

**GULLIBLE'S TRAVELS TO
THE PANAMA-PACIFIC
INTERNATIONAL
EXPOSITION**

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Gullible's Travels to the Panama-Pacific International Exposition by Mollie Slater Merrill

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Panama-Pacific International Exposition

By

MOLLIE SLATER MERRILL

San Francisco, California

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

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GULLIBLE'S TRAVELS.

In amaze, Lost, I gaze!
Can our eyes Reach thy size?
May my lays Swell with praise! —Swift.



LATE I HAD NOTICED that my dignified title of "Captain Gullible" had been abbreviated to the more familiar one of "Cap" by many of the younger occupants of the Farallones. This, with numerous other slights, forced the conclusion upon me that while unwilling to declare myself ill-treated, I was being neglected to the point of contempt. I was born and raised on this small island group, situated not many miles from the Golden Gate, but that has nothing to do with the story of my adventures, which I am now about to relate.

I had often looked longingly toward the mainland, which I saw outlined in the distance, and believing that some day it would be my good fortune to travel and see more of the world, I had closely observed the customs and manners of passengers on the boats which, in fair weather and "fowl," I had industriously followed. I had also gained some knowledge of different languages by the same close observation and the strength of my memory.

My responsibilities and active duties had ceased upon the death of my little gray mate, and I felt that at last I was in a position to satisfy my desire for travel and scientific research. Therefore, on the morning of the 19th day of February, 1915, after waiting until the other "gulls" had hurried away to "catch the first boat," I decided to leave the Farallones, firm in my determination not to return until I had seen "the world" and could come back covered with glory and renown.



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The weather had been wet and far from pleasant, but as a light breeze swept in from the sea the bright beams of the morning sun poured through the Golden Gate and lit up the prows of in-coming vessels, which, I believed, portended a bright future. I paused for an instant, lost in admiration at the wide sweep of sea, and sky, and shore. Then as I carefully threaded my way through the ships which lay at anchor, I became conscious of SOMETHING which lay before me, something golden and glorious. As I drew nearer I felt that at last my dreams were to be realized, for I beheld massed palaces and spacious courts bathed in the rich colors of Nature and the radiant adornment of art.

I could form no idea of my whereabouts, and can give but a feeble account of what lay before me, but the magnificence, the splendor, so far excelled anything I had previously conceived that I could only liken it to the City of my dreams. The central portion of the site rose slightly above the sea, and was encircled on three sides by gently sloping ground.



SECTION OF EXPOSITION YACHT HARBOR.

I entered from the harbor side, and passed over immense palaces, which I immediately decided must be the abode of Royalty. Through stupendous openings in the sides of these palaces I entered great avenues lined with palms and other beautiful trees. There were also giant banks of bright flowers, and huge pools of water. From these avenues I looked into splendid courts, and my artistic eye was in no way offended by the marvelous blending of color. I saw figures and groupings of figures unlike any people I had ever beheld; they were of



PALACE OF FINE ARTS
REFLECTED IN FINE ARTS LAGOON

such prodigious size that I would have been astonished had I not already passed into a stage which knew no astonishment.

Too bewildered to pay attention to detail, and with eyes almost weary with the wonder of it all, I flew on. In a wondrous pool I saw mirrored large pillars and arches of most unusual coloring. "Truly this is 'classical,'" I mused, as I went on my way.

I was lost in the mists of these sights and sounds, and hardly knew the nature of my own mind, but felt that solitude was extremely necessary in order to evolve the many puzzling questions with which it was filled; most of the miniature lakes and lagoons which I had seen were already inhabited by various tribes of birds whose only taste in common with mine was water; but I now saw before me a Lake whose beauty filled me with rapture. It was unoccupied, save by a woman of most unusual size; her nationality was unknown to me, but I heard some one in passing call her a "mermaid." By reference to my pocket dictionary, I found her to be a "sea-woman." Believing we would be congenial, I took up my abode in the Lagoon at the east end of what I heard called "The Great South Garden."

