

From the Illinois Journal Saturday Morning, October 15, 1853

LAST DAY OF THE FAIR

In the Mechanical part of the exhibition we set up great claims for the department. Illinois is pre-eminently an agricultural state, and it is in this respect that she would stand accredited. The exhibition of farming implements, however, was of the most valuable character. There were eight varieties of mowing and Reaping Machines, mostly, if not all, the invention of the citizens of our state. There were also, many varieties of Threshing and Winnowing Mills, and all the important implements that enter into the economy of the harvest field.

In the general department of farming and mechanical implements, the stand of Mr. Fox stood the great center of attraction and admiration; over two hundred varieties of articles were numbered in his collections. His Floral and gardening implements were particularly noticed. Mr. J. G. Paine, of this city, exhibited his new invention of a corn-planter. There were a great variety of corn and seed drills- in fact, everything, almost, that could facilitate the labor of the farmer and mechanic.

There were many noticeable and valuable articles among the display of dry goods. The show of stoneware, from Alton, was especially good. Messrs, Dorwin and Dickey showed superior specimens of their handi-craft. Mr. Adams, ditto, of beautiful hats.

Mr. Wilkinson had a magnificent suit of clothes, from the shop of Mr. Wiley. Mr. Armstrong, good specimens from his manufactory, in Springfield. In the display of patch work and embroidery, Mrs. Dr. Todd, Miss Sprigg and Mrs. Currier, of this city, and Mrs. Price, of Jacksonville, presented very tasteful and beautiful designs. Miss Mary Stevenson, of Morgan county, exhibited exceeding fine specimens of the crayon art. We have not room to allude even to the many other equally beautiful and valuable articles of the show.

The attendance yesterday, and interest of the exhibition, continued unabated through the day. The weather was delightful in the extreme, and pleasure and satisfaction sparkled in the faces of all. New crowds poured in from the country, and old and new went the rounds of inspection together.

The address of Professor Turner was commenced at 11 o'clock before a large and gratified gathering. The address was pronounced in a clear and forcible manner, and received the highest encomiums from all. It is given at length in our columns today, and we hope will be read by every citizen of our State.

At the conclusion of the Address, Doc Kennicott came forward at the solicitation of the society and made the following eloquent remarks: "Friends, and Sons of Labor, in breaking a custom we have broken a spell; our orator has been selected from our own ranks, perhaps the first in any State society, and one to whom the West is ...

At the close of the remarks of Doc Kennicott the award and rendition of premiums were made from the stand. Much excitement was manifested at the announcement of the successful competitors for the prizes and honors of the exhibition. The awards of the several committees will be given in our issue of Monday.

Thus closes the first State Agricultural Exhibition in Illinois, and with it, its lessons and instructions will go out to its people, to encourage and stimulate to greater, but not more cheering triumphs.

- A large sale of stock took place on the Fair grounds after the award of premiums. We omitted to mention that a contribution was taken up at the close of Dr. Kennicott's remarks in behalf of Professor Turner. The amount received we did not learn.

**From the Illinois Journal Monday Morning,
October 17, 1853**

THE FAIR CLOSED

The Fair is over and gone. Its doings have become a "fixed fact" in the records of our State. There it will stand, a starting point for future reference and comparison. Its influence no one can foresee or determine. The men who have attended it have gone back to their homes to rehearse the scenes to their sons, their wives, and their daughters. Neighbors will come in to inquire of and talk it over. They will want to know what this first experiment has brought forth. What of the fine horses, and cattle, and sheep? What of the displays of fruits and grain? What valuable machines and inventions? What numbers, and what great men were there to see it? What was said by those who had attended Fairs in older States? What of the premiums? In short, how the farmers of Illinois acquitted themselves in their first industrial exhibition at Springfield.

The Fair will do much for the future interest of our State. It will beget a spirit of emulation and stimulate to better things. It will set our farmers to thinking, and give them a better understanding of their interests and position. In fact it will raise a spirit among our working men, which, like the ghost of Banquo will not keep down. We rejoice that it is so. Healthful competition – is a good thing.

“When Greek meets Greek, then is the tug of war”. The benefits that will result from the yearly comparing of the products of the farm, the workshop, and the mill. The annual show of horses, cattle, sheep and livestock generally, cannot be compared. There is no reason why this State should not stand first and foremost in the quality as well as the quantity of the products of her soil, and such we confidently believe will be her position when the present generation of boys shall have taken the places and become the men of Illinois.

These Fairs, and Agricultural Societies, and the spread of agricultural literature, are most seasonable. They will work as corrections to much of the vicious and fastidious refinement that is infusing the minds of the sons and daughters of our farmers. They will see that it is not disreputable to know something about the matters of the farm and the farmhouse. The great and good of the land are lending their patronage of these Societies and the Fairs, and when such men favor them, they are far on the road to popular favor and success.

Excerpt from the minutes of the Illinois State Agricultural Society dated October 14, 1953.

Resolved, That to the active exertions of our excellent President J. N. Brown; the ready talent and business habits of our Corresponding Secretary, Bronson Murray; to the untiring perseverance of our Recording Secretary, Simeon Francis; the public spirit of our new Treasurer, John Williams; and the self-sacrificing devotion of John C. Crowder are we indebted for the high success attained at this, our first Fair.

Resolved, by the Executive Committee, at this moment of adjournment, that we congratulate each other, and that we congratulate the citizens of the State, on the distinguished success, in many respects, of the First State Fair; that we renew our pledges to each other and to our commitments, that we shall give to the cause now in our hands, our most zealous and untiring labors; while we look forward with bright hope that the future exhibitions of the Society, will, as this has done, accelerate the advance, with a rapidity unparalleled in any other State of this Union, our beloved Illinois to her glorious destiny. J.N. Brown, President. S. Francis, Recording Secretary.