WONDERS OF THE DEEP.

Proposed Fisheries Exhibit at the World's Fair.

THE MAGNIFICENT EXHIBITION

Outlined by Captain J. W. Collins, of the Fish and Fisheries Department. A Brief History of Fishery Expositions of Other Lands.

One of the most interesting exhibits at the World's Columbian Exposition will be the Fish and Fisheries. Therein not only will visitors of piscatorial inclinations find much to engage their attention, but others who have been wont to regard "fishy" and "incredible" as synonymous and equally inconsequential terms will undoubtedly have reason to change their minds as to the interesting features of a fish display after visiting this department of the Exposition. The fisheries building will be a corner where the public will wish to linger, a spot where it will be possible to realize the words of John Bunyan when he wrote:

You see the way the fisherman doth take
To catch the fish, what engines doth he make!
Behold how he engageth all his wits,
And his snares, lines, angles, hooks and nets.

Much has been said and written of the magnificence of the World's Columbian Exposition, by way of comparison with previous expositions, which it is proposed to eclipse. The immense strides made in every department of art, science and industry during the second half of the present century have been fitly illustrated at the various international expositions held since the Prince Consort of England inaugurated the great London Exposition of 1851. Human ingenuity and the inventive genius of the age have well nigh blotted out the word "impossible" from the vocabulary of material science. Steam and electricity have been harnessed to the will of man until it has become a question how far will human science travel, not how far can it reach. But while the secrets of earth and air have been explored and their forces bent to do man's bidding, the mysteries of the great deep have not been neglected. But inasmuch as the field of exploration, if such a term may be used in speaking of the ocean, is three times larger than that wherein researches by land are practicable, it follows that the result of subaqueous research still leaves almost immeasurable possibilities to be explored.

NOTHING OMITTED.

Everything that science has rescued from the depths of ocean, sea, lake or river will be displayed at the forthcoming fisheries exhibit—inhabitants of deep sea grottos, the coral animal—builder of islands and continents—sea anemones that blossom miles below the surface of the ocean, monstrous devil fish, sharks and other terrors of the deep will be seen, beside the speckled beauties of stream or lake, the plebian catfish, perch and sucker, suggestive of the boyish angler and the shallow. From ocean depths will be brought specimens of subaqueous life so marvelously delicate, and so richly beautiful that the microscope will only reveal in part their wondrous beauty and filmlike tracery. The methods, too, by which the mysteries of the deep are penetrated, the paraphernalia of the United States Fish Commission, the inventions by which the finny tribe is cultured,, the wonderful progress made in the art of fish farming, in addition to the implements of commercial fishing and the latest tackle for angling—all these will be displayed to their fullest extent.

In speaking of the general details of the World's Columbian Exposition, it has grown customary to make comparisons with previous Expositions of the kind, in order to extol the expected merits of the forthcoming enterprise. In making such comparisons the fact has, to a large extent, been lost sight of that the Fisheries display must necessarily be of expectional merit, in order to eclipse previous exhibitions of a piscatorial character. The idea of a fishery exhibition seems to have originated with the Dutch, and to them belongs the honor of having inaugurated displays of this kind. The first exhibition of this description was held at Amsterdam in 1861, and for several years this was reputed to have been the best display of its kind, though, in the meantime, there had been several similar ones elsewhere. Much care was exercised in drawing up the programme, which all things considered, was a comprehensive one, and the display, so far as it went was a thoroughly practical presentation of the fisheries, and the several arts connected therewith. It was considered a success, though, owing probably the small size of the country, and to the fact that people had not at that time really learned to know what a fishery exhibition was like, it was comparatively speaking, scantily patronized.

A NOVEL SPIRIT.

At the present time there is something decidedly novel and attractive in a display of this kind, which is interesting even to the uninitiated. There are always many curiosities in the shape of piscicultural apparatus, models of boats and vessels, singular shaped baskets and pots for the capture of eels and crustaceans, and a thousand and one other appliances, which go to make up a collection of fishing implements. The second Fisheries exposition was opened at Bergen, Norway, on the 1st of August, 1865. In arranging their programme the Norwegians copied closely after the Dutch; all kinds of fishing apparatus for the capture of aquatic animals, from the whale to the shrimp, being included, besides models of fish-curing establishments, and various forms of sea products. In the following year (1866) a third fishery exposition was opened at Archachon, France, and it seems that the French were determined to leave no stone unturned to render fishing popular in their country, for a little later, in the summer of that year, there was also a similar exhibition at Boulogne, the latter place, however, being far less favorably situated than Archachon for a display of this kind. Bertram, in his "Harvest of the Sea," says: "The ambition of the directors of the exposition at Archachon, was to show a little of everything connected with the science of the seas, even to specimens of the ground, inhabited by mussels as well as bits of rock frequented by the larger crustaceans. The uses of the sea-weed were demonstrated; the guano made from those inedible fish with which the sea abounds, could also be tested at the exposition of Archachon. Various other sea products were likewise to be seen there, as ambergris, spermaceti, shagreen, the dye shells of the Indian Ocean, etc. And better than all, at the Archachon exposition the best fishes of the sea could be seen disporting *au natural*. Oysters from the Isle of Re, were also there, growing on the very tiles which had intercepted them as spat. Cultivated mussels, so valuable as bait, were likewise exhibited, hanging in beautiful clusters, just as they had grown on the basket work erected in the bay of Aiguillon."

