“The Fair at Castle Garden,” 7 October 1851

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The Fair at Castle Garden

Yesterday’s glorious sun and bracing air, brought out hundreds to view the Exhibition at Castle Garden.

The Garden is rapidly filling with goods, and the Machinery is nearly ready to be put in operation. The accessions which are daily made to the number of entries, are, we are glad to see, of a substantial character; and the determination to exclude such articles as are of little moment, is faithfully carried out. As a natural consequence, the Fair loses a portion of its attraction for certain classes of the community who may doat on bed-quilts and embroidery; but the earnest man will find a satisfaction which he has not hitherto experienced in viewing the improvements of the year in the Mechanic and Useful Arts.

We notice a marked improvement this year, in the Daguerreotype art. The improvement is not only in the execution, but in the location of the pictures. Formerly, the specimens have been comparatively small, and badly placed; their effect was therefore lost, or, at best, greatly diminished. This year the Managers of the Fair have assigned the portraits to more suitable positions, and the excellence of the workmanship may be fully realized. The finish of the Daguerreotypes in general, seems to be better than ever, and there is nothing to complain of, as regards numbers. Among the specimens exhibited, those of Whitehurst are quite unrivalled for beauty of execution and delicacy of finish. The portraits of several distinguished personages are included in the number. Mr. Whitehurst merits the celebrity he has obtained; his gallery in Broadway is one of seven in different cities which are conducted with industry and success.

[End of text.]

EDITOR’S NOTES:
This event at Castle Garden was the 24th Annual Fair of the American Institute of the City of New-York, an association “devoted to the interests of agriculture, commerce, manufactures, and the arts.” Historical records of the Institute are now held by the New-York Historical Society.

Gold medals were awarded to the firm of Marcus A. & Samuel Root, 363 Broadway, “for best daguerreotypes” and to Charles C. Harrison, 85 Duane, “for best daguerreotype cameras.” (The mid-19th century American trade use of the word “camera” sometimes meant only the camera lens. This is true regarding Harrison.)
A list of individuals awarded premiums under the category “daguerreotypes” is in Transactions of the American Institute of the City of New-York for 1851 (Albany: Charles Van Benthuysen, 1852): 618-19. The category for daguerreotypes appears under the header, “Manufacturing and Mechanical Department.” Whitehurst appears in the list although with an erroneous spelling of his name:

J. H. Whitehouse, 349 Broadway, for third best daguerreotypes. Diploma.

1. http://dlib.nyu.edu/findingaids/html/nyhs/americaninst2_content.html#d4e536