

THE AQUARIUM

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Public Aquaria in America

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WHEN the writer was a small boy he was taken to see the aquarium of the late prince of showmen, P. T. Barnum, at what is now the St. Paul Building, Broadway and Ann Street, New York. Of this he has no further recollection. In the seventies of last century Comp and Reiche, animal dealers and showmen, established an aquarium at what is now the site of the Herald Square Theatre, Broadway and 35th Street, New York. This was open daily to the public and was conducted on the plan of many of the European aquaria, admission being charged and a concert being part of the program. There were some very large tanks, exhibiting among other things the white whale of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, giant turtles, seals and other large animals, as well as smaller fishes, sea anemones, etc. This place existed for a number of years.

When the question arose what to do with Castle Garden, the Battery, New York, after the United States Government had erected the new immigrant station at Ellis Island, among many other suggestions advanced was the one to make an aquarium of it, and the old fort was eventually remodeled for that purpose, and where Jenny Lind once thrilled our forefathers with her marvelous voice, the silent denizens of the sea and inland waters now disport themselves.

About 1894 the aquarium was opened in charge of Mr. Woodward, but as its construction and arrangement were not proper for the purpose, it became necessary to re-

build and rearrange it. So it was not until December 10th, 1896, that the aquarium was opened to the public under Dr. Tarleton H. Bean, the ichthyologist. He in turn was replaced through political exigencies by Colonel Jones, who remained in charge until November, 1902, when the aquarium was transferred by the city to the New York Zoological Society and placed under the direction of Charles H. Townsene, ichthyologist of the United States Fish Commission, under whose able management the institution has grown as never before in its history. Now it is one of the most important aquariums in the world.

It has not only a large collection of fish and other aquaria animals, but also gives a complete exhibition of fish breeding in all its phases.

At all the big international expositions held in the United States, aquariums were integral parts of the exhibition, and a great impetus was thereby given to aquarium science. Since then aquariums have been established in many cities, such as in Golden Gate Park, San Francisco. Detroit has an aquarium, established in 1904. In the Fish Commission Building at Washington there is a small but very interesting aquarium which will no doubt be replaced by a larger and more fitting institution. In Honolulu, Hawaii, there is also an aquarium, now several years old. About a year ago a temporary aquarium was established in Fairmount Park, Philadelphia, which will soon be replaced by a permanent building. The city of Boston will by the end of this year open an aquarium, and as I write I am informed that Seattle is planning to construct an aquarium on a large scale.