

FORMATIVE INFLUENCES IN EARLY IOWA.

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PERSONAL SACRIFICE IN THE FOUNDING OF SCHOOLS.

If it be true that "money talks", there is in the history of education in Iowa, a dollar that is conspicuously vocal. The romance of Grinnell (at first called Iowa) College presents a primitive scene in which this dollar spoke volumes. At a meeting of the Congregational Association at Davenport in 1846, the discussion by word of mouth had reached its limit, and Rev. James J. Hill,¹ perceiving this, walked forward to the Moderator's table, and laying down a silver dollar, asked that he might make the first contribution toward the erection of a college in Iowa.

Just as with Dante it is no great disadvantage that so little is known of his life since the quality of his soul and the character of his genius was stamped on what we do know of him, so a single act such as that of this home missionary on a salary of four hundred dollars a year giving of his scanty store toward the cause of education, will reveal the whole character of the man. This one act raised him to a permanent niche in the Iowa Hall of Fame.

When money talks and echoes on while two generations rise and fall, then bids fair to go on forever, it is an historical matter.

The organization of Grinnell College was one of the strong and typical influences in the development of early Iowa. Some doubt has been expressed as to who made the initial subscription to the college and how. Upon this point I wish to present a record.

¹James J. Hill was born at Phippsburg, Maine, May 29, 1815, and died at Fayette, Iowa, October 23, 1870.

Dr. George F. Magoun,² first President of Grinnell College, and officially related to it when it was located in Davenport, wrote me:

Your father laid upon the table of the Moderator of the Association, after debate, the first silver dollar given for the college, saying: "Mr. Moderator, we have talked college long enough; it is time to begin to give and make sacrifices for it. The time has come to act for the creation of a college in Iowa. I will make my first contribution now," and laid a silver dollar on the table. The rest of the Association followed suit, but that silver dollar of his—how your mother loved to remember it!—was the first foundation in gifts for the college.

In his standard treatise on seed sowing in Iowa, published a score of years ago, while yet many witnesses of the occurrence were still alive, this same historian states:

At a meeting held June, 1846, * * * Rev. James J. Hill, observing that the time had come to give as well as consult, had asked the privilege of being first donor to the college, and laid a silver dollar upon the Chairman's table.³

Dr. A. B. Robbins was one of the originals in everything that pertained to the college. The Articles of Incorporation as recorded were in his handwriting. He was chairman of the board of trustees for twenty years. He also has affirmed to me that the statement of President Magoun was authentic. In his historical papers in my keeping he repeats the statement, as for instance in his reference to "big brother Hill" who gave "that dollar, the first toward the endowment of the first Iowa college".⁴

Dr. William Salter and Dr. Ephraim Adams, two apostles of education in Iowa, have "taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, as they from the beginning were eye witnesses and ministers of the word and had perfect understanding of all things" in which they were participants.

²George F. Magoun was a brother-in-law of J. J. Hill and was familiar with the Hill family history. He visited a week in the earliest of Rev. Hill's Iowa homes soon after the foundation of the college.

³Magoun's *Asa Turner and His Times*, page 250.

⁴*The Commemoration of Fifty Years' Pastorate of Dr. Salter*, page 43.

Speaking of Rev. Erastus Ripley and Rev. J. J. Hill, Dr. Salter said:

Both held an honored place in the work of founding Iowa College. Mr. Ripley was the best classical scholar among us, and Mr. Hill contributed the first dollar to its foundation.⁵

The record of the regular meeting of the board of trustees of Iowa College, July 6, 1886, officially signed by the secretary, memorializes "the Rev. J. J. Hill, the donor of the first dollar to Iowa College."

