

CELEBRATING THE CENTENNIAL:

DURING the last session of Parliament the Minister of Transport mentioned that in New Zealand there were enough cars to take everyone for a ride on Sundays.

If all these cars could be collected in one place, if all these people could be packed into them, and if Wellington's new roads would hold them on their way to Rongotai, they would just about keep our Centennial Exhibition busy.

The immense floor spaces, the gardens, the paths, the theatres, the dance floors, the Tin Pan Alleys, the restaurants, cafeterias, milk and soda bars, would seem a little crowded, but the walls would by no means burst.

That is about the size of the Exhibition to be opened on November 8.

There is enough electricity running through its circuits to light Timaru, or Napier, or Invercargill, or Palmerston North. Enough water flows through its taps, fountains, waterfalls, lakes, ponds, and dish-washing machines, to make brine out of Utah Salt Flats. It has used as much wood as would build palatial coops for all the hens in Australia and New Zealand. There's enough wall board in it to build rows of baches in all the holiday resorts in the country and enough labour went into putting it all together to keep the war going for about half an hour.

But these are unofficial statistics. You will find some others, rather more definite, on another page.

Variety of Functions

Officially the Exhibition can hold thousands of people, feed thousands, amuse thousands, interest thousands, educate thousands. It can tire them out or smooth them over, look after their babies, put them in gaol, or through the Customs, park their cars, bank their money, register their letters, patch their wounds, put them out if they catch on fire, dance them, or otherwise variously delight them.

It is, in fact, a city that has shot up within a city, a landscape within a landscape, with flowers and shrubs and trees forced to grow within its artfully artificial environs, with towns and fields and factories and foreign lands contributing to it their most delectable variety.

It has drawn its substance from all New Zealand and the lands across the seven seas and, thus sustained, it has seemed to appear in a moment, all complete, ready to live out its six months of life in such a frenzy of concentrated excitement that then it must collapse and return from whence it came.

Someone has said: "See what I can do." He has built his house. He has painted it in bright colours. He has set it about with clear pools of water, and neat gardens. Around it he has lit lights to make it seem always like day, and in it he has placed all his treasure. The gesture complete, he will find some Samson to tear apart its pillars and collapse its walls, leaving nothing but the crowd to wonder at the thing he'd made.

A Little at a Time

There is too much here to be gulped down all at once. If it were physically possible to



From the big fountain in the centre of the grounds 50-foot sprays of water rise through coloured light and fall over four equestrian statues into the reflecting pool.

scamper through it in an hour—and a weary journalist's feet inform him most emphatically it is not—it would be mentally impossible. It should be viewed with discretion; each separate creation savoured with proper taste.

You will find it difficult to avoid missing the trees in the magnitude of the forest. The whole vast machine will try to catch you up and whirl you till you're dizzy. Discrimination is your only password to appreciation.

See it at Night

First have a quiet prow around the grounds. Make your first visit at night, when there's no vertical sun to spoil the bold shadows between the curves and angularities of the architecture, and when the floodlights set it off to best effect, with their bright flares and brilliant colours.

After all, the towers are not there to be climbed, the pools are not for swimming, the facades are only decorated because they look better that way, the fountains are not for drinking, or the lights for reading by—they're all there to be looked at, so take a long look, for the effect is like nothing you've ever seen before in all New Zealand.

Don't make the mistake of starting where fancy or confusion lead you. Call at the right place for change, tender the exact amount for your ticket, click the turnstile and walk right in.

Have Another Look

On your left is the United Kingdom pavilion; on your right, Australia's best effort; straight ahead, a broad promenade, flanked first by rows of flagpoles, eccentrically tipped across your path to make half an archway. Beyond them you will pass the reflecting pools, a fountain, statues, and then come up against the main entrance, where water flows through coloured light below the balcony, the historical bas-relief, and the outline of the tall tower.

Then go back to the gate and have another look.

If the family is becoming rather troublesome, take baby along to the crèche, the children to the kindergarten, leave mother sitting down in sheer relief, and start in for yourself.

Here are some of the things you will see:

Three Styles of Architecture

You will see three styles of architecture in the three main blocks of buildings. An architect's appraising eye would describe the main block, with the long wings focusing on the central tower, as effectively modern. The Australian Pavilion is strikingly modern, with striking use of glass. The United Kingdom Pavilion is reserved in style.

From the broad lines of the architecture it is a short step to design in detail, and you will find among all the fine points nothing finer than the individual designs of the exhibits in the Government Court.

All Dressed Up

Here, when you have passed the broadcasting station or the Post Office, according to the entrance you have used, the first big exhibits have been arranged by the Education Department and the Agriculture Department. The first is designed primarily to catch the eye of children, and accordingly its simplicity is certain to attract the attention of adults. There are maps and models, history and geography, industry and agriculture —