

VOICE OF THE FAIR.

ANDREW SHUMAN, Editor.

Chicago, Friday, June 16, 1865.

TO OUR READERS.

When the contract was entered into with Messrs. Rounds & James to print this paper for the Fair, it was anticipated that the Fair would close on the 15th of June (yesterday), and that this morning's issue of THE VOICE would be the last. But the great success of the Fair having so far exceeded the most sanguine anticipations of its projectors and managers as to warrant its continuance for a week or two beyond the term originally intended, it has been determined not to stop the publication of the paper until the Fair finally closes. This issue, however, is its last as a daily paper. It will hereafter be published only twice a week—every Wednesday and Saturday.

The chief object of the publication of the paper was to make it the medium through which to acknowledge donations and contributions, and to report the proceedings and progress of the Fair, and at the same time to give in each number such a variety of fresh and readable literary and miscellaneous matter as to make it desirable and valuable as a family paper. But nearly all the donations have now been acknowledged, so that its daily publication is no longer necessary for this purpose. The proceedings and progress of the Fair have been faithfully recorded thus far, and there being comparatively little left to report that has not been already reported, in connection with the main features and character of the great exhibition, what is to come can as well be recorded in the semi-weekly issues as if we were to continue publishing the paper every day. And having, at the outset, promised those subscribing for the whole series of THE VOICE, at least twenty numbers, our promise in this respect is fulfilled, this issue being the twentieth; but all such subscribers will nevertheless be entitled to and receive all the future numbers, without additional charge.

We will continue to make it an acceptable family paper, as well as a reporter of the Fair, and will endeavor to make it even a better semi-weekly than it has been a daily, having more time in which to prepare matter for its columns.

We feel that the VOICE OF THE FAIR has been a success. It has cost us much hard work, but we are repaid in the assurance that the paper has thus far given universal satisfaction, and in the fact, as alleged by literary people and others who visited the New York, Philadelphia and Boston Fairs, that it has in all respects far excelled the general character and success of the Fair papers published in those cities.

FAIR GOSSIP.

The crowds continue to throng the great halls, and everybody seems to feel just as much interest in every part of the grand exhibition as ever. Those who, after having visited it once or oftener, go in again after a day or two, with the expectation of seeing empty booths and bare tables, are happily disappointed in beholding almost as imposing a display in every department as they had beheld at the first visit. This is not because the articles do not sell rapidly, for the cash receipts show otherwise, but because of the constant replenishment of the stocks from ample reserves, or by new donations coming in.

The cash receipts of the Fair thus far may safely be estimated at about \$230,000 and upwards. The table of receipts published in the city papers from day to day only show the cash paid into the hands of the Treasurer of the Fair. There are several numbers of heads of departments who are waiting until the Fair closes, or, rather, until they have "sold out," before reporting their receipts or paying over the money to the Treasurer. It is impossible to ascertain the full receipts, therefore, until all the departments have reported.

Gen. Grant voted in the \$500 Sword contest, in the Philadelphia department, when he was here. He paid for and deposited four votes for Gen. Sherman, and four for Gen. Sheridan; thus he divided the honors equally between his two chief captains.

The ladies—bless their pleasant faces!—continue to visit the Fair in large numbers every day; and many of them, who have good husbands, bring them along, and many others who have good sweet-hearts are also well attended.

We tried to say, the other day, that Messrs. Bryan and Hagans, of Cottage Hill, donated a valuable Mower to the Fair. The last name, however, was by mistake printed *Hogins*;

our good friend at Cottage Hill will excuse the blunder. The Mower is one of "Curtis' Improved," a splendid machine with "new wringles" in it of interest and value to farmers. It is in the "west wing" of the main Fair building.

Not only have we a "baby-house" in the Fair—what a "thing of beauty" it is, with its perfection of architectural proportions, its tiny furniture and its appropriate surroundings!—but we now also have a "baby-tender," or, as it is otherwise called, a "magic spring cradle." This we find in the Iowa department. It is designed to relieve mothers, comfort, exercise and amuse children, obviate the evils of the rocking motion, and save the expense of a hired nurse. It is up at raffle, 40 tickets, at a dollar each. A splendid present for a mother.

Have you seen the magnificent Statue of Zenobia, in Lower Bryan Hall? If you have not, you have at least one treat in store. Such delicate chiseling, such graceful drapery, and such beauty of figure and features as are here identified with Miss Hosmer's creation of the famous Queen of Palmyra, are not to be found elsewhere in Chicago

The Miniature Horse-Shoes with white, red and blue trimmings, which so many are wearing as a Fair badge—indicating that the wearer has been to the Fair—are "going off" very rapidly. Over fifty thousand of them have been sold, and still there are plenty more for those who want them, at 50 cents a set, and soldiers' half price. You can find them at the first place you come to, on entering the door of Union Hall and advancing a few steps. It is the general fashion to wear them now.

