

## MISCELLANEOUS



*The A. M. A. Trip of the Louisiana Health Exhibit Car*

June 18, 1911, without any "fireworks" to speak of, the most unique and effective advertisement a state ever had was pulled out of the Union Station in New Orleans.

It was Louisiana's "Gospel of Health on Wheels."

Two cars, bearing on the outside of one in

black and white and on the other in gold letters the legend, "Louisiana State Board of Health Exhibit," made up the novel poster.

On the 7,000-mile transcontinental trip hundreds and hundreds at stations and along the road read those words, stared and wondered. Where the train train stopped and they saw the

inside the message was understood, but the thoughts of those who for a fitting moment saw only the outside are not recorded in the log-book of the train.

One of these cars contained the health exhibit, of course, but, in addition, Louisiana was there—her public institutions, oil and gas wells, sulphur and salt mines; her skyscrapers, romantic spots and public men, in prints, adorned the walls. The pelican and the whole family of ducks, oyster shells a foot long, Grunewald Hotel wrapped "French" bread, models of new "plants" and many other things characteristic were there. But, most important of all, interesting pamphlets set forth the climatic excellence of the state, the low death rate and the genius of her people. These were to give to the misinformed.

In the second coach the "living specimens" were housed comfortably, that they might "talk" successfully and interestingly *health and Louisiana*. Dr. Oscar Dowling, President of the State Board, in charge of the train, intelligent and forceful, equal to every occasion, from taking a picture of the shabby little boy who "didn't remember when he had had a bath" to making an address in church or a brilliant after-dinner speech at a banquet; Dr. Beverly W. Smith, Vice President of the Board, scholarly and elegant, an ideal representative of Southern culture, and Dr. Sidney D. Porter, genial and happy, even when hookworm was tabooed, were the notables of the force.

In Texas, at Houston, San Antonio and El Paso, the three places where the train was parked, Louisianians greeted the exhibits and expressed their pride and satisfaction in the progressive spirit of the Board of Health and the business enterprise of the state as evidenced by this new venture.

In Los Angeles the train was parked in the Arcade Station Park, a beautiful spot, and had for near neighbors the California health coach and the Red Cross car. Thousands of the physicians and citizens took in the Louisi-

ana "show," and universally they endorsed the idea. The pathologic specimens, prepared by Dr. Edmond Souchon, of New Orleans, attracted the attention of all.

Members of the force were invited to give lectures on Sunday evening in the churches, and on other days in different halls, and to audiences of various types. One of the talks made by Dr. Dowling was to the men engaged in laundry work.

Los Angeles and Pasadena did themselves proud in entertaining. Elegant and elaborate social functions were the order of the day. One afternoon was especially delightful, the entertainment consisting of horse racing, a polo game and chariot races. It was given in Tournament Park at Pasadena and was a veritable society affair. The chariot race, like those in the days of Rome, was most exciting. When Dr. Savage, dressed in the white and gold garb of the charioteer, slight of build, with sinews of iron, brought his six horses and chariot victoriously "home" in the third race, the entire audience rose and cheered and cheered again. The doctor's flashing eyes and genial smile acknowledged the ovation. Los Angeles will remain a "green spot" in the memories of Dr. Dowling and his associates.

A few hours were spent in Santa Barbara. It is quaint and restful: the mountains and the sea in such close proximity and the glorious coloring make it the American Naples.

San Francisco seemed a Mecca of Southern people, many of whom visited the car. Salt Lake, too, had its quota of Louisianians. The hospitality of its citizens and their interest in the health movement was marked. They seemed especially struck with the idea of the train, and said, "Utah must have one, too." This idea was popular in every state visited, and the papers have since reported that Colorado and Iowa have now plans under way for this kind of health campaign.

Cheyenne looks like a very new border town. It typifies in its streets, houses and

great open spaces one phase of the spirit of the West—self-satisfied aloofness. Dr. Barber, ex-Governor of Wyoming, was a delightful host during the few hours of the visit.

One of the distinguished visitors who was interested in the South and its development was Gov. Shafroth, of Colorado. He knew many Southern men of note and was delightfully reminiscent of his days in Washington.

Chicago dubbed the train the "microbe special." It took some little time to get adjusted to the breezy new title, but when a seemingly intelligent reporter asked how many million microbes we carried, we forgot to be vexed and laughed at both him and the title. We answered enough to kill even Chicago, but that they were not allowed outside the tubes and jars. Dr. George B. Young, Health Commissioner of Chicago, visited the train. He said: "We are doing practically the same thing here, but we have no cars." The Health Department of Chicago has done great things both in administration and education. The healthgrams of Dr. W. A. Evans, former Commissioner, have been quoted throughout the length and breadth of the United States. The force in this department numbers nearly eight hundred. One of the most interesting and beautiful of the Chicago buildings is that of the American Medical Association.

In Kankakee the Mayor told Dr. Dowling that the "Bug Car" was great. His health officer was so impressed by a visit that he was ordering a general cleaning of the city.

Dr. M. Goldman, of Memphis, and many other officials and citizens of that city were hospitable in their courtesies and interested in the train. Memphis is one of the foremost cities of the South, not only in advanced health work, but in general civic regeneration.

One of the interesting institutions visited was the hospital of the Southern Pacific Railroad in San Francisco. It is a marvel of sanitary perfection in equipment and in method. No less interesting was the private car of F. K. Ainsworth, chief surgeon of the road. It looks inside like an ordinary sleeper, but a "touch" transforms the elegant reception apartment into a complete operating room.

In Omaha a special engine took the educational and inspection car to all places of interest situated on the railroads around the city. The Union Pacific shops there are modern in every respect, and the environments, from the health viewpoint, are perfect.

In every city visited the newspaper men were alert to render service and to give space to the story of the how, why, who and what of the campaign.

No feature of the trip was more gratifying than the social courtesies extended, especially to the doctors. Cards of invitation to the clubs awaited their arrival and many offers of hospitality in private homes were received. Dr. Dowling was invited also in many places to make inspection tours of public places of business and of public utilities.

The tour of the health train was an event not only in the history of Louisiana, but in the health annals of the United States.

As a lesson in hygiene and sanitation it entered into the consciousness of thousands; as an exponent of the new idea of medicine, the Medicine of Prevention, it appealed to the intelligent of all classes; as an exploitation of the livable climatic conditions of the South it was an entire success; as a sign of the progressive spirit of the Louisiana State Board of Health it attracted attention nation-wide.