

CHANGES of A CENTURY

What Lewis and Clark Would See To-day

By CHARLES N. CREWDSON

It is as a memorial of the Lewis and Clark Expedition that the St. Louis Exposition is most impressive. Herein it becomes one of the magical and memorable facts of history; a substantial, undeniable proof of the incredible change that a century has wrought in the mighty West.

That West, with its great resources and achievements, so long has been familiar to us that it is difficult for the mind to conceive the ignorance concerning it which once prevailed. It did not even belong to us on the day when Lewis wrote to Clark that "The whole of that immense country watered by the Mississippi and its tributary streams, Missouri inclusive, will be the property of the United States within twelve months from this date."

President Jefferson was as eager as a child over a new and yet unexamined toy, regarding this vast addition to his own country. Long before the treaty had been signed he had planned the expedition which was to explore its unknown depths, map its rivers, establish its geography and topography, and tell to the American people all the facts concerning the "Darkest America" which had become their own. Fancy had peopled it, romance had colored it, and myths invested it with fantastic attributes. What that whole country would be to-day and how much or how little we should know of it had not gold been discovered in California are interesting subjects of speculation. Africa is the only comparison. But from the gold came the population and the railroads, and from the railroads the greatness.

History is a record of dramatic changes, but what changes have been greater in a single century than those which would meet the eyes of Lewis and Clark to-day? Imagine them as ghostly voyagers in ghostly rowboats ascending the Missouri and going over the old trail again! At the magnificent White City in Forest Park they would gaze as if it was a vision. "This is St. Louis?" they would ask. "It was a little, French settlement with cracks between the buildings for streets when we started in 1803." The great, modern city would be like a creation of Aladdin's lamp. The vast and inexhaustible country behind it, which they were the first to explore, they would not recognize. They would find themselves new Argonauts in a new literature, poet and historian awarding them all the honors as the finders of geography's Golden Fleece.

Painfully toiling up the muddy Missouri in their rude rowboats, their first surprise would be a new city called Jefferson, the handsome Capital of the State of Missouri, a State born long after their day. They would push on to Kansas City and stand appalled. Miles upon miles of stock-yards would greet them, capable of holding all the countless buffalo of their time. But the buffalo would be unknown, and in their place would be the countless herds of horned cattle that feed the nation. Passing Fort Leavenworth, they would come upon Atchison and learn of five great transcontinental railways reaching the Pacific in three days, a traverse which in their time required two years. St. Joseph, at a place where they found not even an Indian tepee, would be a busy city, actively distributing over these same railways throughout all the Northwest.

At Omaha, where the solitary inhabitant was the cock of the plains, a new bird excellently sketched by Clark, they would find a city of over one hundred thousand people, and miles of packing houses supplementing the stock-yards at Kansas City. Looking across the river they would see their old camping ground and hear a familiar name, because Council Bluffs still bears the title they gave it. Here it was that they held an important powwow with the

Sioux. It was vitally necessary to obtain their consent to a journey through their territory. Diplomats both, Lewis and Clark wrapped a United States flag around the Chief, and the bright beauty of the Red, White and Blue won the savage heart. But in this aforesaid center of a great tribe they would find not a single Indian remaining. Where in their time tiny spirals of blue smoke arose from hundreds of wigwam fires, a hundred great smokestacks would be belching black clouds above railroad machine-shops cov-

er winter quarters. Here Clark drew the picture of the new trout, declaring it to be better than any fish he ever had tasted, including the whitefish of the lakes. Here he mapped the Missouri as far as they had gone, and here both found time to bring up-to-date the field books and journals for which President Jefferson was so eagerly waiting. And where they mapped the unknown Missouri they would now find

Multnomah Falls



Meriwether Lewis
Portrait by St. Menin



Governor William Clark

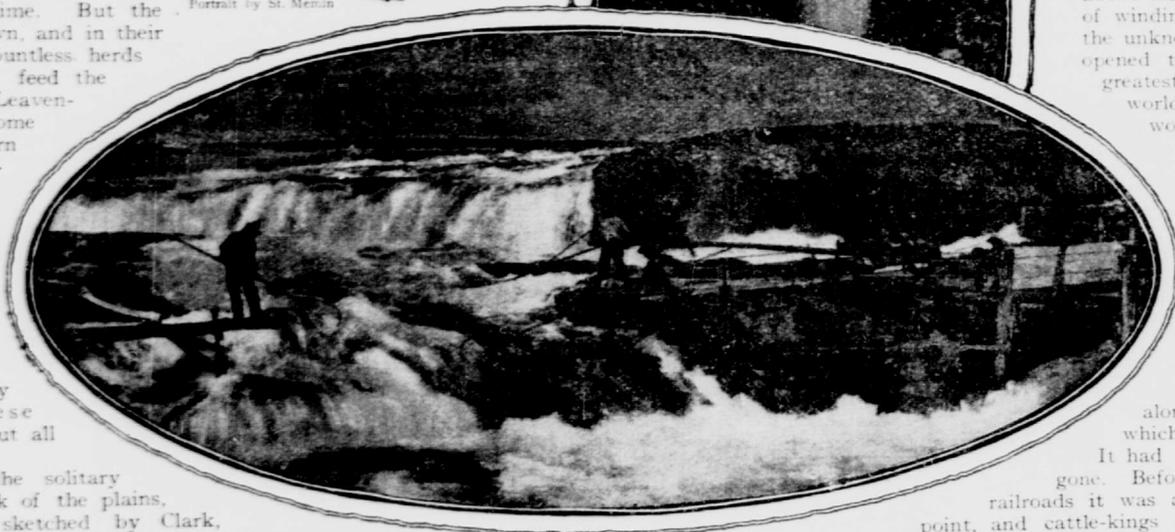
a division point of the Northern Pacific Railway, which daily traverses every section of the long trail which then lay before them untraveled and unknown.

At this point they would find themselves "Out West." A Sioux in overalls, red shirt and a bright blanket, wearing a broad-brimmed factory hat with feathers, would offer them for purchase a pair of polished horns. In himself and in his pitiful trade he would mark the downfall of the great tribe which they most feared. He would be merely a single melancholy relic of that nation whose home lay in the setting sun. Another relic, a cow-boy in a big, white hat, woolly leggings and jingling silver spurs, would be unfamiliar to them. He marks an era which has risen and decayed since their time, and is a national type which, however dear to the story-writer, is going rapidly the way of the Indian and the buffalo.

Now, as then, they would find above Mandan three hundred miles of winding river before them; but the unknown wilderness which here opened to their eyes is now the greatest grazing ground in the world. Every acre of it they would find dotted with cattle and sheep. Montana ships annually miles of car-loads of cattle and millions of pounds of wool. Waiting with interest to see what greatness had come to Fort Benton, they would experience their first disappointment. Benton is the one town along their whole route which has failed to develop. It had its day; but that day has gone. Before the advent of the

railroads it was an important distributing point, and cattle-kings and cow-boys with their "twentys," and placer miners gambling away gold-dust from the Roekies made of it a cheerful place to see. But it has as little vitality to-day as the dead placers which once fed its shops.

At Great Falls, around which they rolled their canoes on wooden rollers, they would find a little



Cascades at The Dalles, Oregon

ering acre upon acre and mile upon mile of ground. Passing Sioux City and Pierre, they would come to Bismarck, now the Capital of North Dakota, and then uninhabited. Opposite Bismarck they would