

## ARTESIA ANNUAL ALFALFA FESTIVAL

Large Attendance From all Over the Pecos Valley—Visitors Royally Entertained

LAST THURSDAY AND FRIDAY

An Interesting Description by Will Robinson the "Tenderfoot"

Pecos Valley Press Association to Meet at Carlsbad Next Year.

That is a wise set of guys down at Artesia. I always knew it, but realized it more than ever last Thursday and Friday—for of course I attended the Alfalfa festival and the annual meeting of the Pecos Valley Press Association. It was one thing to lay the foundation for a permanent great Southwestern carnival, but it was another to have in the city at the same time the annual gathering of the boys who are really building up the country and whose good will is worth untold money in an advertising way. Artesia made good all of the way through.

It all began Thursday morning with a trades procession that traversed all of the principal streets, and which in conception and execution would have done credit to any city in the dryness. All of the business houses were decorated, some of them most effectively, and practically all of them were represented in the procession. Of course alfalfa was everywhere. The Artesia people know their best friend, and play it up for all there is in it. It was in bales, several thousand of them, green for decorations, in bloom and out of bloom, and everywhere you turned you were reminded that it is the great staple of the country about, at least until that time when the hundreds of acres of orchards come into full bearing when it will not be so many, though still a considerable. The finish of the alfalfa principle was found in the great ware house, which was utilized for the display of the products which had been gathered for the Irrigation Congress, and which contained alfalfa in every form, known to man, every form of farm truck and a royal display of fruit, in which Hope was the central figure, practically every blue ribbon being hitched to specimens from the seat of the Penasco empire. It may be different when the Artesia orchards get a little older, but as it is now Hope is the whole fruit in the middle valley. Here were also many other displays, engineered by the ladies, fancy and art work, and things that with all of my wisdom I could not attempt to identify.

The most interesting thing that first day was the barbecue, of course. That was held at the old ball ground, and here more than a thousand people scored, the press fellows among them. It was a game worth playing, for a whole herd of beeves had been roasted to a turn, and the smoking flesh was banked by the best work of the housewife, and watermelons and such, with the indispensable black coffee.

Wiser than most, the committee had placed all of the speaking after dinner and it was in charge of Corporation Counsel James C. Davis, who introduced the speakers of the day, beginning with Hon. G. A. Richardson, mayor of Roswell. The judge was full of beef and optimism, and had a message based upon the wonderful development of the Pecos Valley in his time, and the possibilities of its wonderful future. He

encouraged the workers who have labored to the present station and drew a beautiful picture of the future of all the country from Pecos to Texico west to the mountains. It was all his country. While he did not discover it, he had been in it and in all of the work of the pioneers, and he loved its every acre and with all his heart believed that it was certain to be the irrigated wonder of the world. He endorsed the idea of the annual alfalfa festival and was certain that in time it would grow to be the greatest annual gathering in the valley if not in the Southwest. And many nice things about the older citizens and came so near eloquence that the people several times thawed into applause. The judge was already thawed, as he was speaking from a wagon and standing bareheaded in the sun.

The only other speaker was Robert Tate McClung, the well-known associated press correspondent, at the request of the confederate veterans and which resulted in the preliminary steps for the organization of a camp at Artesia late in the day. Mr. McClung has become noted for his oratorical work along this line, and though he was under the same handicaps as his predecessor on the wagon, he held his audience closely, and was given the glad many times by the southern people present, which was most of the audience. His address was along the line of his great effort at the confederate reunion in Roswell last year, which took him at a bound from obscurity to a high place in the ranks of the speakers of the valley.

In the afternoon the Press Association met at the Commercial club rooms at 1:30. It didn't stay in session long, as all of the members were anxious to see the fun going on, and also desired to await the later trains for the belated delegates; which showed their wisdom. The session was called to order by the president, and the invocation was delivered by Rev. Arthur Stout, a young preacher who has a name to fit him, physically, spiritually, and manfully. Then the address of welcome was delivered by Judge Davis, himself an old-timer, and who succeeded in making all of the attendants feel that they had a right to all of the alfalfa and artesian water in town.

Then the bunch went to the ball game, and saw the Carlsbad infants wallop the Artesia gladiators by a score of 10 to 4. Prattlers by the name of Rarey and Barber were at the points for the children and big huskies by the name of Wade and Linell for Artesia. There was all sorts of hitting, but the youngsters skinned the big fellows a mile when it came to team play and no one was surprised at the result.

Following the ball game, D. T. Payne, of Elida, won the 100-yard dash in 13 seconds flat. John Falk pulled the prize in the fat men's race and Master Ed Terwilliger got a successful strangle hold on the greased pig.

