

The St. Tammany Farmer.

"The Blessings of Government, Like the Dew from Heaven, Should Descend Alike Upon the Rich and the Poor."

D. H. MASON, JR., Editor.

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THE ABITA CARNIVAL.

GRAND BARBECUE, PARADE, MASQUERADE BALL.

The Mystic Club Entertains Its Guests of the Carnival. Barbecued Meats, Creole Gumbo and Boek Beer Served to the Crowds Free. The Ball in the Evening at the Town Hall a Crush of Gay Maskers and Merrymaker. Refreshments Were Served.

Last year Abita Springs participated in Covington Carnival parade, which was conceded to be one of the best pageants ever exhibited in a country town and which brought thousands of visitors to the "Ozone City."

The Abita contingent to this parade added greatly to the success of the Covington carnival and encouraged the Carnival Club of Abita to further efforts in behalf of their town.

While Abita is a town of but five or six hundred inhabitants, its citizens are enterprising and energetic, nor is the civic pride which is so apparent in public affairs confined to the business-men of the town. One of the chief elements of success has been the active part taken by the young men, of which the larger part of the Mystic Club is composed.

When the Mystic Club was organized, less than a year ago, the avowed purpose of the organization was the rebuilding of Abita, and the phenomenal success of all its undertakings has resulted from the attraction to its membership of every citizen whose influence and energy could add a new spoke to the wheel of progress. In consequence the membership of the old Carnival Club was absorbed in the Mystic, and the work of the two continued in consolidated effort.

The program carried out Monday was in accordance with the announcement of the Mystic Club that a free barbecue and parade would be given on the 7th of February and that all who came would be provided for and welcomed, but that admission to the king's ball in the evening would be by special invitation of members of the Mystic Club.

There was one oversight on the part of the Mystic Club that threatened serious interference with the festivities of the day. Evidently the members of the Weather Bureau had been slighted. The day was dark and sombre. Hardly a streak of blue relieved the leaden sky, and try as he would old Sol could not get a glimpse of what was going on beneath the moist curtain that canopied the eaves throughout the day, and while a light east wind brought a slight shower about half-past nine in the evening, it was not until early morning, when all were housed after the enjoyment of the evening, that the rain drops managed to break loose.

The threatening aspect of the weather was a great disappointment to the many out-of-town visitors who had anticipated the pleasure the occasion would bring to them, and had made preparations for a good time; but withal the afternoon saw large crowds gathering, who were regaled with tempting barbecued meats and Creole gumbo, pronounced by all to be most delicious and appetizing, which they enjoyed in the open air, with the green pines waving above, and the soft, brown needles carpeting the ground beneath their feet. Many visitors from Covington, Mandeville and surrounding settlements were among the throng, and as the time approached for the arrival of the 3:45 train from Covington, the N. O. G. N. depot was surrounded by crowds awaiting the arrival of the King and his suite. This train also brought many visitors from Covington and the towns above.

As the King alighted from the train he was greeted with cheers from the throng and music by the band. The gay colors of the carnival decorations and the happy demeanor of the surging crowds made a befitting welcome. At the Town Hall the keys of the town were delivered over to the King with the following address by Mayor Mutti:

In according you the freedom of the town of Abita Springs, I cannot refrain from calling your attention to the advantages we possess in healthful climate, healing water and hospitable citizenship. Your Majesty will find our hotels in secluded spots, buried in the perfume of pines and laden with the ozone that gives health to the body, brightness to the eye and an appetite for the good things you will find on the table [soto voce—I am speaking of my hotel]. Our judges are just; our law officers are discreet and alert; our merchants are honest and liberal. No fairer women, no truer wives e'er graced the homes of honest men than in Abita. Your Majesty has in this honoring our town, given to yourself an opportunity for enjoyment that only comes to the wise who know the way or have learned the lesson, and we gladly welcome you.

Mayor Mutti has been and is still is

quite ill, and his voice lacked the usual strength given to his utterances, but his interest in the occasion would not allow him shirk any of the duties of his office nor forego the pleasure of extending a welcome to the guests of the town.

The greetings of the Mayor were received by the King with all the courteous dignity of his royal station, who spoke as follows:

In accepting the keys of your town, Mr. Mayor, I am not lacking in appreciation of the many advantages you possess. The renown of the medicinal properties of your waters have reached me in far off lands. The virtue of your ozonic atmosphere is world-famous. Of the hospitality of your people I have good reason to know since my arrival here, and I have tasted of the luxuries of your hotels [soto voce—I am talking about my hotel now]. That your women are as lovely in character as they are in face and form is not unfamiliar to the reputation of the Sunny South. But I am surprised at the rapid growth of your town, at the progressive spirit of your citizens, when I consider that only recent opportunities have given you the means that make rapid progress possible. I am surprised also, to see that your merchants are hauling freight by way of Covington instead of from your railroad station, and I assure you, had I been compelled to come by freight, I should have gone on to Covington and then footed it to Abita. That I shall find pleasure in your town I am confident and in behalf of myself and my retinue I beg leave to thank you for your generous consideration and kindness.

As the King passed Railroad Avenue he was presented with a bouquet of flowers by Miss Louise Duquesne. In the line of the parade were Judge A. O. Pons, Grand Marshal, on horseback. Carriage of the town officials in which were seated Mayor A. Mutti, Treasurer John Distruel and Alderman Charles Biggio, preceded by the school children of the Abita Public school. The King on his throne came next. He was seated in the arch of a huge crescent, whose silvery light shone upon a huge bank of clouds above which he was seated, a large winged dragon crouching at his feet, and he waved his greetings to the people with his sceptre, while he nodded his royal head in recognition of distinguished guests and prominent citizens.

