

## THE POET'S REPLY

To a request to contribute to "Our Daily Fare."

Why in these breathless, sleepless times,  
When every hour is like an age,  
Should poets pair the rusted rhymes  
That climb in every school-boy's page?  
Are these the days for idle songs?  
Are these the nights to doze and dream  
When all our fiery manhood throngs  
A perilled nation to redeem?

Yet blame not him whose slender tone  
Blends with the stirring battle-call;  
'Twas but a crooked rain's horn blown,—  
Down crashed the Godless heathen's wall!  
A word of cheer may nerve the blow  
That turns the conflict's trembling scale,  
And he that never saw his foe  
May pierce him through his triple mail.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

Boston, June 4, 1864.

## OUR OWN GREAT CENTRAL FAIR.

Description of the Various Departments.  
Gossip of the Fair.

THE Fair opened, yesterday morning, with a great throng of visitors; "fair women and brave men" thronged the avenues and departments; contributors were hurrying in their final goods; fair young dames, with whole parks of artillery in their flashing eyes, and with tasteful scarfs upon their plump shoulders, were hurrying around like Lieutenant Colonels upon a training day, and "things looked like business." The initial number of *Our Daily Fare* made its appearance just at the nick of time, and the sheets, hot and fresh from the press, "went off like hot cakes." At noon, or thereabouts, the Executive Committee determined to close the buildings for the day, to re-open at ten o'clock this (Thursday) morning, in order to finish up the decorations, and to make some necessary improvements in a portion of the carpenter work, for reason explained elsewhere. This *interregnum* has enabled us to jot down some of our observations concerning how things look both outside and inside at the Fair.

Let the reader imagine a park, iron-railed around, amid handsome public buildings and private houses, the whole neighborhood abounding in trees. Across its centre passes a gallery of boards, more than sixty feet wide, and five hundred feet long, shaped *en ogive*, or like a Gothic arch, rising directly from the ground, and producing, of course, precisely the effect of a ship upside down—realizing more accurately than was ever yet done in any cathedral the origin of the word *nave*—from *navis*, a ship.

On the sides of this great nave, called Union Avenue, and adown its centre, tables glittering with every variety of brilliant and beautiful fancy wares are ranged. Those who will pause at the second centre table from the door

will find it devoted to the sale of *Our Daily Fare*, the voting for the GARIBALDI dagger, and the Book of Honor. The tables beyond it are filled with perfumery and other articles. Four hundred feet on the north side of this park are devoted to an Art Gallery, containing the largest and incalculably the most valuable collection of paintings ever seen in America. On either side of Union Avenue are two enormous circles, each more than 100 feet in diameter—the one a very beautiful restaurant, the other a fountain, and the finest floral display ever made in Philadelphia.

The parallel and intersecting avenues which surround this ground plan are respectively devoted either to special subjects or to separate delegations; as may be inferred from the following, by no means complete, list. There is an old Pennsylvania Dutch kitchen, admirably arranged, and a "William Penn's parlor;" an engine and boiler room; rooms for Committee Meetings, the ice-house, fish pond, fountain, skating pond, brewery, bank, police room, divan, water-color paintings' gallery, the tobacco department, that of agricultural implements, the fancy ball, exhibition room, German Club, confectionery department, and, finally, the long ranges devoted to every variety of solid domestic manufactures. New Jersey and Delaware have shown a glorious spirit in maintaining the credit of their people; and it would be difficult to point out a yard of space in which great taste and zeal have not been manifested.

