

## EXPOSITION BEAUTIFUL WELCOMES WORLD TO LAND OF GOLDEN PROMISES FULFILLED

San Diego's Matchless Triumph Complete When President Wilson Presses Button Which Opens Fair; Loyal Californians, Amid Enchanted Scenes Bathed in Light, Cheer Wonder Wrought by Art, Love And Labor; Thousands Pour Into Fairyland Where Old World Blends With New

SET OFF AT MIDNIGHT at the touch of President Woodrow Wilson, 3000 miles away, a rainbow of light suspended 1500 feet in midair, covering an area of three miles in the sky and punctuated by the bursting of bombs, flashed the news near and far that the Panama-California Exposition had been officially opened and that San Diego with her Magic City is ready to play host to the world for the coming 365 days.

To the accompaniment of triumphant cheers from an assembled multitude, the size of which perhaps never before gathered in Southern California, salutes from the giant guns at Fort Rosecrans, the sharp metallic tones of fighting machines on United States cruisers in the harbor, the staccato notes of 1000 mines surrounding the Exposition in a circle of many miles, the great white light appeared suddenly in the sky, casting a ruddy glow over the gleaming white of the Spanish buildings, and for a brief instant the Exposition stood out against its background of rugged hill, plainly visible for miles at sea.

With a sputtering and spitting of fire which attracted immediately the anxious gaze of the crowd, the gates of the Panama canal swung open in fireworks located on the roof of the Spreckels music pavilion. Slowly a ship, "1915," the great ship of expectancy for which San Diegans have patiently awaited, started through the canal, the waves breaking before her bow. Before the lights had dimmed, letters broke through the mass of shooting flame which read: "The land divided—the world united—San Diego, the first port of call."

Before the spellbound crowd could respond to that which it felt, all the lights of the Exposition were flashed on; the Plaza de Panama and the Prado glittered under its bath of light and the great crowd blinked its eyes. Surprises had come quickly and with such brief warning that it was swept from its feet. But when it realized that all was

over, the great Exposition opened, it found itself in mighty applause.

No exposition ever opened under more auspicious circumstances. On the last day of December an open air entertainment was given which would have been possible in but few localities in the world. Clad in ordinary dress, the great crowd had attended the dedication ceremonies of the great Spreckels \$100,000 music pavilion. Then they roamed about the semi-tropical gardens and the Isthmus and returned at midnight for what perhaps was the most unusual celebration they ever attended—that of throwing open a great Exposition in the first minute of a new year in the clear, balmy atmosphere of a summer night.

Could Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo, who landed on the white sands near San Diego but fifty years after Columbus discovered this continent, have gazed on the new birth of the land of his adoption, he would have thrilled with pride. Could Fray Junipero Serra have stood in the archway of an old mission, his mild eyes would have been lifted in surprise at the progress of a twentieth century procession usurping the once shiftless California for the cause of trade and development and power.

It is a hard matter to write soberly of an event of such tremendous import as that of last night when practically the entire population of San Diego and many thousands of guests from near and far joined in combining a joint New Year and civic celebration the like of which but few had pictured in their wildest dreams.

When the gates were opened early in the evening hundreds were waiting their turn to pass through and see for themselves an Exposition conceived and built by a little city which had but 40,000 people five years ago when first plans were made. But they were a loyal, patriotic band of people, this colony, and what they lacked in numbers they made up in mighty enthusiasm—the sort of enthusiasm which meant that every man dug into his pockets for the millions of dollars which it cost to erect an Exposition. The breasts of these staunch founders of an undertaking of such immensity must have heaved more rapidly last night when in a burst of colorful splendor they saw what had been a vision become an actuality. And, contrary to all precedent in expositions, San Diego's show opened without a debt of a dollar.

