

# THE ILLINOIS WOMAN'S EXPOSITION BOARD

AT THE WORLD'S COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION.

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THE Illinois Woman's Exposition Board was organized by act of the Legislature "to represent the industries of the women of Illinois at the World's Columbian Exposition." To enable it to successfully execute the duty thus assigned to it \$80,000, or one-tenth of the total State appropriation, was placed at its disposal in the State treasury. The appointment for the first time of a State Board composed entirely of women and the conferring upon it of such large financial responsibilities, limited in no way except by its own sense of expediency and right, marks a most significant advance in the public recognition of woman's business ability and capacity for affairs. In view of this fact the Board believes that it may without undue pride call the attention of the

people whom it (jointly with the Illinois Board of World's Fair Commissioners) represents, not only to its work as installed at the Columbian Exposition but also to its history during the past two years of its official existence. The history of the Board is the history of its accomplished work alone. The public press of the State, and especially of the city of Chicago, which has given the Board most generous and appreciative notice and has reported the plans of the Board for representing the industries and interests of Illinois women and the realization of such plans in the installation of exhibits. As the result of this installation there are in active daily operation at Jackson Park a hospital, a pharmacy, a kitchen and a kindergarten, conducted entirely by women, and also an exhibit of material objects representing as fully as possible the results of woman's industry in the home, the factory, the studio and the professions.

In the Illinois Woman's Hospital, situated southwest of the Children's Building, men, women and children receive free of charge the services of women surgeons, physicians and trained nurses of one of three schools of medicine—allopathic, homœopathic or eclectic.

In the pharmacy State-registered women pharmacists compound and dispense drugs and fill prescriptions.

In the kitchen which is the contribution of Illinois women to the Woman's Building, practical demonstration lessons are given each morning upon the proper cooking of maize or Indian corn, one of the staple products of Illinois, and yet one whose nutritive value and palatable preparation are little understood either at home or abroad. In the afternoon, cooking lessons not restricted to Indian corn are given to a class of girls, illustrating how cooking may be taught in industrial or trade schools. Because of lack of sufficient space this hospital, pharmacy and kitchen are located outside of the Illinois Building, but the kindergarten and all other exhibits heretofore described are located in the Illinois Building.

During the first three months of the Exposition, the kindergarten was conducted by the Froebel Kindergarten Association of Chicago. During the months of August, September and

October, it is conducted by the Free Kindergarten Association of the same city. The sessions are held every morning except Saturday from 9 until 12 o'clock, and visitors are cordially invited, in order that the personal knowledge of their philanthropic and most valuable educational system may spread to every village in the State. The kindergarten room itself is a model of beauty and convenience, and, with the grand outlook from the windows and the happy childhood within, is a sight never to be forgotten.

In attempting to gather together the material results of woman's handicraft, the Board has earnestly striven to represent all classes of industry, and so far as possible, every locality in the State. Merit alone has been the test, and all objects placed upon exhibition have successfully passed the judgment of juries of experts.

As a matter of practical expediency in collecting and planning for exhibits, the different members of the Board were assigned to the chairmanship of the following committee:

Literature, including books, newspapers and magazines.

Educational, philanthropic and professional work.

Historical and scientific exhibit.

Fine arts, including sculpture, painting in oil and water colors, chalk, charcoal, pastel and other drawings.

Decorative art, including ceramics, leather work, pyrography, wood carving and plain and ornamental needlework.

Practical arts, including photographs, book illustrations, designs, inventions and manufactures.

Domestic science, including kitchen and pantry stores.

All these different lines of activity are represented in the exhibit, although in many cases only a few examples of the best work of each kind could be shown because of the limited space, 42x150 feet, at the disposal of the board. For the same reason the showing of many industries on a more elaborate scale and with fuller detail was prohibited.

In literature, five hundred books written by women, residents in Illinois, thirteen magazines and twenty-seven newspapers edited by them were gathered together, and housed in a library,

Designed and decorated in the early renaissance style by Illinois women. Of the authors thus represented, one is a member of the Philosophical Society of London and of the International Congress of Orientalists and another of the National American Geographical Society, and among them is the editor and proprietor of the official court journal of the State of Illinois, "The Chicago Legal News."

The educational, philanthropic and professional work was necessarily shown in great part by means of statistics. These statistics are displayed in a large, hand-engrossed, bound book made entirely by women, and are also printed in pamphlet form for distribution. It is not claimed that these statistics by any means cover the ground, as a complete work of the kind would have required the labor of many individuals for many months, but it is believed that they are a valuable addition to present knowledge and are full of significant hints to the student of history and of political economy.

Students of history will also find much that is interesting in the relics exhibited pertaining to the early history of Illinois, and to the lives of its great heroes in later days, Lincoln and Grant. We have the portraits of the first governor of Illinois, Madrach Bond, and of his wife, and many articles of furniture and household adornment from Old Kaskaskia, the first capital of Illinois and, most memorable of all, the first church bell rung west of the Alleghanies, a bell presented by the King of France to the Mission of Kaskaskia in 1742. There are portraits of Grant and Lincoln and a large number of personal relics. In the historical exhibit are also many unique articles illustrating the handicraft of the pioneer women of Illinois. Space forbids their enumeration here, and also that of hundreds of special articles exhibited in other departments, and the interested reader is for anything like a full account referred to the official catalogue of the Illinois Woman's Exposition Board.