Go into the Skating Pond if you want a treat. You will behold a panoramic Skating scene that will do your eyes good this warm weather.

In the south end of the "east wing" is the Cheese department, in which there are about \$2,000 worth of splendid cheeses, most of which have been donated to the Fair by patriotic and liberal dairy-men in Harkimen County, N. Y.

The Jewelry department, which made such a fine display during the first week of the Fair, is disappearing more rapidly than any other. Raffling is what does it.

There will be an auction sale of some very valuable relics at Bryan Hall at 11 o'clock to-day, when will be sold to the highest bidders all the rare and curious coins belonging to the Fair, together with the greatest collection of autographs ever collected west of New York, among which are those of kings, emperors, authors, poets and statesmen. Also, the original Message to Congress of President Lincoln, approving the act abolishing slavery in the District of Columbia. Also, one page of his last Message to Congress, a photograph copy of Gen. Dix's celebrated order, and an autograph album found in Jeff Davis' possession.

The "boys in blue" who are being paid off and mustered out, are making purchases at the Fair, preparatory to substituting the garb of the civilian. We have seen several who have already appeared in new "store clothes." One exclaimed to his companion yesterday, "dang it, Jim, this seems so queer, I don't know how to act in it."

Mrs. Gen. Sherman is a regular attendant at the Fair, daily. She takes a very active interest in the Catholic department, of which she is the chief. Her husband also occasionally drops in to see how the ladies are getting on.

We are pleased to see the pleasant countenance of Gov. Yates in the Fair occasionally. He likes it so well that he will stay just as long as he can.

Mrs. Livermore and Mrs. Hoge the chief lady managers of the Fair, do not seem to know what it is to get tired. They are always busy, and yet never weary. We see them morning, noon and night, constantly on their feet. When do they rest?

It is now almost certain that Mrs. Douglas will not attend the Fair. It is a subject of general regret.

Provisions and "things" are still wanted. Donate freely of your stock, if you have anything to spare. The New England Farm House and the Fair restaurants are grateful for all donations sent in.

D. J. Lyon, Esq., attorney-at-law, No. 1 Cobb's Building, Dearborn street, has written for THE VOICE the very satisfactory reports of the Bryan Hall part of the Fair. He has done it so efficiently that this public acknowledgment is due him. We also thank G. W. Gray, Esq., also a lawyer, for the well-written articles that have appeared in this paper on the Art Gallery.

PICNICING.

The season of picnics is upon us, and right heartily is the overcrowded population of our city enjoying it. One or more excursions leave nearly every day, and on Saturdays a half dozen columns may be seen on their way to take the field for a day's campaign, provided with rations which would make sparkle the sated eye of one of Sherman's bummers. They go forth buoyantly, with heavy baskets, and return wearisomely, with light ones. They depart crisp and elastic, and come back languidly and a trifle towzled, but crowned with garlands of the oak and maple, and wearing surreptitious nose-gays at the button-hole. And this annual one-day's lessons is all that thousands learn of green slopes and shady woods, and dreamy valleys, and gliding streams fringed with wild flowers, and the deepened blue of the far horizon. A short ride on a steamer, or a half hour's whisk on a crowded train, an unworkmanlike bivouac in the woods, some awkward rusticity, then dinner, then two or three hours miscellaneous amusement, embracing infinite varieties, from a startling article of romping down to a siesta where one goes to sleep in the shade, and wakes up in the sun with a congested brain; then a skurry after missing children, and the return. This is the unsentimental summary of a day's picnicing. We say nothing of rain, which shows that we are disposed to take a very moderate view. But though so unsatisfactory, the picnic is the only sort of excursion that many may indulge in. Our city has no park worthy of the name, and until it has, these brief and unfrequent glances at green things, and gregarious sniffs of fresh air, will be popular, and deservedly so.

There is an aphorism of approved weight, but designed hitherto, we believe, for very private circulation, that if you want to study a man's character, you must play with him at draw-poker. This is said to form one of the manifold fascinations of that profoundly philosophical diversion. Woman does not affect the game, and would, perhaps, defy analysis if we did not see her once in a while at picnics. If she has a predisposition to shriek at bugs, or if her day's enjoyment seems to consist principally of trembling for her complexion, or if the artificialities of the city are brought along, to be further belittled in the grand old woods, the facts may not escape notice and classification. The tendency, in cities, is too much to court and marry by gas-light. Were it not for picnics, enamored people would see very little of each other by the blunt illumination of the sun-god. By all means, before you marry, take your divinity to a picnic, and, in addition, we think, with Dickens, that it would be well to induce her, if possible, to climb a fence.

