AN OVERLAND JOURNEY.

XXX.

CALIFORNIA—THE BIG TREES.

STEAMBOAT CORNELIA, ON THE SAN JOAQUIN, Aug. 15, '59.

On reaching Clark's ranche, on the South Fork of the Merced, at 10½ P. M. of Friday, we were so happy as to meet the Rev. O. C. Wheeler, Secretary of the State Agricultural Society, and his associates on the Visiting Committee of that Society, now on a tour of observation through various regions of the State. We had agreed at Sacramento to make the trip to the Yosemite together, but some mishap had detained them fourteen miles back of Bear Valley during the night of Wednesday last; and when at length they reached Mariposas, my party had been some hours on our way, while not a horse or mule could be hired till next morning, to replace their jaded nags, whose immediate proceeding on so rough a trip was out of the question. So they halted, perforce, till next morning, and were only going up to the Yosemite when we were coming down, as aforesaid.

But they had just returned to Clark's from the Big Trees of Mariposas, having visited those of Calaveras two or three days before. The general impression seems to be that the Calaveras trees are the larger and finer; but Mr. Wheeler, having just visited each, was very decided in his preference for those of Mariposas, and I understood all his associates to concur in that verdict. They found the Calaveras trees in far better condition, in the charge of a keeper, and approached by a road over which a light carriage may readily be driven up to the very trees themselves. These are no light advantages, but they assured us on the other hand, that the Mariposas trees are considerably more numerous (some 250 to 300), and really larger and finer specimens of their kind. Mr. Wheeler found by careful measurement the diameter of one of these trees 100 feet above the ground to be twenty feet, while its first limb, which put off at that hight, had a diameter of six feet. Just think of a twig six feet through at that elevation! He obtained these results by measuring the tree's shadow, which I need hardly remark was probably narrower than the tree itself. He had several tape-line measurements of Mariposas trees over one hundred feet in circumference; but one of the Calaveras trees is claimed to be, I think, nearly one-fourth larger than this. No matter—those of either County are big enough.

We went up to the Mariposas Trees early next morning. The trail crosses a meadow of most luxuriant wild grass, then strikes eastward up the hills, and rises almost steadily, but in the main not steeply, for five miles, when it enters and ends in a slight depression or valley, nearly on the top of this particular mountain, where the Big Trees have been quietly nestled for I dare not say how many thousand years. That they were of very substantial size when David danced before the Ark, when Solomon laid the foundations of the Temple, when Theseus ruled in Athens, when Æneas fled from the burning wreck of vanquished Troy, when Sesostris led his victorious Egyptians into the heart of Asia, I have no manner of doubt.

The Big Trees, of course, do not stand alone. I apprehend that they could not so stand at present, in view of the very moderate depth at which they are anchored to the earth. Had they stood on an unsheltered mountain-top, or even an exposed hillside, they would doubtless have been prostrated—as I presume thousands like them *were* prostrated by the hurricanes of centuries before Christ's Advent. But the locality of these, though probably 2,500 feet above the South Merced, and some 4,500 above the sea, is sheltered and tranquil, though several of these trees have manifestly fallen within the present century. Unquestionably, they are past their prime, though to none more than to them is applicable the complimentary characterization of "a green old age."

Let me try to give as clear an idea of these forest mastodons as I can, though I know that will be but a poor one:

In measuring trees, it is so easy to exaggerate by running your line around the roots rather than the real body, that I place little dependence on the reported and recorded measurements of parties under no obligations to preserve a judicial impartiality. But I believe a fair measurement of the largest trees standing in this grove would make them not less than one hundred feet in circumference, and over thirty in diameter, at a hight of six feet from their respective bases, and that several of them have an altitude of more than three hundred feet. I believe the one that was last uprooted measures a little over three hundred.

But these relics of a more bounteous and magnificent world seem destined to speedy extinction. I deem them generally enfeebled by age and the racking and wrenching of their roots by the blasts that sweep through their tops. These malign influences they might withstand for ages, however, were it not for the damage they have already sustained, and are in danger of hereafter of sustaining, through the devastating agency of fire. For these glorious evergreen forests, though the ground beneath them is but thinly covered with inflammable matter, are yet subject to be overrun every second or third year by fire. For the earth, to a depth of several feet, even, is dry as an ash-heap, from July to October, and the hills are so steep that fire ascends them with wonderful facility. And thus the Big Trees are scarred, and gouged, and hollowed out at the root and upward, as the effects of successive fires, one of which, originating far southward, ran through this locality so late as last Autumn, burning one of the forest kings so that it has since fallen, half destroying another already prostrate, through the hollow of which two horsemen (not G. P. R. James's, I trust,) were accustomed to ride abreast for a distance of fully one hundred feet, and doing serious damage to very many others. If the village of Mariposas, the County, or the State of California, does not immediately provide for the safety of these trees, I shall deeply deplore the infatuation, and believe that these giants might have been more happily located.