The King's float was guarded by three Indian chieftains on horseback, lineal descendants of the Indian maid whose life was saved by the wonderful waters of the Abita Springs when all the medicine men of the different tribes appealed to had been unable to help her. These chieftains were Ralph Abney, Walter Abney and Joseph Lamousin, and their picturesque costumes brought the mind back to the time when the Indian arrow sought a vital spot in the wild deer that roamed the surrounding forest. The stone arrow-heads are frequently plowed up in the newly tilled fields of nearby farms.

"Shooting Star," the title of the float on which was seated the "Queen of Abita," carried gently and swiftly on the crest of a cloud heap. Like a star, indeed, she looked, in her costume of blue satin. Waving her wand, her charming little face peeping above her blue costume, the light of her smile like the light of a star in the blue firmament—a "shooting star," in reality was little May Brown.

"Dreamland" was a float gotten up by Mr. and Mrs. W. L. Fountain, of Covington. Its central figure was a pyramid of flowers composed of Marechal Neil roses, red roses and lilies, which was surrounded by bowlers of flowers encircled among which were minstrels with string instruments playing sweet music to the nymphs who dreamed life away amidst the perfume of flowers.

"Consumers Brewery," the float gotten up by Joseph Elchinger agent for the company at Covington and Mr. Charles Biggio, of the Eagle Saloon, of Abita, represented a golden keg of beer, with silver hoops, resting at the top of an ornamented mound. In front was the sign "Eagle Saloon," Chas. Biggio, proprietor; at the back, consumers Brewery, Jos. Elchinger Agent.

The St. Tammany Banking Company and Savings Bank, of Covington, represented a bank scene, the cashier's window in the foreground representing a busy scene where the coin of the realm was evidently keeping the cashier busy with the prosperous rush of business. The facade of the bank was supported by Greek columns, and

the whole made an excellent showing in the parade.

The "Country Barbershop" was very comical and created a great deal of amusement. It represented a barber with an eye to business who was on to his job. He lathered his customer with a huge brush and was not particular how much lather went down the throat. His attendant was kept busy grinding monstrous shears and razors, and numerous signs announced that the L. D. Bondi barbershop was the place to go to get a country hair cut or shave.

Master Frank Brown presented a very pretty spectacle with his decorated goat cart, which was driven along as sedately as the King's chariot.

The last float was the "Minstrels" which contained a pickaninny band and otherwise carried out the designation of its title.

Numerous maskers, clowns and grotesque figures completed the procession. The parade marched on Railroad Avenue to Level Avenue; on Level Avenue to Oak street; Oak street to Main street; on Main street to North street; on North street to Keller street; on Keller street to St. Mary street; then across to Railroad Avenue to Level street and the Town Hall where the parade disbanded.

After a reception to the officials and high dignitaries the doors of the Town Hall were thrown open and all were invited to partake of the hospitality of the Mystic Club. Boek beer was served to the populace, but only orderly good humor prevailed.

Immediately preparations were made for the Carnival ball in the evening. The large hall was put in order, the stage gotten ready for the reception of the King and Queen, and for the very good time that followed in the evening. By eight o'clock maskers began to arrive and when the King was announced quite a crowd was in the ball room, which continued to increase up to 10 o'clock, until there was none too much room for the dancers.

The King, surrounded by his courtiers, arrived at 9 o'clock and was conducted to the throne, while the clapping of hands and demonstrations of pleasure drowned the music which but a moment before had made restive the feet that were eager for the dance. The King chose for his queen Miss Marguerite Lamousin, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Lamousin, a very pretty and popular young lady of Abita. The Queen's maid was Miss Juan Abney, the charming daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Robt. C. Abney.

The coronation ceremony presented a very pretty scene. The King, Mr. L. Souchon, wore as costume of old rose silk, with mantle of white brocade silk trimmed with royal purple, worn over a jacket trimmed with lace and gold with slashes of royal purple in the back, and the crown jewels were very expensive and handsome.

The Queen was handsomely gowned in white grandmother's swiss over silk, with a mantle of white Albatross trimmed with silver braid, wore gold ornaments, and looked every bit the charming Queen that she characterized.

Queen's maid of honor, Miss Abney, wore a costume of pink chiffon, handsomely made and very becoming to her girlish beauty, and carried the Queen's flowers.

Dukes and lords and nobles of the realm of all degrees, with the ladies of the court, gave to the masquerade a brilliant scene that marked the event as another of the successes that makes the Mystic Club so popular with the public.

Dancing was kept up until 2:15 a. m. Among the maskers who enjoyed the evening was a visitor from Antlers, Okla., Mr. T. J. Lacroix, who is the favorite candidate for sheriff of Pushmataha County, Okla.

A very pleasant incident was the receipt of a letter by the president of the Mystic Club from Miss Mary Biggio, who was Queen of the Carnival last year, expressing great interest in the success of the Abita carnival this year and regretting that she could not be with us. Miss Biggio is now a resident of New Orleans.

Much credit for the success of the parade is due to the work of Messrs. Chas. Biggio, Frank Brown and E. B. Moran, and thanks are due to the St. Tammany Banking Company and Savings Bank and to Joseph Elchinger for entering floats, to the citizens of Covington who contributed money and to the St. Tammany Railways and Ferry Company for contribution and for the 9:30 car. In the general ar-

rangements incidental to carrying out of the carnival program Capt. G. E. Millar, Walter Abney, chairman of the Barbecue Committee, Judge A. O. Pons and Joseph Lamousin are entitled to credit for the hard work they did.

The Mystic Club will put on a night parade next Mardi Gras, and an effort will be made to eclipse anything heretofore attempted.

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