

## OMAHA'S GREAT FAIR.

The Omaha exposition, from all accounts, is a great financial success. At the end of July there was a surplus of \$50,000 to apply on the floating debt. Hitherto public thought has been almost entirely on the war and the stupendous enterprise at Omaha has necessarily been to some extent overshadowed, but the war is over and the most delightful months of the year for traveling are coming. The number of visitors should be increased correspondingly.

It may be worth while reading what ex-Senator Ingalls says about this exposition. We quote from the June number of the New England Magazine:

"Originally designed by the commercial congress of 1895 to exhibit the agriculture, commerce, industries and civilization of the new West, the exposition has far outgrown the purpose of its projectors and assumed not only continental but international proportions. Many foreign powers will be represented by displays and commissioners, and nearly every state and territory will unite in friendly emulation to surpass the marvels of Nashville and Atlanta. The government has given its sanction to the enterprise by the construction of the largest building on the plateau, to be filled with novel collections from the various departments, of unprecedented variety and interest. This magnificent edifice, not unlike the Capitol in its architectural motive, will have many novel features, and the display of agricultural products and developments will surpass anything attempted heretofore.

"While the Trans-Mississippi exposition will not reach the proportions of the World's fairs at Paris, Vienna, London and Chicago, it will in some respects be more interesting to Americans, because it will present an impressive memorial of an age in our history which is without parallel elsewhere and can never be repeated, because there is no theater upon which the great drama can be reproduced. It will afford an unrivaled opportunity for cultivating better acquaintance with the manners and customs of that gigantic generation which laid the foundations and established the institutions of the Empire of the West."

## A LETTER FROM PARIS.

Partly the dreadful heat, but most particularly a waiter wearing a white apron awoke me and urged me to leap from my living bedstead. I say living because all around me a sea of bedbugs of majestic size was moving in countless numbers and after having vainly tried to induce the waiter to lead me to a bath-room—an unknown thing in such latitudes—I did the best I could with my washbowl and sponge and asked for Sidi-Ben-Ahmet, who was waiting for me exactly where I had left him, but I cannot say that it was the same glass of absynth that he had before him when I had left him. I am inclined to believe he had indulged in copious libations judging from his flushed cheeks and the vermillion tint of his nose, but here I must say, it is not as in America; we do not need to go into the drugstore or through the ladies' entrance, or even under the crooked ways of the back doors of saloons, to get what we want. Everybody here can take what he pleases under the veranda of the hotels and cafes, without losing any respect by it.

It is just now the fashionable hour, and the "Place du Gouvernement" is crowded with the elite of the high society of Algiers. There are the Europeans dressed in the latest fashion with cream-colored gloves on, and expensive canes in their hands; among them some English people with their mono-

cles on their left eye, which causes them to grin all the time to keep it in place; walking in dignified fashion, fanned by their side-whiskers every time the slightest breeze passes; there are also many Jews recognizable by their highly developed noses—indispensible ornament of the Semetic race—and the constant evolution of the palm of their hands towards heaven; Sidi-Ben-Ahmet points out to me the governor general, then the prefect, and he tells me the name of each one of the officers who pass. He is a treasure of knowledge and gives me particulars of each one of them.

"You see this young lieutenant; well, his father was a millionaire and gave him a pension of 12,000 francs a month, but now he is at the end of his roll, and as he spent all he had with mistresses, his father grew tired and now gives him nothing, so the poor young lieutenant has nothing but his pay, viz.: 3,000 francs a year, which sum can hardly keep him in clothes. Of course, since he has no more money, all the pretty girls who used to hover around him to pluck his best feathers have all flown away, leaving him all alone with his despair and his curled up mustache that has lost all its attraction, not being backed by sound money."

Look at that big colonel, who has just passed us; he is the heaviest officer of France and is as hard on himself as on his soldiers. On seeing him you might believe he is gruff and ill-bred but as soon as he is in the company of ladies, he is all smiles and no young man can out-do him in gallantry. Funny stories are circulating respecting him. They say that he once was engaged in France to a beautiful girl and they were to be married within a few days when, one night, having managed to stay alone with her under the trees, during a ball that had been given at her father's residence, he became so earnest in his declaration that the bride got frightened and ran away to the house. The marriage was broken without any explanation being made public, but a servant, who had been dismissed from the house of the girl's father, related that he had seen everything and now the gossip goes that the stout colonel in a fit of passion, instead of kissing respectfully the arm of the young lady had bitten it, whereupon she had refused to become his wife.

