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THE FAIR MOVEMENT IN THE LOYAL STATES.

THE history of the great enterprises so successfully conducted in various parts of the country, and popularly called "Sanitary Fairs," forms one of the most curious, instructive, and characteristic chapters of American life. Schemes for raising money by the voluntary contributions of the people, for the relief of those who have suffered on the battle-field, have not been uncommon in other countries and in former wars. The great unflinching, popular instincts of patriotism and humanity have often been successfully appealed to. Thus, in modern times, in the early days of the French Revolution, during the excitement of a foreign invasion, offerings of money, the gold and silver plate of the churches and wealthy corporations, and the superfluous finery of the rich were freely laid upon what was called "the altar of the country." In Prussia, when the great national uprising against the French took place, in the year 1813, personal ornaments and jewelry in great number were gladly offered to the Government, who gave in return to the donors small crosses of iron of the famous Berlin manufacture, upon which was inscribed, "*I have iron for gold;*" while in nearly all the revolutionary movements which convulsed the different nations of the continent in the year 1848, almost the first thing done, after the creation of a National Guard and a

Free Press, was to establish in the cathedrals a depot, where the patriotic gifts of the people for the relief of the defenders of the country and their families were received with all the pomp and ceremony of imposing religious forms.

These displays of popular enthusiasm, however, were wholly unlike the grand movements we have been called upon to witness here. They were short-lived and spasmodic, due only to the excitement of the hour, and wholly destitute of the calm, constant, persistent character which has been so striking a peculiarity of our American benevolence directed towards the same great object, while they sink into utter insignificance when contrasted with the magnificent results we have reached here. Fairs, Bazaars, or Exhibitions manifesting the popular sympathy for the soldier, have been attempted elsewhere with limited success. They seem to have exhausted the current of kind feeling directed to his relief, and often they have been the first and only effort made to render of practical utility the free and voluntary offerings of those left at home. But here the tide of benevolence rose in the same hour in which we learned of the attack on Fort Sumter, and has gone on, in the progress of the war, gaining volume and force, until it has reached such proportions as to command attention as one of the most novel and extraordinary features of the great struggle. It will, no doubt, ever flow freely until the last battle is fought and the last soldier

returned to his home. Our Fairs, then, are not due to any fresh or exciting cause, which has temporarily aroused popular sympathy. They must be considered only as a new mode of developing that sympathy, a mode substituted for the regular, normal, steady outflow of feeling which has already contributed more than fifteen millions of dollars for this special object, through the various regularly organized channels for the relief of the army.

It is worth while to trace for a moment the progress of this wonderful scheme of benevolence, as it has hitherto flowed in its course towards the army. The great practical difficulty which presented itself in the outset to thoughtful men, was not to excite popular benevolence, but so to organize it that it should not fail of its great object. It was in vain to tell the people, in the first gush of kind feeling towards those who had nobly given up all to fight and suffer for their country, that the Government, through the Medical Department, was making extraordinary preparations for the care and comfort of the soldier, and that they who felt a real interest in him should seek not to supplant his long-pursed and powerful friend, but rather to supplement and eke out deficiencies which have in practice always existed in the care of every Government towards its soldiers in active service. We have learned many things in this war, and no lesson has been taught more thoroughly than that if we wish to give relief to the soldier properly and judiciously, it must be done not by attempting