

PRESENTATION OF THE PORTRAIT OF EDWIN MANNING.

DES MOINES, IOWA, September 14, 1895.

MY DEAR SIR:—Largely through your active labors and influence, inspired thereto by a love of the State and a desire to preserve its valuable history, we have in your growing and much-prized Department, and other rooms of our beautiful Capitol, the likenesses of most, if not all our early governors and judges, those filling places in other executive departments, as well as eminent legislators and others. To-day, on behalf of his family and many friends, I ask you to accept the likeness of an old representative, not so much of official life, as of the largest business interests of our great State—a pioneer merchant, banker, and farmer, who has nobly and intelligently aided Iowa in her marvelous growth and development, and who, in turn, admits how much Iowa has done for him.

Edwin Manning, a native of Connecticut, almost eighty-six years of age, was a few years a resident of Pennsylvania, coming, however, to Iowa in 1837, settling in that oft-spoken of, "historic county, Van Buren," (and at Keosauqua), where he has since continuously resided, bringing up a large family, and more prominently connected, perhaps, with every material, educational, and religious interest of that county, if not of the south east and other parts of Iowa, than any other man now living. The only official position he ever held was Commissioner of the Des Moines River Improvement, (1856-9), and yet it is proper to say that, without his asking, his name has been more than once prominently mentioned in connection with local representative positions, and also for Governor and member of Congress. He, however, never sought nor desired political preferment, preferring the quiet of his excellent family and that business life for which he always had pre-eminent aptitude.

The life of Mr. Manning has been far from common. Starting a poor boy, for almost sixty years he has continued in the small place where he settled, and of which he was one of the proprietors, content to enjoy an elegant home, surrounded by old friends, going to his daily work at store, bank, or farm, often to each or all daily, working in all capacities most laboriously, giving liberally, and yet as a rule without the knowledge of any other than himself and good wife, to the poor, as also to churches and educational institutions, accumulating a fortune hardly equalled by any other in the state, content to be the leading business man of his locality, a fitting and accredited representative of the pioneer men of this great State. Such a man may not be entitled to wear medals, or have his merits heralded as a public official, or acquire prominence in politics, and yet is worthy of the highest place when we come to write our history. Simple and unostentatious in manners, he is a striking example that "potentates are not necessarily found in cabinets," but often rather in the humble and active walks of life. And hence the appropriateness of having this faithful portrait, made in

his old age, among those who labored in our upbuilding, and whose examples are worthy of imitation by those to succeed us. I therefore most respectfully ask you to accept and care for it. I am,

Yours very truly,

GEO. G. WRIGHT.

CHARLES ALDRICH, Esq.

The above letter by Ex-Chief Justice Wright was accompanied by a fine portrait in oil, from the easel of John Mulvany, of Hon. Edwin Manning. This valuable gift by Mr. Manning's family now hangs in the Historical Department.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THE EXPEDITIONS OF ZEBULON MONTGOMERY PIKE, To Headwaters of the Mississippi River, Through Louisiana Territory, and in New Spain, during the years 1805-6-7. A New Edition, now first reprinted in full from the original of 1810, with copious critical commentary, memoir of Pike, new map and other illustrations, and complete index, by Elliott Coues. New York; Francis P. Harper, 1895.

It will be remembered by our readers that Dr. Coues brought out in 1893, a superb edition of the Expedition of Lewis and Clark. The present work follows almost as a natural consequence. For the task of editing these great and quite unique records of early western explorations, no other man in this country is so well equipped. We have, however, heretofore spoken of his high qualifications for this work which has been a labor of love on his part. He has himself been over the ground traversed by our early explorers. But when he determined to prepare new editions of their works he again visited much of the same territory, becoming so intimately acquainted with their several routes that he was able to identify the precise localities of most of their camping places. Added to his extensive knowledge Dr. Coues entered upon his work in a spirit of the highest enthusiasm. If a point which he wished to establish was in any way obscure, he spared neither time, effort nor expense to learn the exact truth. He spent several weeks in 1894 in tracing out that intricate labyrinth known as the headwaters of the Mississippi—following the footsteps of Pike, up and around, until he reached the very source of the great Father of Waters—verifying and amplifying the records of that expedition as well as those of J. V. Brower, and other reliable explorers. Really, such painstaking editorial work is but seldom seen. It is so rare as to be altogether exceptional. The consequence is, that we now have editions of these early Travels to which it would seem that very little, if anything, can be added in the future. By extracts from original documents, references to many volumes of later date, among which were histories of Iowa counties, and copious notes of his own, he has more than doubled the text of the first editions. In many instances in which officers or soldiers are named he has recorded their history from their entry into the military service to the end of their lives, giving them due credit for their services to their country, thus keeping their memory green for all time. These volumes to casual examination might seem overburdened with annotations, but every note conveys information illustrative of the text, or adding to our knowledge of western life and history. "Pike's Expeditions" becomes quite an important Iowa book, from the fact that he traveled all the way by the Mississippi river, meeting parties of Indians, and visiting their camps or towns and recording his observations and experiences in advance of all other explorers. Upon all this the wide and exact knowledge of his present editor throws a flood

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.