The Big Trees are usually accounted Redwood, but have strong resemblance to the Cedar family, so that my intelligent guide plausibly insisted that they are identical in species with their probable cotemporaries, the famous Cedars of Lebanon. The larger Cedars in their vicinity bear a decided resemblance to the smallest of them; and yet there are quite obvious differences between them. The Cedar's limbs are by far the more numerous, and come far down the trunk; they are also relatively smaller. The Cedar's bark is the more deeply creased up and down the trunk, while the foliage of the Big Trees is nearer allied to that of certain Pines than to the Cedar's. The bark of the Big Trees is very thick—in some instances, over two feet—and is of a dry, light quality, resembling cork: hence the fatal facility of damage by running fires. The wood of the Big Trees is of a light red color, seeming devoid alike of sap and resin, and to burn about as freely while the tree lives as a year or more after its death. Unless in the Cedars of Lebanon, I suspect these mammoths of the vegetable world have no counterparts out of California.

They are of course not all of extraordinary size, yet I cannot remember one that would girth so little as twenty feet at a hight of two yards from the earth's surface, which is the proper point for horizontal measurement. Hardly one is entirely free from the marks of fire at its root, while several have been burned at least half through, and are so hollowed by fire that a tree eight feet in diameter would probably find ample room in its cavity. And, while many are still hale and thrifty, I did not perceive a single young one coming forward to take the place of the decaying patriarchs. I believe these trees now bear no seed-cone or nut, whatever they may have done in Scipio's or in Alexander's time, and that there is no known means of propagating their kind; and I deeply regret that there is not, though starting a tree that would come to its maturity in not less than four thousand years would seem rather slow business to the fast age in which it is our fortune to live. Possibly, the Big Trees are a relic of some bygone world—some past geologic period—cotemporaries of the gigantic, luxuriant ferns whereof our Mineral Coal is the residuum. I am sure they will be more prized and treasured a thousand years hence than now, should they, by extreme care and caution, be preserved so long, and that thousands will then visit them, over smooth and spacious roads, for every one who now toils over the rugged bridle-path by which I reached them. Meantime, it is a comfort to know that the Vandals who bored down with pump-augers the largest of the Calaveras trees, in order to make their fortunes by exhibiting a section of its bark at the East, have been heavy losers by their villainous speculation.

We left the Big Trees a little after 10 A. M., returned to Clark's and fed, and then struck for Mariposas, where we arrived a little before 6 P. M.—I alone so covered with boils, caused immediately by horseback exercise, as to make riding in any way a torture. My friend who had taken me up to Hussey's in his carriage was promptly on hand on my return, though he had been a hundred times assured that I could not possibly be back at the time appointed. We had a gathering and a talk at Mariposas in the evening, and I then rode over to Bear Valley, which we reached a little before midnight. Next evening, we ran down so far as the Tuolumne on our return, and to-day came on to Stockton, where we took the steamboat for San Francisco, which we hope to reach a little after midnight.

COL. FREMONT'S MINES.

I have already stated that I spent most of Wednesday in an examination under Col. Fremont's guidance, of the mines he is working in Bear Valley, and of the mills in which he reduces the rock and separates the gold. I usually observe carefully the rule which enjoins reserve when addressing the public respecting matters of purely personal and private concern; but there are circumstances in the case of Col. F. which seem to justify a departure from the general usage. Chosen three or four years since the standard-bearer of a new political organization in an exciting contest, and exposed, because of that choice, to a torrent of personal defamation which not merely impeached his integrity as a man and his fidelity as a public servant, but sought to divest him at once of his name, his religious faith, and even of his native land, I believe there are many thousands of Republicans who cherish for Col. Fremont a personal regard and affection which render them profoundly solicitous with respect to his good or evil fortune. It is for this class only that I write the following:

The public are generally aware that Col. F. purchased from a Mexican at an early day a large tract or grant of wild mountain land lying among the foot hills of the Sierra Nevada, called by the Mexicans Los Mariposas (the Butterfly), after a wild flower known to abound here. It is known also that this tract was some years after discovered or presumed to be rich in gold—the first piece of rich vein-stone having been taken out by the proprietor's own hand. It is further known that all manner of difficulties and obstructions were interposed to defeat the confirmation of the grant under which Col. F. holds his title, and that a protracted and most expensive litigation was thus forced upon him. Meantime the property was wholly unproductive—that is, to its owner—and the most inviting portions of it were clutched by squatters, who claimed, as they still claim, a right to dig its soil into utterly worthless chasms and heaps in quest of Gold, to cut down its timber and feed off its grass at their own discretion, leaving to the fortunate owner only the privilege of paying the taxes, which, under the management of public affairs by officers politically and personally hostile to him, have been swelled to no less than $16,000 per annum—*his* taxes, remember, on an estate which every body used or wasted as they saw fit, and which was yielding him no income whatever. For the feeble efforts at quartz-mining made in his behalf in his years of absence—in the absence, too, of all successful experience in such mining—only served to involve him still more deeply in debt, which was further swelled by unfortunate agencies and business connections, until the aggregate of his liabilities on account of this property can hardly have fallen short of half a million dollars.