Dr. Ephraim Adams, who wrote the standard history of the Iowa Band, refers to Mr. Hill as "the one who gave the first dollar to the College."⁶ In his address of acceptance of a picture of Rev. Hill for the library at a commencement a quarter of a century ago, in the presence of other original trustees who knew of the fact, as also in his address at the next commencement, Dr. Adams refers again to "that first dollar given by our lamented Brother Hill" and to "the Board of Trustees first elected on the tenth of June, 1846."⁷

The removal of the college from Davenport to the highest ground between the two great rivers brought different conditions. In the new contingent of trustees Hon. J. B. Grinnell was the most conspicuous character. He continued a trustee for thirty years, and leaves this record: "Rev. J. J. Hill of the Iowa Band put the first dollar in the treasury."⁸

The lamented Dr. Leonard F. Parker, specialist in history and distinguished educator in the college at Grinnell, expressed in an address on "The Founders of the College" at the Jubilee exercises, June, 1898, this opinion:

Iowa College was founded when James Jeremiah Hill laid his dollar on the table of the Congregational Association (the first dollar ever given for Iowa College) and said: "Now appoint a committee to take care of it." That committee was the first board of trustees.

⁵*Old People's Psalm*, page 12.

⁶*The Iowa Band*, page 125.

⁷*Inauguration of President Gates*, pages 6-7.

⁸*Men and Events of Forty Years*, page 326.

J. H. T. Main, President of the college, says:

The financial history of Iowa College began when Rev. J. J. Hill, throwing a large silver dollar on the table, said, "I give one dollar for the foundation of a Christian college in Iowa."⁹

Dr. Truman O. Douglass, an authority on early ecclesiastical history in Iowa, reviews the planting time of churches and colleges, and thus awards the honor: "The Rev. J. J. Hill who gave the first dollar to Grinnell College was the founder of seven churches."¹⁰

Entirely consistent was the reply of the lamented Dr. E. W. Clark, one of the most exact and useful of all trustees, to a question in the *Grinnell Herald* of November 29, 1910. A year's subscription had been offered to the person first correctly answering ten questions of which the last was as to who laid the foundation of Iowa College. Dr. Clark's response was:

Daniel Lane, Harvey Adams, Erastus Ripley, Horace Hutchinson, Alden B. Robbins, William Salter, Edwin Turner, Benj. Spaulding, James J. Hill, E. Alden, Jr., and Ephraim Adams, known as the Iowa Band, James J. Hill giving the first dollar for foundation.¹¹

Alluding to the incident, Dr. Lucius O. Baird, District Secretary of the American Missionary Association, says:

Again the history of Harvard with its pewter plates and Yale with its books repeated itself, and the Puritan spirit had a local habitation and a name in the rich commonwealth of Iowa, when Dr. James J. Hill put down on the table one dollar to found this college of Christian education.¹²

The same fact is implied in the Blue Book, Grinnell College, 1898, page 13:

The first dollar to Iowa College was a large one, a silver one. It was as good as gold, when any one from that source was exceedingly significant and when its value was felt by two. It came from the hand of Rev. J. J. Hill.

⁹*Iowa Band and Iowa College.*

¹⁰*Pilgrims of Iowa*, pages 84, 217.

¹¹*Grinnell Herald*, Dec. 6, 1910.

¹²James L. Hill, the author of this article, a son of Dr. James J. Hill, was born at Garnaville, Iowa. Under the impulse gained from his father, James L. Hill gave the first dollar to found Yankton College, Dakota. See *The Advance*, May 5, 1881, page 281.—Editor.

Also in "Record of Fifty Years," Congregational Church, Grinnell:

He endured all heroically, wrought himself into several churches, gave Iowa College its first dollar.

It has been often observed in the great characters of history that they commonly act their part under a sense of presentiment of the greatness of their mission. The world likes a man who does things. This act was just suited to the magic of the moment and to the spirit and purpose of the meeting. It struck the popular ear and caught a quick response from a vibrant auditory. Those of us who have often seen all of the men who were then known to be present, think of them as we last saw them. But, no, this was before we were born, and all the sharers in the event were distinctly young.

