

the proposition was renewed and passed. It is now incorporated in the new Code of Iowa, providing for the publication of twelve hundred copies of the proceedings of each reunion. At the proper time, and possibly in the belief that the proceedings would not be published in pamphlet form, the Secretary failed to put them into proper shape for publication. The consequence was, that when the legislature finally provided for their publication the copy was still unprepared and its materials scattered. At this juncture the matter was taken up by Hon. B. F. Gue, the present Secretary of the Association, who proceeded to collect the necessary data for the pamphlet, so far as it can be accomplished at this late day. It is believed that the more important materials were gathered up, though at least one of the addresses was lost, and the general proceedings doubtless very much abridged. Mr. Gue is entitled to the credit of putting them into the best possible shape, though some of the important and highly interesting features of the preceding volumes are necessarily omitted. The pamphlet will possess especial value from the fact that it presents in full the able and interesting, as well as historically valuable, address of Hon. John A. Kasson upon the exciting struggle for the erection of the State capitol. The addresses of Hon. Elijah Sells and Hon. Washington Galland are also interesting and possessed of much historic value, as well as the tributes to the memory of U. S. Senator James F. Wilson, Judge George G. Wright and Gen. Ed Wright. It is to be regretted that the volume is not as full and complete as its predecessors, but that is due to the causes we have set forth. Provision having been made for their regular publication, it is believed that future volumes will equal in interest and value those of 1886-94.

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#### THE PASSENGER-PIGEON.

Forty years ago, when the writer came to Iowa, and for several years thereafter, Passenger-pigeons were often seen in this region in immense flocks. In fact, there were points in our State where these birds nested—"pigeon-roosts," as

they were familiarly called. These birds existed in veritable myriads, migrating in vast flocks, which sometimes reached across from the eastern to the western horizon. Their habitat extended from the Atlantic to the eastern base of the Rocky Mountains, and from the Southern States to the 62d parallel of north latitude. Alexander Wilson once observed a flight of these birds near Frankfort, Kentucky, which was several strata deep, extending from right to left as far as the eye could reach. He timed the flight with his watch for an hour, and the living torrent was still rushing on. Three hours later the flight still continued with no apparent diminution. Wilson estimated this great aggregation at not less than two thousand two hundred millions of birds! Persons whose memories run back thirty or forty years will recollect how some of these great flocks almost darkened the sky. But for many years it has been understood that this species was practically extinct—exterminated by men who killed them at their nesting-places, or decoyed them into nets during their migrations. The defenseless young pigeons were also destroyed in untold thousands by predatory animals and birds. Recently, however, we have received letters from parties who insist that the Passenger-pigeon still continues to visit certain western localities. Doubting the truth of these statements, the writer addressed a letter to Prof. Robert Ridgway, Curator of Birds in the National Museum at Washington, D. C., who is one of the foremost living authorities upon all questions relating to ornithology. His reply is given elsewhere. It will be inferred from what he says, that while the species is certainly extinct over much the greater part of the country which it once inhabited, there are possibly regions where it still exists. Whether this is true or not, the apparent wiping out of a species so numerous throughout so wide an area and at so recent a period, is one of the startling facts of natural history.

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