Such were the circumstances under which he determined, in 1857, to return to his California estate, and here, surrounded by his family, devote all his time and energies to its improvement and renovation. In the spirit of that determination he has since lived and labored, rising with the lark, and striving to obtain a complete knowledge and mastery of the entire business, taking more and more labor and responsibility on his own shoulders as he felt himself able to bear it, until he is now Manager, Chief Engineer, Cashier, Accountant, and at the head of every other department but that of Law, for which he finds it necessary still to rely on professional aid. And his mines are at length becoming productive and profitable. His first (stesm) mill, near his dwelling, runs eight stamps night and day; his second (water) mill, three miles distant, on the Merced, at the north end of his estate, runs twelve stamps, also constantly; and the two are producing gold at the rate of at least $250,000 per annum, at an absolute cost, I am confident, of not more than $150,000. Of course he needs all the profits, if not more, to extend and perfect his works, having already a much larger water-mill nearly ready to go into operation beside that on the Merced, in which he expects, I believe, to run fifty-six stamps, and he hopes to have one hundred in all running before the close of 1860. With that number, I believe he would be able, by giving his constant personal attention to the business, aided by faithful and capable assistants, to realize a net profit of at least $10,000 per week, which would very soon clear him of debt and leave him unincumbered in the ownership of perhaps the finest Mining property in the world.

Still, the Spanish proverb, "It takes a mine to work a mine," is exemplified in his case as in others. A large additional investment is needed to render his property as productive as it might be. For instance: he has just contracted for the transportation of 30,000 tuns of vein-stone from his great mine to his mill on the Merced (barely a mile and a half down hill) for $60,000. One-half of this sum would construct a railroad from the heart of the mine down to the floor of the mill, and take down this amount of rock, leaving the railroad and $30,000 clear gain. But he must have the rock at once, while the railroad would require time, and a heavy outlay of ready cash. A Rothschild would build the road forthwith, and save $10,000; but Col. F., not being yet a Rothschild, whatever he may in time become, must bide his time.

His great mine, though not the richest, is probably the most capacious of any in California. Its thickness varies from eight to thirty-eight feet—I believe it is in one place sixty feet wide. It is in fact a cliff or pyramid of gold-bearing quartz inclosed in a mountain of slate—a mountain deeply gashed and seamed in various directions by the watercourses which run down it to the Merced. These ravines, this river, aided by proper engineering, obviate all the usually heavy, often ruinous, expense of pumping; the mine, properly opened, will not only clear itself of water, but the vein-stone may be easily run out on inclined tram-roads instead of being hoisted to the surface through shafts by an enormous outlay of power. Then the width of the vein obviates all necessity for dead-work save in sinking shafts and running up adits; the principal work is rather quarrying than mining; and there can be no apprehension that the vein will give out or grow poor, because it has already been tested at its various outcrops to a depth of fifteen hundred feet, and is richer at the bottom than near the top, where it has mainly been worked to this time. I have no doubt that there are $10,000,000 in this mine above water level—that is the level of the Merced—and that, though the yield of gold thus far has fallen rather below $20 per tun, it may even at that rate be mined at a net profit of at least one-fourth of the gross product. Col. F. is confident that his present works do not separate half the gold contained in the rock, and that, by the use of the new amalgamators he is about to apply, he will double his weekly product without an increase of cost. This conviction is founded on chemical experiments and tests which seem to leave no doubt of the fact that the additional gold is in the rock, but whether the means of extracting it have yet been discovered remains to be seen. At all events, I feel sure that the productiveness of these works will increase much faster than their expenses so long as Col. F. shall devote himself to their management so entirely as he is now doing. In the hands of agents and attorneys, they would probably become again what they once were, and what all quartz-mining works managed at second-hand have been. H. G.

FROM BOSTON.

From Our Own Correspondent.

BOSTON, Sept. 23, 1859.

At the Republican Convention held at Fitchburg on Tuesday, all the present State officers were nominated for reélection, with more or less unanimity. Lieutenant-Governor Trask, Mr. Warner, the Secretary of State, and Mr. Phillips, the Attorney-General, had the entire vote of the party. Governor Banks had 627 out of 712 votes, and Mr. White, the Auditor, and Mr. Tenney, the Treasurer, got handsome majorities over some very active opposing candidates. The resolutions, drawn by John A Andrew, are spirited, and strongly Anti-Slavery in tone. One of the members of the Committee on Resolutions proposed one on the subject of the Naturalization Laws, taking ground in favor of reducing the term to three years. He stated that Gov. Banks would indorse this proposition. Mr. Andrew, Judge Foster of Worcester, E. L. Pierce, and one or two others of the straight Republican sort, gave their assent to it, but it was opposed by the Hon. C. L. Knapp, General Oliver of Lawrence, and others, and defeated. I believe that Gov. Chase of Ohio broached the same idea some months ago. I don't know as there is any popular demand for such a measure, from any source, foreign or native. If there is not, it seems to me an unwise movement, in a party point of view at least, for it would not only bring about a quarrel among the Opposition members of Congress, but would establish an agitation of the old native and foreign question in half the Free States, by which the Republican cause would be pretty sure to be damaged. I can readily understand why the Democrats should desire to raise the issues by which they profited so much in 1856, but why the Republicans should voluntarily enter upon the discussion, passes my comprehension.