In science, an active exhibit in bacteriological laboratory work is made by an instructor in one of our leading universities. In entomology, scientific drawings are shown which challenge comparison with the best work of the kind. Taxidermy, botany (including marine algae) and geology are also represented.

In sculpture, the visitor is greeted by an ideal female figure, "Illinois Welcoming the Nations of the World." Other statues adorn the walls. There are a large number of carefully selected paintings and drawings, several of which have won high praise from artists of acknowledged ability. The frieze in the reception room illustrates the relation of women to the arts, and was painted in panels by ten Illinois woman artists. Worthily of notice in this room, also, is a cabinet of miniatures painted on ivory by one exhibitor. Among the artists are nine who have obtained the distinction of exhibiting in the Paris salons. A large part of the fine arts exhibit was received from the Palette Club of Chicago.

In ceramics there are almost 200 different specimens of work, many in wood carving, several in embossed and illuminated leather work, tables and chairs in pyrogravure (poker work in old-fashioned parlance) and a large collection of needle work of all kinds, showing how woman with her needle supplies many of the necessities of life and also contributes to the decorative beauty of her surroundings. The ecclesiastical embroideries and those of the Chicago Decorative Art Society especially attract the surprised attention of visitors. Much decorative work is shown as an object lesson in the woman's reception room, such as modelling, carving, designing and weaving, the entire room being to a large extent an exhibit of woman's work.

The department of photography is made notable by one exhibitor who obtained a diploma for distinguished excellence at the Vienna Exhibition in 1891. Another exhibitor shows carbon prints on porcelain. Book illustrations and designs crowd the space allotted to them. Two hundred and forty-nine inventions are shown ranging in character from sewing, cooking and nursing appliances, pertaining especially to the employment of women, to harvesters, harness attachments, car couplers, hay presses and other implements or processes for use in occupations in which women are seldom engaged.

Manufactures are shown by finished products from factories owned and managed entirely by women, and also by a series of one hundred and eight photographs showing women at work

with men in the factories, where the finished products are the result of their combined labor.

Woman's skill in the preserving and canning of fruit and the making of jelly is shown by choice examples.

The silk industry is exhibited from the beginning in the egg to the woven silk fabric.

The women farmers of the State show grain inferior to none even in the great Agricultural Building.

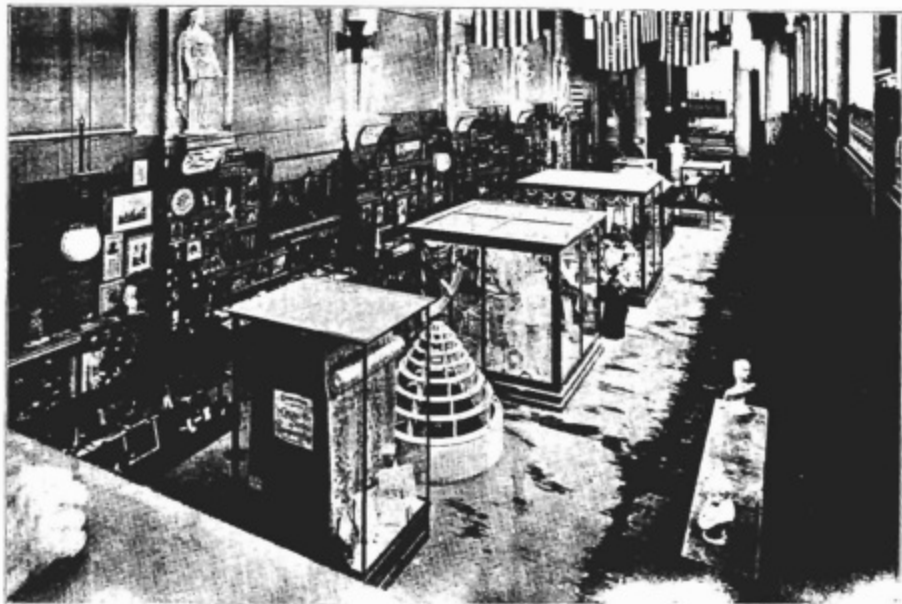
Scientific reproductions of fruit and vegetables are shown in wax.

The Woman's Relief Corps of the State has decorated the ceiling of the exhibit space with its flags and banners, and also displays the rosters of the different corps of the State.

There are several memorial volumes showing research in history and skill in the decorative making of books, as well as containing tributes to woman's industry and ability in many practical directions, not capable of material representation.

Throughout the whole exhibit of the industries of the women of Illinois, thus most cursorily outlined, the aim of the Illinois Woman's Exposition Board has been to show, first, the excellence of the work of every kind done by Illinois women; second, the best methods and the best results in the every-day affairs of life; third, the new avenues constantly opening by which woman may earn her livelihood or add to the sum of human happiness and wisdom.





WOLAN'S EXHIBIT.