Far down the gallery of College History hangs another picture. It is a Dubuque scene. Only young women are delineated. It is at a meeting of the General Association of Iowa and in the second largest church in the State. The telegraph had just demonstrated its practicability the year the "Immortal Eleven" went to Iowa. Bridges, railroads and telephones were lacking, but it was said to be worth a year of toil to go up to this feast of fellowship. The college was the theme. Great feeling was kindled. Hearts flowed together. We read:

The conference on Monday morning was distinguished by the warm flow of sympathy and affection, a high tone of spirituality and the expression of the most earnest desire to do good. The wives, also, of the ministers, anxious to share in the enterprise of founding the college, resolved to raise one hundred dollars out of their own resources, and seventy dollars were subscribed by fourteen who were present.¹³

At this meeting in connection with her gift to the college, the wife of J. J. Hill, who died at the age of twenty-eight years, uttered the words that have become somewhat celebrated and which were inscribed on her monument in the Hazelwood cemetery at Grinnell: "Somebody must be built into these foundations."

¹³*Minutes*, 1850, page 62.

Dr. John C. Holbrook referring to the incident which occurred in his church at Dubuque, says, "There was a pledge of ten dollars each", whereas we find the sum of seventy dollars was subscribed by fourteen who were present."¹⁴ But Dr. Holbrook was writing from memory, in California, when more than ninety years of age.

The college, it will be seen, grew out of the church as the waters of Ezekiel's vision flowed out of the sanctuary. We are not to think that the men who shaped the beginnings and planted the small seed made the history. It is the history that made the men. The first gift in point of size was negligible in quantity. It became important only by later bestowals. The increase of that first dollar at compound interest would amount in less than two hundred and forty years to more than two and a half million dollars. But this vast amount will be needed before the expiration of that time.

The volume of the history of Grinnell College is produced by the confluence of two streams. Let me quickly trace them both.

The first audible expression ever made touching the college was in 1842, in a conversation between Asa Turner and Julius A. Reed. In 1844, Father Turner was sent East to raise \$30,000. to be invested in land for the endowment of the college. This project originated with Julius A. Reed, who was the Mr. Worldy-Wise-Man in the progress of those pilgrims who had come to Iowa. He had such sagacity that he read opportunities which were a sealed book to others. That was not foresight. There is no such thing. It was insight. All so-called 'foresight is insight. Dr. Reed was apt to regard poverty as at least half a crime. Without a reduction of his usefulness as home missionary superintendent, he came to affluence and the ownership of a bank, but in that early experience in Boston his whole scheme was mercilessly rejected because ministers were generally bad business men and the project savored of speculation.

¹⁴*Recollections of a Nonagenarian*, page 77.

The on-looker today observes the momentum of Grinnell College. It comes from the fact too, as we shall see, that it takes its rise on high ground, where certain wise men from the East followed the star. They heard the future calling to them, like Joan of Arc, "Up, out and away." When the land south of the Caribbean Sea was believed to be surrounded by water, the Orinoco river was sighted, but the discoverers exclaimed, "Such a river can never have its rise in an island." When the population was sparse in Massachusetts and the people were poor, and when they had not more than twenty beginnings of towns and not thirty houses in Boston, our fathers in New England said that they "could not subsist without a college." and Tyler says in his "History of American Literature" that only six years after John Winthrop arrived in Salem harbor, the people of Massachusetts, while yet the tree stumps were scarcely weather-brown in their harvest fields, made arrangements by which their young men could enter at once upon the study of Aristotle and Thucydides, of Horace and Tacitus and the Hebrew Bible. Their "youth were not put to travel for learning, but had the Muses at their doors." This was also the "Iowa Idea."