### Enchantment Reigns in Land Surcharged With Romance.

The dimly lighted grounds through which first visitors passed on their way to the Isthmus never before seemed to cast the enchantment of last night. Dark-eyed Spanish girls in their striking gowns of Old Spain danced in the mellow gloom of patios which might have been hundreds of years old. Dusky-skinned young fellows leaned against the vine-covered buildings in the shadows and thumbed their stringed instruments. Now and then the crowd on a quiet side path met a Spanish lad and his sweetheart. From different parts of the grounds came the strains of bands playing Spanish airs, and now and then the voice of a senorita broke through in happy melody. The air was surcharged with romance, redolent with sweet breath from 640 acres of blooming fairyland and teeming with the atmosphere of a time long since passed and made possible only by blending the old with the new.

When at a few minutes before 11 o'clock the official Panama-California band members took their places directly in front of the Sacramento building, the members clad for the first time in their trim Spanish uniforms, the great crowd gave them an ovation of ringing cheers. Then followed the flag raising by enlisted men of the army and navy. When the star spangled banner went floating to the top of the tall mast and unfurled itself to the soft night breeze and the band broke into the national anthem, thousands of lusty voices were raised in applause. And when the Spanish flags were raised under the stern colors of Uncle Sam and the band began on a patriotic Spanish air, the crowd again lifted its voice in a tremendous volume of cheers.

Col. D. C. Collier, the man whose personal sacrifices and untiring efforts have made San Diego's Dream City a reality, was cheered until the echo pounded back on the great open space from the crevices of the buildings. With an uplifted hand Colonel Collier waited for silence. Evidencing in his voice and manner the sentiment he felt, he said:

"We are here tonight to celebrate the culmination of five years of hard work, of meeting and defeating obstacles which have been flung in our way, and discouragements which seemed always a little greater than we could overcome.

"Our hopes never wavered, our efforts did not lessen. We have stood together, like one people a unit, should. We encountered all the trials and tribulations ever before those who attempt to blaze out a new trail or attempt that which seems impossible. That which five years ago was a hazy dream is tonight a reality, and San Diego keeps her promise to the world. The grins with which the world heard the announcement those years ago have been turned into lines of admiration and people from all the world are coming to see what we have prepared for them.

"And when, in a few fleeting minutes, the president of the United States shall press a button which shall transmit across 3000 miles of intervening space a spark which will officially open this Exposition, he will contribute the final touch on the labors of those who have given of their best to this great work."

Colonel Collier introduced Carl I. Ferris, who spoke for the board of park commissioners. Ferris was given a reception which must have repaid him at least in part for his work on the park board. In surrendering Balboa park to Mayor O'Neill, he said:

"Mr. Mayor: It is my pleasant duty as park commissioner to inform you that the magnificent grounds within these gates are now ready. They have been made beautiful by the master genius

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### WELCOME TO EXPOSITION!

By G. A. DAVIDSON

President Panama-California Exposition

WITH the opening of the Panama-California Exposition a civic dream has been realized and the people of San Diego city and county are to be congratulated for the unselfish co-operation they have displayed in carrying to completion what at first seemed an impossible task. Without that co-operation the Exposition would have remained a dream instead of the beautifully substantial heritage it will remain for many years to come.

In the face of nation-wide pessimism California has moved forward in the ranks, holding high the banner of progress and prosperity. During two tense years of financial depression this state has erected two magnificent world's fairs, one here in San Diego and another in San Francisco. By these two achievements the great state of California has been welded into one harmonious whole.

Thousands of persons who have never been in the West will visit California during 1915, when the state will reap the reward of its faith and courage. Many of these visitors will remain to become a part of the great constructive work of the West. To these a hospitable welcome will be extended, and here they will find the goal of their ambitions, working with the zest that characterizes the activities of California and the West.

Those who remain for a short time will take back with them to thousands of friends in the East the glad message of the Pacific slope.

It is not too much to predict that the two Expositions will play a large part in uniting the diverse interests of the United States and bring together in national harmony the people of the extreme East and the extreme West.

To the vast army of pilgrims who will turn their faces to the Golden West in 1915, San Diego extends a warm welcome, and offers in its unique Exposition an attraction that these who see will remember with delight for years to come.

G. A. DAVIDSON, EXPOSITION PRESIDENT