One of the Republican papers of this city, *The Bee*, frequently warns its public not to believe the political intelligence furnished to THE TRIBUNE by its Boston correspondent. It had one of these periodical warnings a few days ago, the occasion being a statement which I made as to the opposition which would be manifested toward Governor Banks in the State Convention. It turns out that my statement was correct in every particular, except that the disaffection was under-estimated. I stated with perfect accuracy even the cities and counties from which the opposition would mainly come. I dare say that the superserviceable zeal with which the plainest facts are denied by *The Bee* gives many persons the idea that Gov. Banks is pleased with this method of advocating his political interests. This is a great mistake. The Governor is the only American statesman of high rank, so far as I know, who has comprehended, or at any rate stated, the true function of the newspaper in relation to candidates for office; and he understands very well that the partisan press, *i. e.*, the press which feels bound to justify all that one party does, and condemn all that the opposite party does, is going out of fashion, and cannot do any man much real service hereafter. This conclusion, which he announced in 1857, does credit to his sagacity and careful oversight of events. His language was as follows:

"The partisan press was only half an existence, and yet it fulfilled its mission in preparing the way for a more expanded and intelligent system of journalism. . . If we look back upon its career with some satisfaction, we feel that there was nothing in its life that became it like the leaving it. In its place, we have an elevated, expansive, and intelligent system of independent journalism. Supported only by general patronage, it has no interest in perverting truth. The little that is left of the old system is like the journalism of Louis Napoleon, compared with that of England or the United States. There is no higher mission in either country than that of the independent journalist, but it is maintained only by superior wisdom and high integrity. In the absence of either, it sinks to the ancient level. But while it is an elevated, it is also a private interest. As a candidate for popular support, I cannot and do not desire to command it."

John Tyler may have been delighted with the daily perusal of *The Madisonian*, and Mr. Buchanan may believe all he sees in *The Constitution*: but Gov. Banks is a man of another sort, and though I dare say he is well enough pleased when any newspaper praises him or his administration, it is not at all likely that he relies greatly upon the partisan press for his political information.

A portion of the opposition to the Governor is due to his appointments, which have caused disappointments in various quarters. Thus ex Judge Sanger, late of the Court of Common Pleas, who presided at a meeting of Anti-Banks men the night before the Convention met, may fairly be presumed to have been governed in some degree by the fact that he was not appointed Judge of the Superior Court. He is a very honest man, as well as an uncommonly good-looking one, but it is not in human nature to forget such injuries. When I add that eight other Common Pleas Judges had the cold shoulder at the same time, you will understand that the element of dissatisfaction was quite formidable. Then there were some military men among the delegates, who had been offended in some way or other. Col. Burbank is a type of these. The political opposition must also be considered, and when you remember that two years ago, when Gov. Banks was first nominated, thousands of Republicans entertained toward him the bitterest feelings of animosity on account of his support of Gardner the previous year, you will not be surprised to hear that this feeling has not wholly subsided. Men do not easily forget the overthrow of their plans and hopes. The Governor has done some things which satisfy this class of men, such as his prompt action in the Loring matter, but he has disappointed them in other respects. His participation in the exercises at the inauguration of the Webster statue is not atoned for by the facts that he intimated very strongly that Horace Mann must have a statue on the other side; drew the lesson from Webster's life that "concession does not always secure peace," and said, plainly enough, that the Webster who spoke against the slave-trade at Plymouth, and for Freedom in Congress, and not the Webster of 1850, is the Webster men desire to see perpetuated in bronze, as we care to know how Napoleon looked at Marengo, and not how he looked when quarreling with Sir Hudson Lowe at St. Helena. As the Presidential election approaches, this class of men, or some of them at least, look for an opportunity to do honor to their old leaders in the Anti-Slavery warfare. I have indicated sufficiently, and with much greater minuteness than there was any need of, some of the reasons for the opposition to the Governor's nomination. Yet it after all amounted to only about 12 per cent of the whole vote; and even if the names of Mr. Knowlton and Mr. Dawes had not been withdrawn, would not have reached over 20 per cent. The name of Mr. Dawes was withdrawn by one of his friends, and Mr. Knowlton appeared in the Convention and desired his friends not to vote for him. *The Post* attributes this action on his part to the fact that he feared Gov. Banks would remove him from the office which he holds, that of Sheriff of Worcester County. Inasmuch as the people elect Sheriffs, and without much regard to the wishes of Governors, this could not be the reason. I am reminded of the story told of a worthy but not over-intelligent citizen of Concord, who, while the subject of Gov. Gardner's veto of the Personal Liberty bill was under discussion, broke in with the remark that "Gardner couldn't ha' done any-"thing else. If he hadn't vetoed it, President "Pierce would have had his head off in five "minutes!"