The class of 1843 in the Theological Seminary at Andover, Mass. contained all the members of the Iowa Band, of which Rev. J. J. Hill acted as scribe, and for which he conducted much of the correspondence about going to Iowa. It was about to graduate. On the evening of September 1st before their graduation on the 5th, they were invited to the home of Samuel Farrar, the old treasurer of the Seminary and of Phillips Academy. He felt deeply the importance of planting early a college as well as churches in the new Territory of Iowa and created this occasion to impress upon them their duty in the matter. He gave to each of them a copy of the constitution and by-laws of Phillips Academy, which became the model of the work they did soon after they reached Iowa. We have seen that the Articles of Incorporation of the college were in the hand-writing of A. B. Robbins of Muscatine, who is known to have been present at the meeting at Squire Farrar's, and Robbin's copy of the Phillips Academy constitution

and by-laws, old fashioned and curious, is preserved among his papers. So it is proved that this rill which we have been threading to its source had its rise among the hills of Massachusetts.

There is abundant evidence that the Band came to Iowa with their plans fully perfected. They had the purpose of planting a good permanent church by each working individually, and of building a college by their collective labor. In view of later tendency in many places where once co-education prevailed, toward the segregation of the sexes, it is interesting to note that Grinnell College was at first exclusively for men. Dr. Magoun, a trustee of the college and pastor at Davenport, reports July 6th, 1857, ten years after its beginning, and fifteen years after its verbal inception, "The committee are prepared to recommend a plan, immediately practicable, for a female department which the professors desire put into operation."

THE LECTURE SYSTEM.

My next two chapters in the genesis of Iowa treat of certain universities which gave no degrees but which were efficient in the early development of State feeling and of public sentiment on two great reforms. An agency which filled a conspicuous office in the generating of general intelligence and the preparation of the budding community for later results, was the institution of the Lecture System. It brought together the people of different faiths, unified them socially, gave them a home-like feeling in the State, and imparted just the tonic power necessary to the highest development of character and early civilization. "The founders and first fathers of States are entitled to the highest rank," says Bacon, and the order of his arrangement of the degrees of sovereign honors when applied to the stages of the evolution of Iowa, so accords with the exact fact that his prophetic insight seems like inspiration. Freely translated, we find, in the first place, the founders of States. In the second, law-givers, sometimes called the second founders. In the third, those who (by the Black Hawk War) delivered the country, and in the last come

those who make the times good wherein to live. This is a fine scale of honor and gives the fathers in Iowa a true and just historic position. With human nature as it is, it would not be possible for us to understand history disconnected from individuals. Jewett, the great teacher and scholar of Oxford, said, "We shall come in future to teach almost entirely by biography," and this accords with the dictum of Emerson that there is no history, only biography. And so I approach the matter from the biographical side.

The large manuscript record-books kept by Rev. J. J. Hill and by his early ministerial associates, describe with much minuteness the labor, expense and enterprise which were applied to the lecture system that was so largely used in stimulating good thought, good feeling and a good purpose among the pioneers in the new Territory. In the abundant memorabilia left by these men are many topics on which they lectured, or planned to prepare or secure lectures. Here are a very few: "The Education of the Practical Man," "Nature and Human Nature," "The Man of One Idea," "The Relation of Moses to Republican Institutions," "The Philosophy of Home Life," "The State of the Country and Its True Remedy," "The Curse of Slavery," "The Cause and Cure of Our National Troubles," "The Employment of Time," "Heroes and Heroines of History." Dr. A. B. Robbins of Muscatine also leaves us a large record-book devoted entirely to memoranda touching lectures and the organization of effective courses. He gives dates, speakers, plans and programs. He prepared a lecture on the "Puritans and Pilgrims," in which he took the ground that the Pilgrim is really a character rather than a man of any particular descent.

Acceptable talent with burning themes was not lacking. Gen. J. D. Cox says that whole theological classes spent their vacation lecturing, and slavery, which was the absorbing topic of the time, was rarely absent from their thought or speech. In each country hamlet was a platform where the politics of the country took shape, and where were formed and instructed the minds of the men who became delegates to nom-

inating conventions, and where was created the public sentiment which soon began to find its echo in Congress. Each autumn men swarmed from the college halls and scattered westward, always agitating reform. It bubbled from their lips as naturally as their breath and they could not refrain from it. I unhesitatingly assert that there is hardly a township in the North—west of the Alleghanies, in which this sort of propaganda was not easily recognizable.