WILL BEAT THEM ALL.

The affair at Boulogne was, however, on a much grander scale, a remarkable feature of the inauguration being a grand procession, which, as it turned out, was an aquatic one, for a heavy rain fell while it was en route. At this exhibition, Norway took the leading position, as might be expected, for a country having such important fisheries, and depending chiefly on southern Europe for a market, could not afford to neglect the opportunity thus afforded of bringing its productions to the notice of the world. The success of the expositions at Archachon and Boulogue seems to have incited other countries to follow the example of the French, for in 1867 there was a display of fish and fisheries at the Hague, while the exhibitions held at the same time at Aarhuus, in Denmark, and at Vienna, though to a certain extent general agricultural shows, nevertheless, were chiefly remarkable for the presentation of material illustrative of the fisheries and the industries connected therewith Comparatively little was shown, however, besides specimens of fish, and the Danish affair was not, strictly speaking, a success. Sweeden was the next to follow, a display of this kind being opened at Gothenburg in 1867.

The exhibitions which have been mentioned, though they contained much which was interesting to at least a certain portion of the public, had, nevertheless, failed to reach that degree of comprehensiveness which it is desirable to obtain in a display of this kind, but, beyond all question, these efforts paved the way to the remarkable success which has been attained of late in the planning and management of fishery exhibitions. In 1868 France again took the lead, the Havre exposition being inaugurated in June of that year under favorable auspices. Strange to say, so far as is known, pickled mackeral were shown for the first time on this occasion, and were looked upon as a novelty. For the next four years things were at rest, but in 1871 the Italians entered the field, a fishery exhibition being held at Naples that year. This was, however, comparatively unimportant, and after its close little was done by the promoters of fishery displays until 1878, when the piscicultural exhibition was held at the Westminster Aquarium, London; but, owing to the haste with which the affair was gotten up, the result was unsatisfactory. During the same year (1878) the Germans begun to talk of holding an international fisheries exhibition at Berlin, and invitations were sent out to all countries to participate.

After two years of preparation and indeatigable effort on the part of several influential members of the Deutscher Fischerei Verein, the exhibition was opened on the 20th day of April, 1880, by the Crown Prince of Germany. Among those who gave prizes were the Emperor, Empress, the Crown Prince, the King of Saxony, and several of the archdukes of the empire. It is now a matter of history that the display made by the United States, on this occasion, far exceeded that of any other nation in comprehensiveness and in the variety of the objects shown. The first prize of the Emperor was awarded to America for the completeness of its display, while a large number of medals, etc., were received by private American exhibitors.

THE INTEREST.

The interest in fishery expositions, which, during all these years had been growing slowly, but surely, was now complete, the success at Berlin giving new courage to the promoters of such enterprises. Curiously enough, the English, from being, apparently, the least interested, became the most zealous advocate of fishery displays, and April 18, 1881, the Prince of Wales opened a national exhibition of this kind at Norwich. This proved so successful that it was followed the next year by the International Fishery Exposition at Edinburgh.

Even while the latter was in embryo, so to speak, plans were laid and action taken which resulted in the Great International Fisheries Exposition held at London, in 1883. It was perhaps one of the most important events in the history of the fisheries of the world, and did more to advance these interests than had been done in many years previously.

But on no previous occasion has there been such a beautiful and fitting setting for a fishery exposition as that which has been designed for the Exposition at Chicago, in 1893, where it is hoped there will be gathered such a display as has never been seen in America, and one that will eclipse all preceding fishery expositions.

J. W. COLLINS.

DOVIE COMSTOCK.

The Woman Who Figured in the Larbig Tragedy Highly Connected.

PROVIDENCE, R. I., July 1.—The woman, Mrs. Dovie F. Comstock, whom the police of Brooklyn are holding as an accessory to the murder of Theodore Larbig, was notorious in this city for ten years. She came here from Washington, D. C., as the wife of Walter J. Comstock, 1880, straight from a brilliant wedding ceremony.

He was a wealthy young man, born of rich parents, and she was received everywhere. She was the only daughter of D. C. Forney, the proprietor of the Washington *Sunday Chronicle*, and John W. Forney, journalist, lobbyist, politician and the personal friend of many public men, was her uncle. The family hailed from Philadelphia, and were in the best society at Washington.

