

placed the Department under many obligations for kindly efforts and favors at Washington.

Hon. S. G. Matson, of Viola, Linn county, has presented many scarce and valuable Iowa books and documents, and has been most earnest and energetic in securing gifts from other people, of which we shall have something to say hereafter.

There are scores of other contributions of which we would be delighted to make mention, did time and space permit. Our object at this time is merely to name a few of the most noteworthy, and to show that the tide is finally coming in. It has for quite two generations tended in other directions, carrying away from Iowa much of the data for her own history, as well as the memorials of the races which preceded ours. That sort of thing has ceased. However much our State has lost in the past, the outlook is very encouraging for securing whatever remains.

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### PRESERVE THE HISTORIC PLACES.

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Every true American rejoices over the growing disposition of the present generation to preserve historic relics of great events. When the association was formed many years ago, by some patriotic ladies, for the purchase of Washington's old home at Mt. Vernon, and the preservation unchanged of the plantation and modest house where the great American General and President lived and died, they did a most commendable work, which has served as an example for others who have the public spirit to inaugurate similar movements.

The general efforts of late years, on part of the survivors of the great Battle of Gettysburg, to erect monuments, tablets and statues, at different points of interest where heroic struggles took place during the three days of terrific fighting on that historic field, meets with general approval. In this way there can be perpetuated for all future generations a most graphic tableau of the hundreds of thrilling episodes of that gigantic battle between American soldiers. As ages pass

away and the great conflict between freedom and slavery is known only in history, every monument on the field of Gettysburg will bear witness to the valor of American volunteer soldiers, and become a sacred memento of the sublime courage and loyalty of the thousands who there gave their lives as martyrs to their convictions of duty.

Recently the Grand Army of the Republic, of Georgia, has purchased the forty acres upon which, in 1864, was enacted, on one side, the most fiendish inhumanity that ever disgraced a civilized government, and on the other the most heroic endurance of torture and lingering death of thousands of martyrs who ever gave their lives for a sacred cause. The very name of Andersonville is associated with horrors so dark and demon-like that it becomes a synonym for cruelty in its most ghastly form. The thirteen thousand graves of victims of the Andersonville stockade are each marked with a marble slab to perpetuate the name and memory of the heroic dead who perished in that "hell upon earth." The Government has beautified the sacred ground with well kept lawns and grateful shade above the graves of its immortal martyrs, who sleep calmly now, tenderly watched over by trusted officials. The old flag they followed in the weary march, and the bloody charge on many a battle field, waves its folds unceasingly from a lofty staff in the lonely cemetery. But now the sloping hill-sides where they were once herded like cattle, unsheltered from winter's fierce storms and summer's tropical heat, until life was slowly tortured out of their emaciated bodies, is to be rescued from the neglect of a quarter of a century, and forevermore held sacred to their memory by loyal comrades and grateful countrymen. The field once inclosed within the old stockade will be visited in all the years to come by thousands of the descendants of those who were victims of its horrors, and others who revere their memory; and it is well that it should be rescued from the careless cotton and corn planters, and beautified as a tribute to the heroes whose unparalleled sufferings have made it sacred ground.

There is a growing sentiment among thoughtful people in favor of marking historic localities and buildings by monu-

ments or tablets, with appropriate inscriptions to preserve the record, and connect it permanently with the spot thus made historic.

A memorial association has recently been organized at the National Capital with Chief Justice Fuller at its head, having for its purpose the preservation of historic buildings in Washington, which have been the scene of memorable events, and inscribing upon them in durable tablets, a brief record of the facts which have made them of ever-increasing interest to the people. Such tablets will tend to cultivate a historic spirit among our people and inspire a reverence for the memory of the founders and leaders in the formation and development of our republic.

Our own State has been sadly deficient in preserving its history, marking the localities made memorable by its heroic and historic achievements. But two or three of its ninety-nine counties bear the names of notable Iowa men, and very few of its cities or chief towns; while scores of each have been named for Indian chiefs, national and foreign notables, and cities so often duplicated in name as to become tiresome from long-continued repetition. One tablet in the Court House of Hamilton county, secured by the efforts of one man, is all that commemorates the achievements of as heroic a little band of volunteers as ever risked their lives to save other lives, and bury the victims of a massacre as horrible as that of Wyoming or Deerfield.

A few localities have erected monuments or tablets in honor of soldiers of the Union Army, whose graves were thickly strewn in every village and country cemetery in Iowa thirty years ago. No memorial halls have been built in which to preserve the relics of the greatest of wars and the records of unsurpassed valor and sacrifice. It will be one of the missions of the ANNALS OF IOWA to urge upon the living the sacred duty of commemorating the virtues, the achievements and heroisms of the dead. We have many historic localities and buildings in so new a State as Iowa; let us mark them with suitable monuments and tablets that will in all time to come enlighten

the growing generations, and stimulate the acquirement of historic knowledge.

A few venerable forms, here and there, are the sole survivors of the earliest pioneers, who pressed close upon the retreating footsteps of the Iowa Indians, as they looked for the last time upon their "beautiful land" of virgin prairie, sheltering groves and winding rivers.

The present generation of young men and women, who are now taking the places of trust and responsibility in society, business and government, vacated by the pioneers, must acquire most of their knowledge of the first settlers who possessed the State in its original wildness, their privations, their heroisms and their achievements, from history. They can only contribute to the work of preserving the records of the past by helping to rescue all that is not lost beyond recovery. No citizen of Iowa need fear to know all that has gone before his recollection, for it is an unwritten record of the fortitude, the energy, the wisdom and the virtues of a generation that laid the foundations upon which one of the greatest States of the Union is growing up. State pride, and respect for the pioneers who "buildded so wisely and so well," should impel the present generation to perpetuate the memory of their notable achievements, and mark with enduring tablets and monuments the historic places.

B. F. G.

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It is impossible for the citizens of prosperous Iowa of to-day to realize the privations of the early settlers who came to make homes on the vast wild prairies that stretched from the Mississippi to the Missouri fifty years ago. The dearth of money even among the most thrifty farmers in those days was almost absolute, and the law-makers in territorial times often started on horseback for the Capital without money to pay traveling expenses. "The Search for a Shilling," so graphically told in another place by Allie M. Letts, is a most touching realistic picture of frontier life in Iowa in the "forties," and shows how bravely the women and children met and endured the countless privations.

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