Allusion to this is made not so much on account of its bearing on the removal of that relic of the dark ages, as to disclose the power in the lecture system of which in Iowa the minister and churches usually were the originators, and which did much to mould society and was never lacking in life and force.

The history of eloquence like that of liberty, its companion, harks back in Iowa to the palmy days of the lecture system, in which were being educated the future soldiers and electors.

The prevalence and exaltation later of schools, with well educated, well paid teachers, often from other communities than those in which they sought employment; of daily papers, easy travel, and the wherewithal to pay the fares; and of the rural telephone, make almost unimaginable that condition of things which early made lecturers so attractive and so welcome. We will have to "orient" ourselves to measure the pristine potency of this beneficent institution. The telegraph's first message was not sent until 1844, and without a railroad a far from home feeling was universal. The men were chiefly homesteaders, limited by necessity to one locality, and easily induced to try to make something of it. They lived on farms they owned or hoped to own, and so their first training was toward independence. Many of the strong individualities of Iowa people, politically and otherwise, are due directly to this form of free life. It is easy to see how the earlier history of the State determined its later expression and character. The work of the farmers was varied. Each handled an entire business and not a small part of one, as is so much the case in other occupations. With a few rational

and simple diversions rather than with artificial and highly seasoned amusements, they were in a way to appreciate and to actually develop a normal and well-rounded life. But most of all they had a family life which was an inestimable boon to boys who, unlike those in great cities, took early lessons in industry, developed slowly, and matured symmetrically.

In the lectures partisan politics and sectarian matter were by tacit understanding carefully eschewed, but when it came to temperance, the lecturers let slip the dogs of war.

The first remembrance that I have of Mr. Hill in any public appearance was when he was put forward for a week-night lecture on the Maine Liquor Law. Hailing from that State, his whole heart engaged in opposing the saloon, and he, a big man, at least physically, put his whole weight against it. Reports to the Home Missionary Society, the organization which chiefly sent the earliest ministers into Iowa, abound in references to the good effects of the institution we are considering, as related to temperance.

Iowa's earliest and rather ultra record on slavery and temperance is directly traceable to this agency. Daniel Webster, then living, introduced a style of oratory which was not only distinctive but really new in the literature of the world, which we may call simply patriotic. The lecturers were somewhat inflamed by it. To this can be traced something of the ardent temper of Iowa people at the beginning of the Civil war, where the proportion of enlistments and display of devotion to the country were proportionately greater in the churches than anywhere else.

The local minister would with much labor prepare a lecture on some matter with which he was conversant, and such topics as these were used: "Self-knowledge," "Perils of the Great Republic," "Heroes and What Made Them So." He would then make up a full course of lectures by exchanging with other ministers, and thus bring into town fresh genius, new faces, unusual themes. Home talent was impressed and developed. Men with good gifts would work for two or three years on a lecture to be given for the delectation of the minds of neighbors.

This little university which gives no degrees, I have considered only as it was found existing and shining in early Iowa. It produced a community spirit and revealed an early passion for education both on the part of the leaders and the patrons. It is thus shown that Iowa was produced by certain influences and ideals and methods of education as well as by the fertility of her soil, advantages in location and material things.

The decline of the institution in rural Iowa is such a profound and instructive study that it could well receive a separate treatment. Its doom was plainly written on the wall when it became so inordinately expensive. No other institution ever became so distinctly commercialized. If the people in a community wanted to put a fence around the graveyard they proposed a lecture course to secure the funds, and canvassers were sent to sell tickets. The very popularity and the social effects of the institution were what were directly traded upon, and at first with good returns which led to a continuance of the custom. It broke of its own weight. It was first despoiled by its friends. As the towns grew in size, prosperous men put up so-called public halls, and when they were not used every day of the week and were not good investments, the rental was placed at a high figure. This combined with the fact that lecturers knew that they were used for money raising purposes and increased their rates almost to the limit of extortion.