At night the press people, and everybody else that could squeeze in, attended the carnival of the Christian ladies at the old Dyer building. It was the biggest surprise party of the two days. The trades display was good and the marches better, but in the two one-act plays that followed there developed a degree of talent that was totally unlooked for. One of them was in the familiar little "Stepsister," in which the part of the blind girl was played in a way that could not have been excelled by a finished actress, consummately showing the shades of feel-

ing of this exquisite character. The performance could not be repeated the following night, and it was a good thing that it couldn't, as all of the bunch would have been there.

Friday morning the press bunch, reinforced numerously by this time, arose at the unholy hour of 5:30, and were taken on a long drive, Elmer Feemster, the unvanquished crop teler, leading the way, the assistant conductors were Gayle Talbot, of sorghum fame, E. C. Conn, who pinned a royal American beauty rose on every editor and editress upon arrival at his beautiful home. For miles and miles we were driven through orchards and farms, through apple avenues and regiments of Kaffir and Indian corn, and several times the great artesian fountains were unuzzled and shot their sparkling shafts high into the sunlight. That trip did more to popularize water than anything that has ever come before the Pecos Valley Press Association, and it was also an absolute revelation as to the marvelous development of the country around Artesia, where land that was a few years ago in the brown of the desert is now worth \$150 an acre, and in numberless cases returns more than that acre for acre every year of croppage. They are getting to have more sense down that way about wasting water and not a single well was seen wasting. I have been a long time in the valley, but am free to confess that I never realized what has been done around there, and that if there is a farmer's heaven in this matchless vale it is right there.

Friday after dinner the press people buckled down to work in earnest, and listened to several papers of the most extreme value, on technical matters. J. F. Newkirk, of the Artesia News, had the star paper on "Foreign Advertising." J. F. Wood, of the Lakewood Progress, an inspiring brief on "Country Boosting." Gayle Talbot told of the "Hasbeen," L. P. Loomis, of Texico, discussed the "Pay in Advance Subscription Plan," and Col. W. H. Mullane, of Carlsbad, brightly delivered "The Recollections of a Frontier Printer." The celebrated fighting editor was in a happy mood and his reminiscences were enjoyable in the extreme. All of the papers were gathered up in a bunch and sent to the Western Publisher, the great organ of the country printer in America. A committee was appointed to prepare suitable resolutions upon the death of Mrs. Fanny McClane Martin, the only member answering the call within the year, and whose bright mind and sunny spirit was greatly missed. The auditing committee O. K'd the accounts of the secretary-treasurer, and the matter of choosing the next place of meeting was then taken up.

It was an interesting contest between Carlsbad and Texico, the claims of each of which were presented by Messrs. Mullane and Loomis, and the first ballot resulted a tie. The president declined to decide the tie, having friends in both places, like Mark Twain, and the second ballot resulted the same way. Mr. Loomis gracefully withdrew the name of Texico and Carlsbad was chosen, it being generally understood that the association will go to Texico in 1910. The chivalry of Mr. Loomis was then recognized by his election as president and Col. Mullane was named as secretary, following the custom of the association, which locates the secretary at the place of the next meeting. The colonel was happy in the honor, and at once promised the scribes the time of their lives

and a camping trip to the mountains next year.

The association then voted unanimously to affiliate in all possible ways with the territorial association, but never to merge into it, and the association adjourned sine die, proceeding to the ball grounds where the Artesia nine braced up and reversed the score of the day before, and at night after supper enjoyed the band concert and grand display of fireworks at the same place.

At nine o'clock, the banquet tables was spread at the rooms of the Commercial club, and here as everywhere the editors were the guests of honor, and they were served with an elaborate menu by the flower of the young manhood of the town, who accepted the services of Caterer Addington, but went no further. The actual honor of serving they would entrust to no profane hands, and the result of their service was as much of a dream as the collation itself, which is saying much. Mr. W. F. Corbin served as toastmaster and he made a good one, brightly introducing the various speakers. The first was Will Robinson who made believe the banquet was in 1957, and told of the early trials of the town, and of the great achievements of the past fifty years. He introduced air ships, electric driven machinery from the air, a valley population of millions, and some Bellamistic trimmings and characteristic goods. The people seemed to rather like it, for some strange reason, proving that you can never account for tastes.

Judge Davis briefly told of the gladness the presence of the scribes inspired, and topped it off with a funny story while Gayle Talbot concluded the orating with some reminiscences of old time newspaper men that were really the best of all. During the banquet Mrs. Corbin sang and a sweet faced little girl sang a song of hearts. Then the floor was cleared and all of the guests of the evening, editors and all, danced to smallest kind of hours.

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