As I have alluded to the Webster statue, let me say that we are waiting for a fair day, in order to have Mr. Everett's eulogy repeated, in front of the State-House, where seats have been provided for 6,000 persons. The Legislature has once heard it, even tramping through the mud from the State-House to the Music Hall for the purpose; but they are eager to hear it again. But not even Mr. Everett's finely-turned periods and finished style of elocution can make people satisfied with the statue, as a work of art or as a likeness. And there are plenty of growls from the Abolitionists. *The Liberator* says the statue must be removed, but I don't think it will be, unless there shall be danger of disunion, in which case Mr. Everett gives us reason to believe that it will "descend from its pedestal to stand in the "front rank of the peril." Be sure, if it ever does this, it will never get back again. The idea of relying upon Mr. Webster or his brazen image for aid in time of peril is very ludicrous. There is nothing heroic in his history, as in the history of John and Samuel and John Quincy Adams, who were true representatives of Massachusetts character. It is disgraceful to the State that this prominence should be given to a man not a native of the State, and who, whatever may have been his ability and his early services on the right side of the political questions of the day, betrayed the people he represented in his last days, and cast his great influence into the scale of oppression. But "complimentary flunkeyism" is the order of the day. A great part of the time of many leading Republicans is taken up in burning incense under the noses of living Hunkers, or tramping about in processions in honor of dead ones. My friend Sourkrout, who desires to check this tendency, has handed me a copy of an oration upon Mr. Webster, which he is ready to deliver if requested. I dare not quote the whole of it, and I fear you will think what I do give you!—is of a sacrilegeous character. He says—the blasphemer:

"Daniel Webster was born in New-Hampshire, from which place, having been starved out by his creditors in early life, he came to Boston, where he was owned for 30 years by a few corporations, who, then finding him damaged and expensive to keep, sold him for $50,000 to a New-York Company, who soon put him off to the Slave Power for a promise of the Presidency. The last purchaser, having got the article, did not pay the consideration, and there being no means of enforcing the contract either in the Federal or State Courts, Mr. Webster retired to Marshfield, where, having 'sot' on Mr. Winthrop, he died, and was buried with great pomp. He was then duly canonized by Mr. Everett, and his statue by Powers, an execrable caricature, was set up in the State-House yard, causing much speculation among the members of the General Court whether it was meant for Pericles, Pompey's Pillar, or the Razor Strap Man in a mood of rapt contemplation; or if it is Webster, whether it is Daniel, Noah, or the Professor. Opinions differ. A respectable tailor attracts good custom by advertising that *he* did not make the pantaloons on this statue. Mr. Webster was a good lawyer, a moderate statesman, a poor diplomatist, and at one period of his life an orator. From this latter complaint, however, owing to full feeding, he recovered. His private life was adorned with some virtues. He was a first rate judge of chowder, the English classics, and old otard. He was an expert fisherman (though timid in a boat), a poor shot, and had the best hog in Plymouth County. He attended church with considerable regularity, and his respect for the Methodist clergy was great. He hated a lean ox, an unfilled can, and Abbott Lawrence. He loved brook trout, Peter Harvey, and his country. He left to his family a splendid legacy of unpaid debts, and a sincere love of good liquor. He was a good looking man, Powers to the contrary notwithstanding. The great army and innumerable company of American insolvents will continue through all time to hail him as their august apostle, and will treasure his memory and copy his example with affectionate fidelity and respect. To all good little boys, and Presidential aspirants, the chief lesson of his life is, *Own Thyself*."

Thus far Sourkrout. I do not indorse him. On the contrary, I am shocked, as you will be, by his irreverence. But, taking his estimate and Mr. Everett's together, you will obtain a very accurate view of the character of the man whose effigy we have just set up and consecrated.

ACCIDENT ON THE CLEVELAND, COLUMBUS AND CINCINNATI RAILROAD.—The express train coming South on this road yesterday—due here at 1:30 p. m. with the New-York mails—was thrown from the track five miles above Columbus, by the breaking of a wheel in the truck of the locomotive. Every car in the train was thrown off, as well as the engine and tender. The engineer, Charles Langdon, had his right leg broken above the knee. Noxon Platt, fireman, was taken from under the ruins next the boiler, but escaped with a scalded arm and some minor injuries. None of the passengers were seriously wounded, and very few were hurt. A. D. Schram of Cincinnati had his shoulder dislocated; Mrs. Babcock of Buffalo, Mrs. Kern and Catharine Fogle of Cardington, Ohio, Mrs. Henry of Columbus, Mrs. Smith of Belmont, N. Y., Mrs. Edwards of Mobile, and Mr. and Mrs. Rongeley of Mobile were more or less bruised, but, as already remarked, none were seriously injured. [Cincinnati Journal, 23d.