At the last meeting of the Advertising Men's Association, they claimed the right to know before using a newspaper for a medium, whether it was conducted from the editorial rooms on the basis of its worth or whether it was conducted from the business office, increasing its circulation by premiums to those who were getting up clubs. And so with lecturers. Under primitive conditions in the early settlements, they were welcomed for what they contained themselves. Later they were exploited and men and communities cashed up on the very high regard in which the institution was held in the community. Men traded upon the hold which lectures at one time had upon all classes. They would peddle their tickets

and urge them upon reluctant customers. The lecture system which had seen glorious days, became so debased and perverted that owners of halls and simple panders actually plowed with this heifer and flamboyantly advertised lecturers who were brought to town as a part of a selfish, personal, money-making program. The decline of the beneficent institution, heaven-sent for a nobler mission, was rapid.

When the system had become commercialized by the proprietors of halls and only the brightest lights in the literary firmament could be effectively advertised, the custom of starring it developed. This is fatal to any popular movement, for it ends in what is exorbitant and exclusive. It marks the ebb and wane of the institution in remote and ill-conditioned places. This almost necessitated the Chautauqua movement, for at certain points, the greatest brilliancy could be obtained and the people, now grown more prosperous, could do the traveling and follow the star and converge at well-selected places. When lectures came to be used to create funds for church and community uses, lecture bureaus sprang up to advertise and supply talent. Their fee, which was of course legitimate, had to be paid out of the consumer, as is usually the case. Variety being sought, the sale of tickets was immensely augmented by an attractive concert or two, for which I have nothing but praise, but the effect was displacement, so far as the thing we are considering is concerned. Lectures, which at the first in Iowa, were uniformly and almost exclusively instructive and taken seriously, came to be advertised as "entertainments" and their character tended to match the word. Then came "Children in the Wood", and later, by an Iowa man, "The Rise and Fall of the Moustache," which was far and away his finest production and which may be called perfect for its purpose. And still later came the lectures containing nothing but fun, after the style of "Blessed be Humor."

THE LYCEUM.

A close observer or a student of history can study fashion in words as well as in clothes. There is something interesting and greatly instructive in watching the fortune of words.

A situation, as in the case before us, requires a new word, or a new use of an old word, and we find men seeking after it if haply they may find it, and the very success of the idea sometimes depends on the happiness with which it is phrased. One of the most popular of the new old words is "environment." While the idea was one in part expressed by the well-worn English word, "surroundings," yet the idea is better grasped and projected by the word with a French derivative. Webster for example insisted on imparting to the words "interesting" and "respectable" a more than ordinary import, as when he calls the group on the deck of the *Mayflower* "interesting" and the character of Washington not only most pure, most sublime, but most "respectable." On the lips of Carlyle, we find always the word "earnest" and in the mouth of Matthew Arnold the word "culture." The single word "justification" is a distinct age mark in the history of religion, and as with this word, it is strikingly suggestive to watch the gradual falling and disappearance of a word that once shone as the sun. "The history of a word is often more valuable," said Coleridge, "than the history of a campaign."

The word "lyceum" marks an era in the history of Iowa. It always gives me a remote degree of that feeling that is akin to pain when I hear a young person designate some building in the town or present city as "Lyceum Hall," using the word as if it were Grampian Hall, or Hamilton Hall, having no clear conception of what the name of the hall signified to the early community and to the State and to the social and political history of the country.

A review of the work of Rev. J. J. Hill in Iowa and of many with whom he came to the State, shows a very exalted estimate of the lyceum as a means of self-improvement. This little university which gave no degrees was co-educational. The women too were welcomed, not only to the meeting where their presence was a stimulus to the debaters, but to participation in the conduct of the lyceum paper, which, read by one of the sterner sex, often contained contributions by the women. In it were witty conundrums, based on local names and conditions, pointed suggestions, humorous hits at the hardships

they were at the moment experiencing, which enabled the people to laugh at their own privations. Deep feeling and marked literary ability were often shown in the contributions to this unprinted paper. It was for just such pages as these that the first poems of Lucy Larcom were produced, and she says that if she had learned anything by living it was that education may proceed "not through book learning alone, sometimes entirely without it."