I looked about and must confess to never having seen a more beautiful sight. The country looked like enclosed fields of a continuous garden. Flowers were intermingled with trees of a great height, the whole compassed by a bright green hedge fully twenty-five feet high. From my knowledge of botany I drew the inference that it must have been growing for a great, great many years.

I turned and beheld a huge Tower, the upper part of which seemed to take the form of terraces that led up to groups of figures, the whole surmounted by a miniature world. This Tower was set with jewels which glittered like diamonds. There were also domes and turrets, and from one of these the King had descended and was advancing toward me mounted on an immense steed.



I hurried away, as it was growing late, and being exceedingly fatigued, resolved to postpone further explorations until the following day.

The next morning I rose early, took a dip in the excellent bathtub furnished by the "Hotel de Lagoon" (as I termed my

stopping place), glanced into the Lake, which also served me as a mirror, and as I drew back perfectly satisfied with my appearance, I was almost positive I caught a glance of admiration in the eye of the mermaid.

When following the boats I had often heard learned men discuss the problem of, "What Is Life?" Strange! I had only been away from home twenty-four hours, yet had found the solution of one deep question, for surely THIS is Life, I thought, as I strolled back and forth along the "Sea Wall."

As yet I did not know the name of this enchanting spot. I now heard some one say, "Jewel City." Right well named, I answered, for every column, spire, and turret seemed to flash a tale of the countless wealth which I believed must live in this favored City.

"Oh! Looka—degul! looka—degul!" a boy beneath me cried, as I was taking a "bird's-eye" view of the many wonders. He shouted very loud, and pointed a finger directly at me, so I reasoned that he must be a page, and was making a proclamation to the King of my presence.

Immediately the news of my arrival seemed to spread throughout the Kingdom. A confused sound greeted my ears.



OPENING DAY CEREMONIES.

and prodigious numbers of people crowded in to see me. For hours they poured through enormous gates. I believed that all the villages in the country must have been emptied, and I began to worry for fear business and household duties were being neglected. It was afterwards reckoned that over a

quarter of a million people visited me the first day after my arrival.

All night and during the early morning hours I had heard a knocking like that of people at work, and I now saw a huge stage capable of seating many people erected in front of the wonderful Tower set with jewels which I heard was 480 feet in height.

There was now a general shout, followed by frequent repetitions of a word which sounded like, "Hurrah, hurrah!" Then a number of people who seemed to be persons of quality mounted the stage and made me long speeches. Clearly they were welcoming me to their "Jewel City."

All at once the multitude gave a great shout between pleasure and surprise, the sun burst forth from behind clouds nearly dazzling their eyes, and at the same time a terrific noise was heard like the bursting of a bomb. This was followed by others. I was so badly frightened that I did not see all that occurred, but at the risk of having my veracity questioned, I do solemnly assert, that from all parts of that enchanted garden beautiful streams of water poured forth, many straight in the air—fountains, I heard them called, but to me it looked as if the inhabitants of the various lakes and lagoons were indulging in a most refreshing shower-bath. There was a great deal of music, much finer than any I had ever heard on the boats; flags were flying, and every one in that vast throng seemed glad and happy that I was there.

Soon after noon, while taking a short flight, I noticed thousands of faces turned upward apparently watching me. "Wonderful! wonderful!" they murmured as one person. "Such graceful sweeps, and dips, and lines." Some remark was made about a "flapping-wing," so I was positive they were talking about me; and I couldn't but wonder what my companions on the islands would think could they know of my importance, and the royal welcome I had received in a city which I knew could have no equal.

Glancing across the sky I saw a strange object. It closely resembled a bird, but was much larger than anything I had ever seen in the air. Clearly it was trying to imitate as well as draw attention from me. I must admit its imitations were clever, but to my surprise I found as I drew nearer, that wood, wire, and canvas were used in its construction, rather than bone, muscle, and feathers. I wondered how the public could be so "gulled" as to believe this object a bird.

"Flying machine!" "Aeroplane!" I heard them call. "One of the greatest inventions of the age." I turned my head to