THE PRIZE-FIGHTERS.—Price, one of the principals in the great prize-fight, to take place Oct. 5, crossed over from this city to Canada on Saturday. Those who saw him represented him to be a very powerful-made man, and in excellent condition. Kelly is expected to-day or to-morrow. He is also said to be in fine trim, and withal very confident of winning the battle. The fight creates great interest among the fancy, and Kelly, from his known powers and sinew, is the favorite; Price, however, has his backers, and they are taking the odds whenever offered. The fight, if is expected, will be equal to any in the display of "ring tactics" and pugilistic science which has occurred in this country. Price will complete his training at Cowhards, Fort Erie, and Kelly somewhere near Point Abino. [Buffalo Courier, Sept. 19.

THE NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL SHOW.

THE STEAM PLOW TRIALS—TROTTING—FLORA TEMPLE AND PRINCESS RULED OUT—THE GOLD MEDAL OF HONOR ($1,500 BY THE ILLINOIS STATE SOCIETY, AND $1,500 BY THE ILLINOIS CENTRAL RAILROAD) AWARDED TO FAWKES.

From Our Own Reporter.

CHICAGO, Sept. 17, 1859.

The success anticipated in my former letters has been achieved, and the United States Agricultural Society is in debt to the young, but whole-souled West, for its first important surplus of receipts. The Society is on its legs again; Richard's himself; and if they will only keep from exhibitions in the Southern States, all will go right. True, it is a national society; granted that all sections are equally symbolized on the reverse of its medal; but the lamentable fact is, that at the South the surplus, if any, has been kept by the local associations, and none come into the national fund. By reference to the following estimate of receipts at several shows, it will be seen that in the very home of "Southern chivalry," where the loudest talk was made of national this, and national that, and where the greatest success possible was promised if the Fair located there, the receipts were but forty per cent of the amount taken here, where they did not talk much, but did a great deal in their own quiet, effective way. The receipts have been, in gross, about:

Springfield, O.	No estimate	Richmond, Va.	$13,000
Springfield, Mass.	No estimate	Louisville, Ky.	20,000
Boston	$27,000	Chicago	33,000
Philadelphia	38,000		

Although the largest in receipts, the Philadelphia show falls far below this one in actual profit to the society, as I previously explained.

All through the week, the legitimate business of an Agricultural Society has been carried on; stock and horses have been led in classes for examination in the ring; implements and machinery of various kinds have been tried; self-sacrificing men have squeezed through crowds, imploring for "room for the Committee;" steam-plows have run long furrows toward the setting sun; and none of these "trials of speed" have been made that formerly drew the crowd at a National Fair from the sheds to the ring, and gave the grounds the appearance, and name, of respectable race-courses with agricultural appendages. The iron plowing-horse has overshadowed the fancy trotter, and has literally entered for competition and run mile-heats around the course. For those who were on the Fair grounds on Friday witnessed a sight never before presented at any show—no less a one than a trial between the Water's plowing-engine from Detroit, and that of Fawkes, "to show their locomotive capacity and outward mechanical construction"—in the language of the report herewith sent. The Waters machine makes 24 revolutions of the engine to 1 of the drivers, and gets a slow motion, of course; while Fawkes's being geared 6 to 1, his speed is considerably greater. At about noon, yesterday, the Committee of the U. S. Society brought the two machines upon the course, so that they might be seen by the crowd of 25,000 persons. Waters went ahead, and Fawkes behind, that the ruts made by the ribs of the wheels of the one should be obliterated by the smooth roller of the other. Away they steamed, amid a general silence; but Fawkes, impatient of the sluggish progress of his rival, when one turn had been made, took advantage of his opportunity, and steaming rapidly past, soon distanced him. The scream of his whistle was well nigh drowned in the cheers that burst from the large assemblage, and the President of the Society, and the several officers were so excited with the novel race, that, forgetting official dignity, they cheered as loud and as lustily as the crowd. The engines, after leaving the track were taken to an open plot in the implement quarter, and caused to plow, each one furrow through, to show the people the quality of their work. After completing this they were taken to the open prairie adjoining the grounds and put regularly to trial. The result is given in the official report, so I need not repeat. We all felt very sorry for Waters. That he should break his plows so early in the trial, and before the qualities of his machine were fully developed, was too bad. But he came here without having plowed an acre of ground, without competent men to manage his plows, and unprepared for accidents. The Committee, you will perceive do not indorse the Fawkes machine as perfect, either in their individual capacity as Committeemen, nor as integral parts of the National Society, but they think the Medal of Honor of the Society is due to its inventor for having got so good a machine in so short a time. His plows may not be well set or well chosen, his steam capacity inadequate, but he has a principle there which must be successful, and which will be so probably when the first of the machines is built, which have been already ordered. The machinists of the Illinois Central Railroad Company feel confident that in the event of their taking hold of the machine, the first one they turn out will work well from the start, and I think so, too. New-York will have a chance to see the thing at work next week, and can judge for itself. The Railroad Company, satisfied from personal examination of the merits of the machine, unanimously awarded to Fawkes the $1,500 prize placed by them in the hands of the State Society for that purpose, thus giving a sharp rebuke to the latter body for their perverse skepticism after the favorable report of their own Committee of able machinists. The State Society under the pressure of public feeling rendered doubly manifest when the action of the Railroad Company was known, compromised between duty and prejudice, and gave Fawkes $1,500. They did not come manfully forward and say that if Fawkes had not got a perfect machine, he had at least one more than half perfect, but made a donation of the money in consideration of his having drawn a crowd to their Fair. I rejoice to know, beyond peradventure, that some of the members of the Board, seeing the contempt and indignation expressed on every side for their temporizing policy, and convinced from the first that it was their duty, as a great Society, to aid a poor inventor who had a good invention, stood up manfully for doing what was right. Hereafter, when plowing is regularly done by steam, and the historian comes to inquire into the inception of the effort, the names of these men will be held in grateful remembrance. Did poor Fulton jump at once to success? Did he not make crude application of cruder ideas before his voyage to Albany was made? If he had been taken by the hand, and aided by powerful scientific bodies, when the opportunity offered, would we not have got a practical steamboat much sooner than we did? And shall our Agricultural Societies, professedly the most interested in steam plowing, stand by and see an inventor struggling in a hard fight with want and misery, to bring out a great invention like this, and, instead of aiding, help to crush him? Fawkes, and Waters, and Field, and Mann, and Stein, and our other inventors of steam plows, may not have got perfect machines as yet; but I say, in the name of Progress, let us assist them to reach perfection, if we can.

