

Baltimore

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Near the head of Chesapeake Bay stands Baltimore, the largest of our Southern cities and the seventh city in size in the United States.

Because of her importance as a Southern railroad center and her excellent harbor on the largest bay of the Atlantic coast, Baltimore is called "The Gateway to the South." Great ships from all parts of the world unload their cargoes at her docks and take in return products from nearly every section of the United States.

The railroads bring to Baltimore vast quantities of iron, coal, and grain from the West, and up from the South ships and trains come laden with raw sugar, tobacco, fruits, and vegetables. Here the oysters, fish, and crabs from Chesapeake Bay and the products of the rich farm lands of Maryland and Virginia find a ready market.

Knowing these things, one can surmise what the city's leading industries and exports must be. Baltimore is the world's greatest oyster market, she leads the world in the canning of vegetables and fruits, she is one of the country's largest banana markets, and more corn is exported from this city than from anywhere else in America.

Baltimore is a great sugar-refining center, she leads the world in the making of straw hats, and among her foremost industries are the manufacture of clothing and the making of tobacco goods.

Thanks to the coal and iron she receives, Baltimore builds cars, ships, and almost everything made of iron and steel. Then, too, the city has the largest copper-refining plant in America.

If this story had been written a few years ago, it would tell you that Baltimore's streets were narrow, that miles of them were paved with cobblestones or were not paved at all, and that the city generally was developing very slowly. But to-day we have a quite different Baltimore.

On February 7th and 8th, 1904, a great fire swept the business section of the city, destroying \$125,000,000 worth of property. While the ruins were still smoldering, the courageous people, refusing all help from outside, began to plan a bigger and better Baltimore.

The work began in the burned part of the city. The narrow down-town streets were widened and paved, and new and better buildings took the place of the burned ones. Most of these new buildings are three or four stories high, though a few tall ones range from ten to sixteen stories. Fortunately three of Baltimore's oldest and most imposing buildings escaped the fire—the post office, the city hall, and the courthouse.

Two important streets cross this newly built business section—Charles Street, running north and south, and Baltimore Street, running east and west. Baltimore Street is the chief business thoroughfare, and north and south of it are the wholesale, financial, and shipping districts.

The city owned little wharf property of importance before 1904, but the fire made it possible to buy all the burned district fronting the harbor. This the city purchased and laid out in a wonderful

system of public wharves and docks open to the commerce of the world.

Pier 4, at the foot of Market Place, has been set aside for the use of market boats, and here small crafts bring much of the fruit, vegetables, fish, crabs, and oysters which make the markets of Baltimore among the most attractive in the United States. There are eleven of these markets, and on market days they are a most interesting sight with their busy jostling crowds all eagerly buying or selling.

But these great improvements in the business center and along the water front are only part of the good results which have followed the fire. In past years Baltimore had many miles of open sewers, an unhealthful arrangement which caused much sickness. The very year after the fire, work was begun to do away with this evil, and to-day the city has a sanitary, up-to-date sewer system.

Another important work of the city-betterment plan has to do with a stream called Jones Falls, which used to flow in an open channel right through the center of the city. This stream now flows through great concrete tubes, over which is a broad highway running diagonally across the city, all the way from the docks to the railroad terminal. Then, too, the city has a new water system, great enough to supply the entire city with purified water from Gunpowder River. And besides all these a great dam, the third longest in the world, has been built across the Susquehanna River at McCall Ferry, furnishing electric power which lights the streets, runs the cars, and supplies power for many of the city's factories.

From the harbor Baltimore stretches away to the north and west, covering thirty-two square miles. Within the city are green hills and pleasant valleys, and a chain of beautiful parks with many splendid old trees bordering the boulevards which connect them. Two of these parks, Mount Vernon Place and Eutaw Place, are near the center of Baltimore. The former is cross shaped, and here stands the famous monument to George Washington, the first statue erected to his memory in this country. Eutaw Place is a long parkway made beautiful with statuary, flowers, fountains, and winding walks, and on either side stand handsome residences.

Covering seven hundred acres of picturesque rolling land is Druid Hill Park, with its miles of driveways, its ancient oak trees, its athletic grounds, tennis courts, botanical palace, zoo, and a large reservoir lake. The rugged scenery of Gwynn's Falls Park challenges Druid Hill's claim to unequalled beauty. In Patterson Park there is the largest artificial swimming pool in the United States.

Besides its many swimming pools and indoor baths, the city has organized a system of portable baths—small houses which are moved from corner to corner in the crowded sections, supplying hot- and cold-water shower baths to many thousands each year.

Baltimore has won a reputation as an educational center through the splendid equipment and wonderful accomplishments of Johns Hopkins University, which is noted throughout the world, especially for its work along medical lines.

Goucher College, for women, ranks with the best women's colleges in the South. The Baltimore College of Dental Surgery is the oldest college of its kind in the world. The Walters Art Gallery, and the Peabody Institute with its art gallery, conservatory of music, and library, afford opportunities for the study of art, music, and literature.

With its more than 550,000 inhabitants, Baltimore, like Philadelphia, is a city of homes and is renowned for its good old Southern hospitality.

Way back in 1634, a company of Catholic pilgrims came to America to found a colony where their religion would not be interfered with. King Charles I of England granted to these people a certain territory north of the Potomac River, which he named Maryland in honor of his wife, Mary, who was also a Catholic. The founder of the province was Lord Baltimore, and from the very beginning, settlers of all beliefs were made heartily welcome.

About one hundred years after the planting of this Catholic colony, sixty acres of land on the north side of the Patapsco River was purchased and laid out for a city. To honor the generous-hearted founder of Maryland, the place was named Baltimore.

One of the most thrilling events in Baltimore's history led to the writing of our national song —“The Star-Spangled Banner.”

Francis Scott Key, of Baltimore, was a prisoner on a British man-of-war in 1814, when the British attacked Fort McHenry. Fort McHenry guarded Baltimore, and if the fort fell, the city too must go. All day the English ships fired shot and shell at the fort. During all the night the attack went on. Anxiously Key watched through the darkness. Could the fort hold out against such a terrible bombardment? From time to time, by flashes from bursting bombs, he could see the outlines of the fort. Then came the dawn. In the early morning light Key saw our flag still waving, and in his joy he wrote on the back of an old letter the words of the song that has since become so famous.

A wide thoroughfare which follows the curve of the water front for several miles is named in honor of Francis Scott Key. Key Highway, it is called, and it leads to Fort McHenry, which the War Department has lately given over to the care of the city of Baltimore.

Source:

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