

were not represented from as early dates among the resources of the Historical Department. In these days great attention is given by all well-conducted public journals, including those at our county seats and other inland towns, to market reports. But in former years, especially back of 1870, this work was either to a great degree neglected, or but indifferently performed. Fortunately, however, the journals named had always given intelligent and careful attention to their market reports. And now these old, long-neglected, dust-covered volumes yield up facts of living, vital interest. Their early editors were pronounced politicians—two of them in bitter opposition to the other—but their market reports were always correct and reliable, and no one at this day will question them. As in the instance named, so in scores of other directions, will the public journals of the past be consulted for facts of the highest historical importance.

ELIJAH SELLS.

Mr. John M. Davis, of Des Moines, presents in this number of *THE ANNALS*, his recollections of Hon. Elijah Sells, who served three terms (1856-61) as Secretary of State. He was also a member of the first Iowa Constitutional Convention (1844), and represented the counties of Muscatine, Johnson and Iowa, in the lower house of our State Legislature (1846-48). Mr. Sells was one of the most influential men our State has ever had in public life—a man of wide and varied intelligence, genial and cordial in his manners, blessed with “troops of friends,” a shrewd, far-seeing politician, possessing withal business habits and executive ability of a high order. He was a conscientious administrator, leaving a record for efficiency and integrity which has never been questioned. He was

one capable of taking the initiative in a new State, where so much was to be done in formulating legislation and establishing customs and precedents in government. Many useful laws still upon the statute books, or crystallized in the codes, were originated or introduced from older regions by Mr. Sells. He enjoyed the warm friendship and confidence of such distinguished men as James W. Grimes, James Harlan, George G. Wright, Ralph P. Lowe, James F. Wilson, Caleb Baldwin, and many others prominent in his day. He has resided many years at Salt Lake City, but is still well remembered in Iowa.

A WORD TO OUR FRIENDS.

There has come to be quite an accumulation of very excellent and valuable historical articles, written for THE ANNALS, in excess of our ability to publish them promptly. Then our little magazine, as a medium through which to reach the public, is rather slow, containing only eighty pages and appearing but four times a year. We are of course very glad to receive these kind favors, gratefully appreciating them as most valuable aid to the work of the Historical Department, and only regret our inability to publish them earlier. But for the historical purposes for which they are intended it will matter little whether they see the light now or some months hence. Sooner or later all will be given in these pages, and in most cases with one or more appropriate illustrations. We hope that this explanation will be accepted as satisfactory by the many excellent friends whose articles have not yet been printed. It is our intention that nothing which they have done in this direction shall be lost or forgotten.

Copyright of Annals of Iowa is the property of State of Iowa, by & through the State Historical Society of Iowa and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.