

will not suffer for lack of money. About twice the amount asked of the government will be furnished in other ways. The management include some of the biggest capitalists of the United States. The president is Capt. J. M. Brinker, the man who built the railroad in the gorge below Niagara Falls, and one of the richest men of Buffalo. The vice presidents are Chauncey M. Depew, ex-Gov. Roswell P. Flower and E. B. Thomas, president of the Erie railroad; while among the directors are men like H. Walter Webb of the Vanderbilt family, Daniel O'Day, president of the United Pipe Lines, and a dozen other men of note, including the presidents of the big electrical and other companies about Niagara Falls. The secretary of the exposition is Mr. R. C. Hill, a former newspaper man, who got his first experience with international shows when he was on the Philadelphia Press during the centennial, and who has been connected with nearly every great exposition since then, having been the representative of the Buffalo interests at Atlanta and Nashville.

I met Mr. Hill at the exposition headquarters this afternoon and had a chat with him about the exposition and its prospects. Said he:

"I think there is no doubt that the exposition will in its way be fully the equal of, if not superior to, the World's Fair at Chicago. We will not spend anything like the money that was spent at Chicago, but we will not need to do so. God has done for us what man had to do at Chicago. We have Niagara Falls two miles below us. Its enormous water power is now in harness and the falls will run our machinery and furnish all kinds of novelties. The exposition, you know, is to be located on Cayuga Island in the Niagara river. This island is just above Grand Island, about two miles above the falls. It is only a short distance from the shore and is bounded on one side by the Niagara river and on the other by the Little Niagara. The island covers about 200 acres. It is in the shape of a big fish, and is the ideal place for an exposition. We can reach it from Buffalo in thirty minutes. The street cars will take you in five minutes to Niagara Falls, and within half an hour you can go from it to a dozen towns and villages, where good accommodations could be secured. The river admits of all kinds of shipping displays. We can have lagoons and lakes, and our river frontage is more than a mile and a half long."

"How about the buildings, Mr. Hill?" I asked.

"The plans for them have been made and we are about ready to give the contracts. We shall not attempt the wonderful architectural displays of Chicago. We are going to put up substantial structures made of iron and glass and so made that the exhibitors will feel perfectly safe. Our plan is to concentrate the buildings in a group so that you can see all the exposition with the least labor, and still have plenty of room outside for recreation. The buildings will be on the low lands of the island, fronting the Little Niagara river. This will be the nearest point to the electric car lines and the railroad depots, and the buildings will be so arranged that the moment you step on the grounds you will be in the exposition proper. We had intended at first to put the United States government building in the center. This may be changed, however, as the officials at Washington think they would like to have a building off by themselves. Space has been allotted to all of the great South American countries. Mexico has applied for a large amount of ground and the Canadian exhibit will probably be very fine. I am now in correspondence with Sir Wilford

Laurier. He is anxious that Canada should have a good show and it is probable that the Canadian parliament will take the matter up very soon. You know the exposition is not simply a Buffalo affair. We call it the Niagara Frontier Exposition and we expect Canada to have a big part in it. In connection with the Canadian exhibit there will be rooms showing life on the Klondike. All of the methods of gold washing and mixing will be exhibited. There will be representations of the cabins of the miners, of the inhabitants of the Northwest Territory, and other things, so that one will have a chance to know all about the country without taking a trip to Alaska."

"I suppose you will have a fine electrical building, Mr. Hill, will you not?"

"No, we will not have an electrical building," was the reply. "The exposition will be filled with wonders of electricity in its every part. Every bit of machinery will be run by electricity. The most wonderful of the illuminations will be electrical, and there will be things shown in this line which will be a revelation to every one. Nikola Tesla, who, you know, made the discoveries which led to the harnessing of Niagara Falls, has promised to devote a great deal of his time to the electricity features of the exposition. He will not take charge, of course, but he will give us his best work in the way of suggestions and plans. All of his own wonderful discoveries will be shown. Edison has also promised to help us, and we shall show the wonders of the age of electricity as they have never been shown before."

A LOOK AT THE MAIN BUILDING.

