

[*Extract from Director-General's Address to Judges, May 24, 1876.*]

“The method of initiating awards which we have adopted differs in some respects from that pursued in previous exhibitions. In place of the anonymous verdict of a jury, we have substituted the written opinion of a Judge. On this basis awards will carry the weight and guarantees due to individual personal character, ability, and attainments, and to this extent their reliability and value will be increased. It is not expected that you will shower awards indiscriminately upon the products in this vast collection. You may possibly find a large proportion in no way raised above the dead level, nor deserving of particular notice. The standard above which particular merit worthy of distinction begins is for you to determine. In this regard I have only to express the desire of the Centennial Commission, that you should do this with absolute freedom, and when you meet with a product which you consider worthy of an award, we desire you to say, in as few words as you may deem suitable, why you think so.

“This, gentlemen, is all we ask of you in the Departments of Awards. Opinions thus expressed will indicate the inherent and comparative merits, qualities, and adaptations of the products,—information which the public most desires.

“Elaborate general reports and voluminous essays, though of great value as sources of general information, give little aid in determining the reliable or intrinsic merits of particular, individual products.

“The regulations which have been published divide the work of awards into three parts:

“1st. The individual work of the Judges.

“2d. The collective work of the groups of Judges.

“3d. The final decisions of the United States Centennial Commission in conformity with the acts of Congress.

“Each award will thus pass three ordeals, which, doubtless, will be ample and satisfactory.”