Did you see a tall and slender officer passing a moment ago with boots on and his sword hanging at his side? It is count X....., who is very rich, but as he has no intelligence, he is an easy prey for women who want to catch him. He is married to a handsome woman who deceives him with a lieutenant of the Spahl regiment, but as usual the husband knows nothing of and would not believe it, even if he heard it. He is a flirt of the first water and will run after everything wearing petticoats; so that a few weeks ago, his friends, the other officers, played a joke on him. You know, perhaps, that Mauresque women must, according to the requirements of their religion, wear over their face a veil called "Haick," which does not cover the head entirely but starts from the nose down, leaving the eyes and the forehead free. Now the officers went to work and engaged an ugly old woman and fixed her in fine style. She was made up to butterfly around the fopish captain, and as only her eyes—which had remained beautiful and sparkling in spite of her 65 springs—could be seen, the jokers paid her quite a nice sum to have her do her best to catch the captain. You may think it is not true, but nevertheless he was caught and it cost him very dearly, because the old witch finally made the captain, trembling in his boots, hand

out to his 65 year old conquest, all the money he had in his pocket, besides his watch and a case of cigars. But the funniest of all is that the woman showed him her face before letting him go, and at that moment the jokers, who were all in another room looking in through peep-holes, burst in such a tremendous roar of laughter that the captain ran away as fast as his long legs allowed him. This is why when he passed us a moment ago, he had such a scowl on his face. You see, he does not know who played the joke on him and sees an enemy in every one he passes.

My friend Sidi-Ben-Ahmet, whom I like better and better, gives me many more details of the Algerian society, but I will not mention them, because I have no place and moreover I have several subjects to write about.

The Moorish woman can not leave her house without wearing a veil called "haick," as I have previously said. These women are beautiful, especially their eyes have a velvet finish that would warm up the coldest of men. It is said that their power is so great over men that in the "harem" it is not uncommon to see eunuchs falling in love with them. Luckily for men in general, these "Mauresques" are not intelligent and it is a good thing they are not, because if such magnificent specimens of feminine beauty possessed also the power of the mind and did not bring all their actions to mere physical adornment. We might still see prodigious feats undertaken by men to win the good graces of some beautiful queen of their heart, just as when in the old ages and from the quotations of all novels of chivalry "Rolando Furios" "Lancelot du lac" and many others. We read of the errant knights setting out to the search of adventures. There are some cases, however, when in women of the Moorish race, intelligence and beauty are united, but profane eyes cannot behold pearls of such value and as the rich Mahomedans have constantly emissaries in search of some new beauty to adorn their seraglio, these women are hidden forever and lost to the world. There is many a tale of woe that could be narrated by some of these miserable creatures who are compelled by the custom of their race, to obey in all the man who owns them. A woman to be selected as fit for the harem of any man, let him be a rajah, a pasha or a simple sheik, must be pure and innocent and that not only by reputation. If a Moorish girl is found to have the requirements without which she cannot be bound to her husband after death, she can be made a wife and enjoy all the prerogatives pertaining to that title. She will have at her service, two or three eunuchs who will watch her day and night and who, a cimeter in their hand, are ready to kill any man who might venture around the walls of the harem with sacrilegious purposes. She will have slaves at her orders and all she wants, but as soon as her husband approaches she must forget her own identity and sink in him so to say, because the law of the prophet has said that woman can be saved only through men, since they are of a weaker, less developed and lower spirited essence.

At times the emissaries of a great rajah find some woman of queenly beauty, but no matter how beautiful she may be, she cannot become a wife, if she has trifled away her innocence.

Mahammed, who after all was quite a nice man, knew mankind pretty well, so he taught that if a woman is not pure enough to become a wife, she can be a "cnocubine," and she is just as lucky as the wives, it is the same thing all through, but if he has chil-