This thing of dancing at picnics we particularly object to: not on moral grounds, but purely æsthetic ones. To shuffle through quadrilles, with feet of lead, in broad day-light, while turbid drops of perspiration fret the classic brow, whose luminous paleness (by gas-light) has heretofore been your wonder and delight, is not allowing the fair one a decent chance in the analysis that we think can be made on such occasions with peculiar advantage. Tripping it on the green is a pretty delusion. Gracefulness is a very delicate combination of physical and artistic symmetries, and imposes conditions. A twig may transform a swan-like step into a waddle; a dornick of unfavorable configuration will unsettle the most poetic undulations; and the bare earth itself, though level as a lake and firm as the sea-beach, forbids all the gliding, and the sliding, and the swooning revolutions which are termed dancing, and over which Terpsichore, poor thing, is compelled to reign with a strange look of unhappy jocundity. One swallow does not make a summer, and a few hours in a grove can hardly be called an excursion. We do not know what it might be called when the time is wasted in an exercise which requires so much unseemly contortion, so much uncomfortable exercise, and such interminable wringing of perspiring hands. The labors of the old fellow "who used to live in the country" and proves the fact by botanically plodding through the woods with a grubbing-hoe in one hand and a spade in the other, digging up infant trees for ginseng, are infinitely to be preferred. He does not add much to science or pulmonary repair, but he shows an agreeable disposition not to carry around with him all the bricks and mortar of his acquaintance.

If there is any conclusion to be derived from what we have written (which is a matter for very nice consideration and no little doubt), it is that picnics ought to occur much more frequently, or not at all, with a misty preference for their occurring often. Why should they all be

confined to May and June? The country is never lovelier than in September, and loveliest of all during that hazy elysium called Indian Summer. One day's recreation in near four hundred will hardly keep alive the knowledge that nature is not a term for bowlder streets and green-grocer establishments. Bye and bye the soldiers will be at home, and we will warrant that their picnics will last for a fortnight. They will shoulder their blankets, and lose themselves in some contiguous forest, having first provided themselves with the necessary amount of salt.

SOLDIERS' LETTERS.

A New Book, just published, containing a collection of letters from soldiers, is received and for sale at the Episcopalian Department for the benefit of the Fair. The book is edited by Lydia Minturn, Poet.

The letters contained in this volume, with one or two exceptions, have not before been published. They were collected by a committee of ladies for the Sanitary Commission, in response to an appeal addressed by them to the families of soldiers.

They relate those thrilling incidents of heroic adventure and self-sacrificing patriotism, and those peculiar experiences of the march, the Battle, and the Camp, not to be found in the general public accounts, thereby affording a most vivid *inside* view of the War—the hardships, adventures, triumphs and sufferings of our noble band of Northern heroes, told in their own simple, unaffected, but graphic language.

As a record of the exploits of the individual soldier, and of the sentiments and motives that animated the army, no other publication can equal it. It affords a continuous picture of the army in its triumphs and its failures; in its gloomy retreats and its glorious advances; from the first opening of the War at Bull Run, through the four fateful years, to the final surrender of Lee.

FOR MRS. GEN. GRANT.

One of the most noticeable articles in the Michigan department is a magnificent QUILT given by the teachers and scholars at the Class Union School at Detroit. It is eight feet long by seven wide, and is made entirely of the finest and richest silk. One side is an American flag the whole size of the quilt, and the other is composed of trapeziums in the ordinary form called block patchwork. The exquisite arrangement of the brilliant silk pieces on this side produces a harmony of color and richness of effect not often equalled in the ancient and honorable but much abused art of patchwork. The banner side is one of the most gorgeous flags that can be imagined and needs no description. The quilting is neatly and elegantly done, with all the regularity of machine work, and the whole is trimmed with a beautiful silk cord around the edge, with tassels at the corners, making it worthy the bed of an emperor.

This splendid article is to be presented to Mrs. Gen. Grant by means of dollar subscriptions, and a blank book elegantly bound in Turkey morocco is provided to accompany it with the autographs of the subscribers. More than a hundred subscribers have already been obtained, and the ladies having it in charge are confident of getting at least five hundred. There are few more satisfactory ways of spending a dollar in the Fair than by joining in this magnificent gift to the wife of our favorite Hero.

FROM DIXON, ILL.—The ladies of Dixon send in cash \$317.50 to the Methodist department of the Fair. This fine donation is in addition to large things done heretofore. Last fall they sent to the Sanitary Commission \$1,500 worth of vegetables, \$900 in cash, and 600 bushels of potatoes.

In the Methodist department we also notice a beautiful Afghan, made by Sophia Wood and Miss Woodward, of Dixon.

God bless you, friends of the soldiers, for your efforts in their behalf.

PRIZES.—In Firearms department, No. 10, one gold plated pistol drawn by Mr. A. W. Delormy; ticket No. 5—value \$40.

No. 11, one silver plated pistol, drawn by Wm. Van Fleet; ticket No. 5—value \$30.

No. 12, one national revolver, by H. C. Johnson; ticket No. 2.

WEDDING AT NEW ENGLAND FARM HOUSE.—On Saturday at half-past two o'clock, a wedding in costume will take place in the Farm House. Everything will be in the style of a hundred years ago. It will be interesting to see how our great grand parents were spliced.