Walter J. Comstock met Miss Forney at one of the Atlantic coast resorts. Her name was Clara Sherk Forney, but she was always called "Dovie," from her then sweet disposition. There is no sarcasm in that statement, for in personal manner she was a particularly agreeable woman. The name "Dovie" was even engraved on her wedding invitations. She was a little the senior of her husband, who was about twenty at that time.

THEIR STANDING KNOWN.

The marriage took place at the Church of the Epiphany in Washington. The standing of both the bride and groom in society is shown from the names of the bridesmaids and groomsmen. The bridesmaids were Miss Eva Haak, of Lebanon, Pa.; Miss Scofield, daughter of G. W. Scofield, Register of the Treasury at that time; Miss Millie Harmer, of Germantown, Pa., and Miss Juliet Emery, daughter of ex-mayor Emery, of Washington.

The groomsmen were Allen Ropper, of Lebanon, Pa.; Mr. J. S. Koeney, of Kansas; Mr. Calvart Spiller, of Baltimore, and Mr. W. A. Cowle, of Washington. Many people from Providence went on to the wedding. The Comstocks were wholesale beef merchants of this city. They made their money slaughtering beef before Chicago's killing was the rule and have been prodigal of money in every way.

Mr. J. F. Comstock was the father. His provision for his son's marriage was generous in the extreme. For one thing he presented him with a house, in which he put, with the furnishings and the stable, over $50,000.

After the married life of the young couple began there was an abundance of money for entertainments and social extravagances. Two years afterwards a boy was born. Some of the first steps in the direction of an improper life wore made when the skating rink craze broke out. Mrs. Comstock was at the rink regularly in the evening. She found a number of other gay young married women there and gradually the public began to talk about her.

It was not long before her husband became suspicious of her. He came home late several times, it is said, and found the house turned topsy turvy, wine bottles lying around and the furniture dismantled. He upbraided his wife, and she, getting angry, instead of defending herself, played the whole battery of a depraved woman's tongue on him. He stood it as long as he could and then left the house.

He was greatly affected, but he simply kept away from her, went on with his business and saw that neither herself nor the child suffered. She had the pretty mansion to herself, and for a time there were carnivals in it every night. A number of the gilded young men of the town waited on her and made her life pleasant for her. According to her wishes she was still allowed money enough to dispense a liberal hospitality, and she did it.

BEGAN TO STAY IN NEW YORK.

About 1885 she began to stay in New York a good deal. She stopped at the Gedney House. Occasionally she would run down to Providence to see her friends. Her child was left here in charge of servants. As soon as the husband found this out he took possession of his home on Parker avenue again and cared for the boy. Even then he did not try for a divorce, but allowed his wife her liberty and an income.

With this income she was able to do as she liked, and the husband, a wholesouled fellow, does not seem to have begrudged her anything. When she was in Providence she stopped with well to do people. She sometimes appeared at balls, and was pointed out as a gay woman, but not necessarily a bad one.

Things went on this way until the March term of the supreme Court in 1886. Mr. Comstock then petitioned for a divorce. There was a wide public interest in the case both in this city and in Washington. The husband accused the wife of all varieties of improprieties. He charged her with at one time coming to this city and registering at the Narragansett Hotel under the name of Miss Post. The petition of her husband was granted after a great mass of evidence had been placed before the court.

RETAINED HIS NAME.

She was allowed the privilege of seeing her son at his home at any time she might call, but was refused the custody of the child. She was permitted to use her husband's name. She then lived more quietly, but still very well. The Gedney House managed to spare her, and for three years or more she lived in this city. She then appeared with a certain Belle Seville, who had a semi-private establishment of her own on Washington street in this city, and who was said to be from New York.

At length she was said to have formed a sort of partnership with two other Providence women for mutual enjoyment. It was a curious arrangement. The three lived in the same house, a large residence belonging to one of them. Their life was a quiet one and respectable in every sense.

In 1889 Mrs. Comstock went to New York. A New York jeweler was said to have drawn her thither. She traveled about with him, and at one time was in Washington, her old home, for eight or nine months. She returned to New York, and since that time has not been heard from in this city.

Her husband married again and at the present time is traveling in Europe. He is famous as a breeder of fine dogs and the dogs of the Park Kennels, of this city, which took prizes at the Madison Square Dog Show in the spring, were principally his. He is also an owner of valuable horses and is known to sporting men generally.

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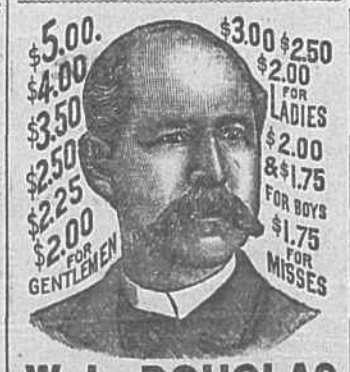

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