

ANNALS OF IOWA.

EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT.

CLOSE OF VOLUME VI.

This number of THE ANNALS completes the twelfth year of its publication under my supervision. The issues now fill six biennial volumes of nearly 4,000 pages. I trust that I may be indulged in a brief retrospect of my labors as its editor, and of the work it has aided in accomplishing. Up to the time the Historical Department was organized in 1892, very little sentiment existed in our State favoring the preservation of the materials of Iowa history. This had been urged for many years by Hon. Theodore S. Parvin, Mrs. Ada E. North, Capt. W. H. Johnston, the writer, and others, in the public press. But progress for a long time was very slow. The work was taken up in THE ANNALS from the first. Articles detailing the experiences of eye-witnesses in our early days were solicited and published, with biographical sketches and portraits of men prominent in those times. It was at first quite difficult to procure such articles as were desired, and for awhile even the best that could be obtained attracted little attention. But gradually a spirit of genuine appreciation has been awakened, we now have a wide circle of deeply interested readers, and many things are copied from our pages into the columns of leading Iowa journals. We are of the opinion that writers in the future will look to these pages for many points of Iowa history. The papers of Governors C. C. Carpenter and Wm. Larrabee, Gen. G. M. Dodge, Hon. John A. Kasson, Rev. Dr. William Salter, Judge George G. Wright, Maj. S. H. M. Byers, Prof. F. I. Herriott, Major Hoyt Sherman, George C. Duffield, Tacitus Hussey, Col. C. H. Gatch and many others, contain a world of precious information to be found nowhere else. He who writes in the future of the "Spirit Lake Expedition," of our "Forts and Encampments" in territorial times, of "Steamboating on the Des Moines River," of the "Great Flood of 1851," of the long and acrimonious struggle to build the new capitol of Iowa, of the pushing of settlements into newer regions, the operations of the claim clubs in land-office days, the "war" between Iowa and Missouri over the boundary question, and scores of other important episodes in our history will come to these pages for facts and suggestions. I cannot but regard THE ANNALS as the most important auxiliary in founding the Historical Department of Iowa, now so grandly recognized in the erection of the magnificent edifice where the State's varied treasures of literature and art will be housed. It has brought to the Department exchanges with valuable historical periodicals throughout the United States, Canada, and to some extent abroad. It has also brought us ex-

changes with 300 Iowa journals, which are placed in substantial bindings at regular intervals, the volumes now numbering over 3,000. It is heartily appreciated in the libraries of our cities, colleges and schools, as well as by an increasing number of intelligent people. There is a constant demand for copies of the work for permanent preservation. I have simply aimed to present in comely, old-fashioned style, in plain printing, with no attempt at ornamentation, as much of the materials of Iowa history as I have been able to obtain. Beyond this main purpose, and the general influence which such a periodical ought legitimately to wield, I have had no ambition. The volumes have gone to the public upon their own merits. Their kindly reception by the intelligent people of Iowa is the amplest reward that one could covet. If health and life are spared me, I hope to add other volumes to this series.

CHARLES ALDRICH,
Editor of THE ANNALS OF IOWA.

THE IOWA MOUNDS.

First and last there has been, if not exploration, at least a great deal of digging into the Iowa mounds and ancient Indian graves. Aside from the work of the Davenport Academy of Sciences, and of a very few individual explorers here and there, these disturbances of the soil had better never have been made. Such work should be performed comprehensively, under intelligent, systematic direction, and its results carefully saved for our schools and museums. There should be a prohibition upon that sort of exploration which would carry away to other States, or to private collections, such discoveries as may chance to be made. Our Iowa museums and schools have need of all the materials that can be procured from these sources. It is a matter of profound regret that some of the most precious finds thus far made in this State have been taken beyond its borders for the benefit of other communities. But there has not only been no means of preventing such results, but explorations are expensive, and those who could perform the work in a proper manner have not been supplied with the requisite funds.

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