining practical beauty values.

Many of the buildings of the fair will be permanent and remain an asset of great value to the future of San Diego. They will exist in the years to come not only as a memory of San Diego's great fair but as distinct ornaments of the city. This will be especially true of the noble quadrangle of buildings of which the California state building is the dominant feature. With the establishment of the museum of ethnology and archeology San Diego has the beginning of one of the most important museums in America. Future explorations will fill these halls with rare specimens of prehistoric man, and ultimately the city by the Harbor of the Sun will become the mecca for scientists from all parts of the world.

From day to day American archeology and ethnology are assuming more importance in the comprehensive science of man, and the aborigines who lived millenniums ago west of the Rocky Mountains are assuming larger significance in the speculations of investigators. With <sup>the</sup> nucleus already established, said to be the best in the west, our museum must sooner or later be of national, if not of international, importance.

In the collection of specimens now installed the entire history of man, as far as at present learned, is displayed. The

various races and tribes whose history and traditions run back before the beginning of the Christian era, are shown by actual specimens that have been exhumed after centuries from the soil of Arizona, Utah, New Mexico, Mexico, Central and South America.

We have sought, and I believe we have succeeded, through this exposition to create an effect, an atmosphere, if you please, that will come as a revelation to the visitor. He will see here the life of California epitomized. He will see home life as it is lived nowhere else under such pleasant conditions. He will see the flowers and fruits of the west as well as a bewildering variety of unusual trees. He will glimpse in a short sojourn the result of a half century of struggle with stubborn conditions. He will realize that Californians have not been working in vain, and that they have made no exaggerated claims for the land they love. And above all he will carry back to the east the glorious message of promise that is the heritage of California and the West.

The gates of the exposition are open. San Diego invites the world to the Panama-California exposition.

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