

ANNALS OF IOWA.

EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT.

THE ORIGIN OF A FAMOUS INSCRIPTION.

When Hon. John F. Lacey, M. C., made his speech from the east front of our Capitol on Battle Flag Day, August 10, 1894, he quoted the motto chiseled on the stone contributed by Iowa to the Washington Monument. Hon. George G. Wright, of Des Moines, who had something to do with the inception of this inscription, was of the impression that it was in some respect different from the version in Mr. Lacey's speech, and accordingly wrote that gentleman in regard to it. The following is Mr. Lacey's reply:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, U. S., }
WASHINGTON, D. C., August 16, 1894. }

DEAR FRIEND: Your letter in regard to the inscription on the Washington Monument is at hand. I went to the monument this morning and copied the inscription. It is as follows:

"Iowa.

Her affections, like the rivers of her borders, flow to an inseparable Union."

This is more compact than my quotation:

"Iowa.

The affections of her people, like the rivers of her borders, flow on to an inseparable Union."

I quoted it from memory and it was so strongly impressed on my boyish memory at the time that I first saw it, at the time of its adoption, that it never occurred to me that I might not remember it with strict accuracy. I am in doubt which one I would choose, if I were now selecting it for the stone cutter. There is also a Masonic stone cut out of a dark granite boulder with the following inscription:

"Grand Lodge of
Iowa,
A. F. & A. M.
1876."

With my kindest regards,

Yours truly,

JOHN F. LACEY.

Hon. George G. Wright.

We have been used to seeing this motto quoted as Con-

gressman Lacey gave it in his speech, but everybody must stand corrected now that he has seen and copied it from the Iowa stone.

By reference to the Senate Journal of the Third General Assembly of this State, pages 23 and 24, we learn that Mr. Josiah H. Bonney reported as follows to Governor Ansel Briggs:

IOWA CITY, Nov. 30, 1850.

To His Excellency, Ansel Briggs, Governor of Iowa.

The undersigned, appointed by your Excellency an agent to procure a suitable block of marble or other stone, to be furnished by the State of Iowa, for the Washington Monument, would respectfully report—That after having examined all the quarries in the State now worked, from which it was supposed such stone could be obtained, succeeded in procuring a block of the proper dimensions from the quarry of Moses B. Root, of Van Buren County.

The stone is now at the shop of Mr. Root, in Keosauqua, blocked out of the proper size and shape, ready to be finished in such manner and with such inscription thereon, as the General Assembly may direct.

Mr. Root looks to the liberality of the General Assembly for such compensation for his services as they may think him entitled.

I have the honor to be

Your Excellency's obt' serv't.

JOSIAH H. BONNEY.

This letter was transmitted to the Senate with the Governor's message. On the 14th of December Senator George G. Wright moved,

"That so much of the Governor's message, and accompanying documents, as relate to the procuring of a block of marble, for the Washington Monument, be referred to a committee of three, to act with a similar committee to be appointed on the part of the House."

This motion was agreed to, and Senators Wright, Shields and Espy, were appointed as such committee.

On the 20th of December we find the following final reference to this stone and its inscription:

Mr. Wright, from the select committee to whom was referred that portion of the Governor's message relating to the block of marble for the Washington Monument, made the following report:

That they have been informed and understand that nothing is wanting to the completion of the marble block, but a suitable inscription to be placed thereon, and that the workman has been waiting directions upon this subject. To select one that would appropriately designate our locality and unchangeable fidelity to the Union, has been our great object.

Your committee, after a careful examination, would recommend the following:

"IOWA.

Her affections, like the rivers of her borders, flow to an inseparable Union."

Your committee further recommend the adoption of the following resolution:

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate and the Chief Clerk of the House, jointly forward a copy of this report to M. B. Root, Keosauqua, Iowa, with instructions to place the inscription above recommended upon the block of marble by him prepared for the Washington Monument.

All of which is submitted.

On motion of Mr. Lewis, the senate concurred in the report of the committee.

Judge Wright informs us that while this matter was pending in the hands of the committee, he invited several gentlemen to suggest inscriptions for the Iowa stone, and that a large number were in consequence received and considered. Among others, the late Lieutenant Governor Enoch W. Eastman furnished three or four, including the one which was finally adopted. Judge Wright, however, is of the impression that the inscription as furnished by Governor Eastman was identical, or nearly so, with the quotation made by Mr. Lacey, but, owing to the requirements of space the wording was cut down as it now stands. For some time after the newspapers attributed the inscription to Judge Wright, an impression which he took every opportunity to counteract. The credit, and the sole credit as he informs us, of the thought embodied in this inscription, is due to Lieutenant Governor Eastman. Such facts are very apt to be forgotten in the lapse of years, where the history of a great State has not been written, and it is well to revert to original sources for correct information, as we have done in this instance.

WHY WE PRIZED THE OTTOMAN.

When the writer settled in Webster City, the bright and vigorous capital of Hamilton County, away back in 1857, the furniture dealer had not made his advent into that then altogether primitive region. Whatever was needed in the way of furniture had to be made in a rough sort of way, or "wag-

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