



GREAT CENTRAL FAIR BUILDINGS,

Logan Square, Philadelphia, June, 1864.

The artist who prepared the above cut of the outside of the Great Central Fair Buildings in Logan Square, specially for the pages of "OUR DAILY FARE," has done his work so well as to leave but little room for description or explanation. The thoroughfares which form the extreme foreground of the picture are Nineteenth and Vine Streets. The door of entrance nearest to the person examining the picture is at the northwest corner of the Square, and the perspective sweeps in a southerly and eastwardly direction over the roofs and spires of the city. The noble structure which looms up in the background, upon the left hand side of the picture, is the Cathedral of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, the finest specimen of church architecture in the city. On the southern side of the Fair Ground, Wills' Hospital "for the Halt and the Blind" will be seen; while those who are familiar with our local landmarks will readily recognize in the distance the spires of Saint Mark's Church, the West Arch Street Presbyterian Church, and of the Baptist Church on West Chestnut Street. These are only the most prominent points in the grand panorama which includes within its sweep fully one-half of the city, with nine-tenths of its commerce, trade and wealth. The gothic structure which runs from east to west and intersects the Square is Union Avenue, a noble hall which is worthy of the name it bears; at this writing, it contains more splendid wares, and more magnificent groupings of the emblems of patriotism and loyalty than can be found in any single apartment in the country. From its centre rises a mammoth flag-staff, 216 feet high, from the summit of which waves a magnificent specimen of the Stars and Stripes.

On the left of Union Avenue is a canopied structure which is also surmounted with a flag. This is the Horticultural Department, where, amid a world of floral sweets, a fountain is in constant play, rendering the perfumed air delightfully cool and pleasant. Between art and nature, rare plants, and plashing waters, scenic effects, bright lights and brighter eyes, the Horticultural Department becomes mimic fairy-land, and the visitor almost fears to see the bright picture melt away like a pleasant dream that is too delightful for reality.

Upon the opposite side of Union Avenue, is another circular building, which is occupied as a Restaurant. It is light, airy, well ventilated and magnificently decorated, forming a grand dining-room capable of entertaining fully a thousand guests at the same time.

The entire range upon the extreme left-hand side of the picture, extending from Eighteenth Street to Nineteenth Street, is occupied by the Art Gallery, which contains the most magnificent collection of paintings ever got together in the United States.

The ground plan of the buildings which we print upon the other side of the sheet, gives a full and accurate key to the arrangements of the several buildings, the uses to which they are applied, &c.

And now for some figures :

Union Avenue, which we have already described as the main structure of the group which form the Fair Buildings, is 540 feet long and 60 feet wide, with an elevation from floor to the point of the arch of 50 feet. The Gothic Arch of this Building is formed with rafters, constructed with the Howe Truss, each rafter being 2 feet in depth and 6 inches wide, with pannels 2 feet wide, in each of which are two main braces and one counter brace 2 inches square; the chords are of 3 by 6 inch scantling. The rafters are placed at distances of about 19 feet apart, and are footed upon heavy timbers set upon the ground, properly notched to receive the chords. The chord of the arch is about 60 feet, with versed sine of 6 feet 6 inches. There are four lateral buildings, extending north and south, from Union Avenue, having a width of 26 feet, a height of 18 feet, and a length of 250 feet each way. Upon the north and south, and parallel with Union Avenue along Race and Vine Streets, are buildings 29 feet wide and 18 feet high, each 500 feet long—that on the north (the Art Gallery,) being lighted from the roof. From the middle of Union Avenue extends a gallery northward, connecting with the Floral Department, (which, as we have already stated, is a circular building,) 190 feet in diameter, 100 feet of which is covered with a canvas canopy. In the middle of this department is a lake, with fountains of great variety of jet, arranged around and in it, in the centre of which is an island upon which are tastefully arranged an imposing group, of tropical plants and fruit.

Upon the South of Union Avenue, on the line of the Floral Department, is the Restaurant, which is also circular, with a diameter of 190 feet. Connected with this are a number of buildings arranged for culinary purposes, such as Main Kitchen, Pastry, Maizena Kitchen, Ice House, Ware Closets, Sculleries, and Servants' Dining Room.

The Pennsylvania Kitchen and the William Penn Parlor, on the north and South of Union Avenue, are relatively 84 by 34 and 60 by 34 feet.

The names of the architect and builders of Union Avenue are Strickland Kneass, architect, and Burton and Quigley, builders. The remainder of the buildings were put up by B. H. Shedaker, master builder, under the immediate direction of John Welsh, Esq., Chairman of the Executive Committee, and of the Committee of General Arrangements, of which J. C. Cresson, Esq., was Chairman. Mr. Henry E. Wrigley prepared many of the original drawings.

The internal decorations were in charge of the Committee of Internal Arrangements, of which J. H. Orne, Esq., was Chairman.

The aggregate length of the Fair Buildings is 6,500 feet, or more than a mile. A million and a half feet of lumber was used in their construction, and the work of building and decoration was completed within forty working days.