In view of our pre-arranged plan, we will first take up for description,

## THE DEPARTMENT OF ARMS AND TROPHIES.

This Department is one of the most interesting of the numerous exhibitions in the Fair. It runs at right angle with Union Avenue, and the entrance is near to the eastern door. Two smoke stacks of the Monitors in front of Charleston flank the entrance, and not only guide the visitor, but also attest the terrible effects of modern weapons of war. Within the Department, the decorator has exhausted his resources in order to secure a magnificent display, and the result is a rare combination of hunting, cannons, arms and trophies artistically arranged. At the northern end of the room there is a collection of muskets, swords, spears, &c., arranged in a semicircle, tier after tier, the whole surmounted with an eagle and American flags. The effect is very fine. Within this circle there are a number of interesting trophies. The two brass guns presented by the Dutch Government to Admiral VAN TROMP in 1673, attract much attention. Between these a warrior in full armor stands guard.

The prowess of our American soldiers upon the battle fields of the Revolution, the war in 1812, the Mexican war and the Rebellion, is well illustrated by the numerous trophies arranged on the tables and along the walls, and the gallant Jack tars contribute their share of flags and sword captured from the enemy on the ocean. The collection is arranged by divisions, and each table is decorated with the flags of brave Pennsylvania Regiments. Their worn and stained folds

speak more eloquently than any inscription of the deeds of daring performed by those who rallied beneath the stars and stripes. Rebel flags captured by our soldiers are also made to do duty as decorations.

Scattered throughout the department are cannon, muskets, swords, shot and shell, each of which has a history. There is a solid 10-inch shot fired from Battery Gregg—and its broken particles attest the strength of Philadelphia's pride, the New Ironsides, on whose deck it lodged. A ten-inch shell, fired from Fort Moultrie, forms its companion piece. A 13-inch shell, from the siege of Yorktown in 1781, rests near these Rebel shot. It was found at Yorktown, eighteen feet below the ground, and when the Rebels were retreating from West Point, in May, 1862, this shell was taken in a train captured by the Union troops. Samples of canister and grape-shot are also exhibited, and a comparison of the modern with the more ancient is suggestive of the rapid strides made by the Yankees in the art of war.

The most formidable of these shell is a 150 pound Parrott, two feet in length, calculated to penetrate even the sides of an iron-clad. Oval shields are placed at regular intervals along the walls, and in these there is a display of small arms, some foreign and others domestic, but all valuable by reason of the history connected with them. An English cavalry sword, taken at Toulouse, in the fight between the English and the French; rebel bayonets from Chicamauga and Missionary Ridge; a sword used by Gen. GIBSON during the Revolution; and a sabre borne by General REYNOLDS in the Mexican war, are among a few of these articles. An ugly looking Bowie knife, taken from one of Forrest's cavalry men, attests the ferocity of the owner. It is 20 inches long, and weighs about 15 pounds. One of the rarest curiosities of the display is a Scottish claymore, nearly 5 feet in length, and with blade  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches wide.

This sword was used by Colonel DONALD MACGREGOR, of Elengyle, father of Rob Roy, during the struggle between the Covenanters and the Cavaliers. Mr. ROBERT MACGREGOR, a lineal descendant of Rob Roy, has made this rare contribution, which is a relic almost out of SCOTT's famous romance, and certainly out of one of the most interesting portions of Scottish history.

An Albanian pistol, from Constantinople. JOHN BROWN's spear of Harpers Ferry notoriety; a Chinese matchlock taken at Barrier Fort; and a French canteen from the battle-field of Waterloo, are exhibited near together and attract much attention. A trophy from Shiloh, consists of the lock of a musket. The inscription gives the history, as follows:

"This is the lock  
That cracked the cap  
That fired the gun  
That carried the ball  
That caused the fall  
Of General Johnston."

The shreds of the flag of the Fifty-sixth Regiment Pennsylvania Volunteers are enclosed in a frame, and covered with a glass. This regiment opened the battle at Gettysburg, and won imperishable renown in the three days' struggle upon those bloody heights.

Gettysburg is well represented in the department, and a handsome sum will, no doubt, be realized from the sale of relics from the battle-field. At one of the tables there is a large collection of goods, rendered valuable by reason of the association with this battle. These relics are offered in the form of walking