"Here, for instance, is a picture of the main building," said Mr. Hill, as he picked up a large photograph, representing an enormous building, with steps leading up out of the water on to an esplanade, ornamented by statuary. The top of the building terminated at the center in a great dome, and this in a tower, upon which was an enormous globe, from all sides of which electric rays seemed to dart forth. "You see that globe," said he; "that will contain the most powerful electric light ever made by man. That is an electric tower, and the globe on its top is 350 feet above the ground. The globe will be fifty feet in diameter, so big that you could not put it inside the walls of the average house. When the light is turned on that great ball will blaze with a dazzling fire. You will be able to see it for fifty miles, and it will be a beacon light for the ships on Lake Erie and Lake Ontario. Niagara Falls will run it, and the grounds of the exhibition will be flooded with its illumination. The tower will be big enough for an elevator, but that will not be the means by which visitors will be carried to the top. No, they will be taken up around and around the tower in an electric car, which will run on a trolley, and which will, within a few minutes, lift a crowd from the ground more than three-fifths the height of the Washington monument."

"The building below this will be devoted largely to industries and inventions. At the right and left will be great halls given up to art and education, and at the back there will be other buildings of large size. Altogether I think we will have about ten great buildings covering more than fifty acres of floor space. The present idea is not to make second stories to any of the buildings."

"How about the state buildings?"

"We expect to give each state some space, and a number of the states have already signified their intention of erecting buildings. We are getting applications in large numbers from the different cities. We have many applications from the big manufacturing establishments and nearly all of the great interests of the country have

signified their intention to make exhibits."

"How about the Midway Plaisance? Will you have any of those horrible naughty shows that were exhibited at Chicago?" I asked.

"We will not have a Midway Plaisance," replied Mr. Hill. "As for me I don't want anything that will be naughty, but we will have all sorts of oriental shows. This feature will be in a department of the island known as the Syzygy. The word really means a row of stars, and in this case the stars will be of the first magnitude. We have already had a big offer from a syndicate to lease this part of the exposition. They propose all sorts of novel oriental features. There will be representations of Constantinople and Venice and other cities. Then Imre Kiralfy and others have made application for space. Kiralfy was here the other day looking over the ground. He would like to get up a spectacular extravaganza, and use in connection with it the wonderful electrical forces which we have here. He thinks he could surpass the Black Crook, America, or any other thing of the kind which has ever been produced. Buffalo Bill has applied for quarters for his Wild West Show, and we have one man who wants a place to exhibit a series of railway pyrotechnics showing all features of life and death on the rail. This will be composed of railroad wrecks, train robberies, collisions and all the comedies and tragedies of the rail."

"How about the Ferris wheel?" I asked.

"We have been offered the Ferris wheel, but I do not think we want it," replied Mr. Hill. "The Ferris wheel is an old thing now, and the watchword of this exposition will be the word new. We want nothing that is not decidedly novel. We may have the Sherman umbrella. This has been invented by a Chicago man. He plans to lift cars of people attached to the ribs of a great umbrella, up in the air, a distance of 250 feet above the ground. When they have risen to that point the umbrella begins to whirl and they are carried about with a velocity which is frightful, to say the least. These things are but incidents of the exposition. What we expect to do is to show the progress of this hemisphere along all the great lines, and we will have a wonderful exhibition of industry and art. It is not, you know, a world's fair, and it is international only in that it is to be confined to this hemisphere. We think it will not only benefit us as to trade matters, but that it will also bring about a better feeling between the different countries."

"It will be a kind of an education along the line of the Monroe doctrine, will it not?"

"Yes, it will," replied the secretary of the exposition. "It will show that there is in America for Americans, and why Americans should hang together. I see that the Pan-American congress has been announced to meet in Washington in 1900. This, I believe, will be changed and the meeting will be here in 1899, at the time of our exposition. This was the idea that the Pan-American delegates had when we conferred here about the exposition last year. I believe President McKinley has this idea. When he was here at the Grand Army reunion he and Gen. Alger and the other members of the party went out to the island and drove the stake which marked the beginning of the real work of the exposition. He then said that he hoped that the next Pan-American congress would be held at this time. I hope that the date of 1900 will be changed to 1899."

The conversation here turned to other features of the exposition. Mr. Hill said that he believed they would