I have said before that the show of implements has been good. Of plows it has been particularly so—better than we often see at any show. Of reapers and mowers there were exhibited 36; of corn-planters 20, and of threshers 11. This does not quite come up to the English shows, where eighty to ninety threshers are not only shown, but tested in a thorough manner. In fact, the show of threshers, and of portable engines, is what makes the marked difference between English fairs and our own. The day will come, and that speedily, when portable engines will be seen here, too; and the sooner the better. It is a great pity that the Ericsson Caloric Engine Company had not done as they said they would, viz: show the new power at work with various stationary farm machines. If the cylinder of the Caloric can be increased with a corresponding increase of power, and they can be furnished at equal cost as steam engines, see what a field would open before it! An engine not more dangerous than a cooking-stove, and yet as powerful as steam, would drive its rival from every farm. Has this been invented? We shall see.

The U. S. Society has vindicated its reputation against those cavillers who said its horse trots were but common races after all. And thus: The citizens of Chicago offered a purse of $1,000, to be contended for by trotting horses, mares and geldings, according to the established rules of the society—that speed should be taken only in connection with other good qualities. Flora and Princess entered for the contest, and all the world came up to see them. But during the Fair these mares had a trot for money, on the race-course near town, and their owners coolly informed the Executive Committee that they would not trot in the race to-day unless speed alone was considered, and unless they received half the gate receipts! They were snubbed instanter, and informed that they might trot or not as they chose; the society had rules and would adhere to them. So Flora did not appear at all, and Princess did not enter for the prize, but Mr. Eoff showed her on the track after the trot was over. She is a fine animal, but does not look as if she had the bottom to repeat her great California performance of 10 miles in 29:06. A Chicago horse, Ike Cook, a fine large and well-made bay gelding—quite old enough to vote by this time—won the purse and blue ribbon, having made his mile in 2:28, which on this track is fully equal to 25 or 26 on one properly made. The Judges wavered long between Ike and a Michigan stallion called Magna Charta, who certainly made the finest show for a four-year colt that was ever seen. He not only went in 2:37, but he did it in such fine style, is such a well-proportioned animal, so young, sound in constitution, and an entire horse. It seems to me, that even with a few seconds difference in speed, the prize should be given to an animal that is capable of transmitting his qualities. The mare Belle of Saratoga, owned in Buffalo, is as graceful as a deer, and has a wonderful pair of leaders and shoulders. She made first-rate time, (2:34), in her trot with Belle of Chicago, who made 2:38, but when competing with Ike Cook her driver let her up to get ahead, and when he wished to pull her in could not. Reindeer, a black horse formed in Chicago, is one of the best movers I ever saw. There is no hitching up and letting drop of the fore legs like some horses, nor the forward and back oblique thrust of others, but a fair and square setting down of hoof, with an easy up-spring that seems to get the animal off the ground without weariness.

Just before the great trotting began there was an episode, which, although amusing enough in its way, was sadly out of place. A poor German woman, of unfortunate fecundity, had given birth at one time to three children, which she had in a basket for exhibition to excite the charity of passers-by on the Fair Grounds. Some distinguished ladies becoming interested, brought her to the attention of President Tilghman, and the result was that with a view to making some innocent fun on the last day, three spoons were purchased for public presentation. At a chosen time, when the crowd were waiting impatiently for the trot, the basket full of babies was brought to the judge's stand, and in presence of the large assemblage the spoons were presented to the three babies by the President, who delivered a witty extempore address, which went to show that no nation could be great without population, and if we would be greater than others we must populate more rapidly. Roars of laughter and loud applause continually interrupted the speaker, and responded to him at the close. But the affair was in eminent bad taste. What, I should like to know, has the United States Agricultural Society to do with giving spoons to triplets? This is the peculiar province of Mr. Barnum, and if one part of his business is monopolized, what is there to prevent the other following? Let this be repeated and we shall see giants and dwarfs, albinos, and speckled negroes, two-headed babies, and no-headed animals knocking at the gates of the National Society and entering for premiums.

In an association of such magnitude as this, whose officers live hundreds of miles apart, and one that is dependent for Committees in great measure upon visitors to the annual shows, it is not strange that errors in awarding prizes should be made, and injustice be done. The Society will certainly not be charged with design in all this, but there are those who say that Committees should be very carefully composed, lest interest blind the eyes of justice, and the medal be by her handed to the wrong man. Cases have come to my observation here which seemed to evidence partiality of a flagrant nature, not only in the implement, but the cattle and horse departments as well. If we were to listen to all the complaints of disappointed exhibitors, we might fill our columns for a week, and for fear that a bad precedent would be established, I will not mention any. At all Fairs favoritism creeps in, and it is almost safe to say that the larger the Fair the greater the tendency to partiality.

New-fledged Kansas has taken her honors as well as other States. Mr. W. F. M. Arny had on exhibition specimens of minerals that seemed to prove the resources of the new State to be promising. In the collection were some specimens of lead from Lynn County which contained 90 per cent of metal. The Judges very properly bestowed the first prize upon the exhibitor. And this reminds me that Mr. Arny, who is a Vice-President of the Society, contributed in no small degree to the pecuniary success of this show; for, finding that by some mysterious process a great crowd could be upon the ground with a very small show of money to represent it in the cash box, he stationed himself at the principal entrance, and caused a rigid adherence to the terms of admission that resulted most favorably.

The question arose during the examination of sheep as to what was a "grade"—there being one lot entered as grades, which were full-blooded Merinos, but crosses between different families of the breed. And now what do you, and what does any man acquainted with breeding, call a grade? Heretofore we have all supposed it to be a thorough-bred animal, crossed upon a common, or "cold-blooded" one, and no respectable agricultural society is ready to recommend the use of grade sires to improve a breed, although grade dams may, with great profit, be bred to thorough-bred males for general farming purposes. The progeny of a Devon from one part of the world crossed on a Devon in another, or of a Short-horn bought in England of Bates on a Short-horn in America from Booth's stock, is still a Devon or a Short-horn, as the case may be. And so I think it is with Merino sheep, for Merinos in Spain and Merinos elsewhere are Merinos still, and not Leicesters, or Cotswolds, or Southdowns. Talking of sheep reminds me that one of our greatest sheep-breeders, Colonel Josiah Ware of Virginia, has been here all through the show, serving on committees, and taking as active a part as if he were thirty instead of three-score.

And here is old "Farmer Jones" from Delaware, as great on the subject of statistics, and wheat, and Protective Tariffs as ever. He offered a schedule of volunteer premiums for the best crops of wheat from 70 down to 20 bushels, that would have been published by the United States Agricultural Society this time, if they had been received in time. Here, too, we have Mr. Wager from one State, working like an enthusiastic Irish laborer in every department, from speech-making down to cutting stakes, "without fear or hope of reward;" and Mr. Frederick Smyth from New-Hampshire; and one Col. Johnson, and Mr. McGowan of Pennsylvania, and Secretary Poore, and Treasurer French who has been elected Grand Master of Knight Templars, and others whose names to followers after national shows "are as familiar," &c.

To give some idea of the crowd at the hotels, and the little chance there is for privacy at these great gatherings, I may say that I counted on the register of the Tremont House 2,107 names of persons who have stopped here during this week. The hotel contains about 300 rooms; but on one night 942 visitors and 200 servants slept beneath its roof (or rather laid down, for how much they slept depended on their relative imperviousness to musketo-bites). The landlord has kindly given me the following list of food consumed in the time: Coffee, 500 lb; Butter, 1,400 lb; Eggs, 1,325 dozen; Sugar, 1,435 lb; Flour, 76 bbls.; Beef, 3,560 lb; Mutton, 940 lb; Hams, 800 lb; Milk, 922 galls.; Potatoes, 76 bush.; Chickens, 1,260. And as to the liquor drank and the cigars smoked, they must be computed by logarithms. I went late one night to play a game of billiards, but found the tables serving as bedsteads for forty persons, at least twenty-seven of whom were snoring in the key of G minor.

I cannot close without again paying an humble tribute to the spirit of the great North-West. Her representatives came to Washington last Winter and sought the location of the National Fair, promising that if she obtained it she would do well by the Society. It has redeemed its promise, and after two disastrous exhibitions in Southern States, the United States Agricultural Society finds itself, for the first time, above actual pecuniary want. May it ever find such good friends to assist it. Long live the North-