Some of the productions first read in these lyceums came later to have a wide celebrity. I have never forgotten the effect on the audience of a poem, "My Last One Dollar Bill," an actual tragedy in personal experience in those days when money was scarce, income nil, or next to it. If I close my eyes and open the chambers of memory, I distinctly see the young homesteaders with many signs of diffidence, rising timidly to participate in the debate. This was sometimes thrown open to the house after the appointees had opened the discussion. To increase the number of parts taken, certain grave, slow men, not likely to share in the discussions, noted chiefly for their moderation and caution, were named in advance as judges, and their decision was to be based first, on the weight of argument, and then on the merits of the question. To keep up the excitement, the decision was sometimes appealed to the house.

A company of the residents in primitive Iowa could give some racy recitals touching the early discussions and also the men who participated in them and were developed by them and went from them into the various forms and degrees of public life. As Samson found the honey, so these lyceums discovered talent where it would be looked for least. Men came to look for good in each other under these conditions, and that helped some. And here is a partial explanation of the fact that so many men who became prominent in early Iowa were from small towns.

The lyceum developed a social group and a communal intellectual life, which advanced the value of property although the lyceum did not, like the later Village Improvement Society, concern itself so exclusively with material and outward con-

ditions. It discovered leaders in the various departments of mental and reformatory effort. It must be kept in mind that the pioneers in Iowa were to an exceptional degree homogeneous and overwhelmingly American. The tramp and the millionaire were both unknown characters. Thus through a door, which the ministers opened, a mighty influence swept in which was felt throughout the State.

The aims and methods of Mr. Hill and his associates were summed up by a letter and answer I found among their effects. Such letters were addressed by young men of the type these ministers felt responsible for. The one mentioned was written to the newspaper which they believed most sympathetic, and was, with its answer, in part as follows:

Will you please give a number of subjects for debate adapted to young men of from seventeen to twenty-five years? It is desired to discuss these subjects in a literary society whose members aim at improvement. Let the subjects be adapted to persons of not very extensive education.

Answer.—Instead of giving a list of subjects we can probably help our young friends more by making two or three suggestions in general terms. First, let a certain proportion of the questions to be discussed involve practical neighborhood issues. Second, let another class of questions concern themselves with history not too remote; in short, avoiding always questions which cannot be fully and intelligently and easily answered, let it be an inflexible rule to take up questions that lie near if not nearest, and there need be no fear but that the discussion of these will lead always onward and upward into regions sufficiently new and abundantly entertaining. Neglect of this rule is the one great mistake in almost all debating societies.

The boys in the villages formed their little debating societies, in which the first question discussed seems to have been, "Which is Preferable, City or Country Life?" One man, speaking of the compensations in coming from the East to the West, said:

I do not want to have my children depend upon others to amuse them. I want them to be so situated that they have to read and study in our long winter evenings. Their worst exposure is when they open themselves up to others to amuse them.

Mr. Hill was a good singer and could appreciate better music than the congregations in his early days supplied, and so he sometimes sought to extend the lyceum's season with a singing school, generally instructed by a traveling teacher. As I remember this conservatory, it had no accompanist and no instrument whatever, not even the traditional tuning fork, and if there was any musical instrument in the village, I do not remember it. It was Mr. Hill's habit in announcing a hymn to name also the tune in the religious services, and if no one else "struck up" he could be depended upon to do it.

When the boys' lyceums needed variety, a writing school, taught by a tramp teacher who continued with us only the stipulated number of evenings, was instituted. I often lamented that I did not attend this little university longer and to a better purpose, for I never graduated *cum laude*.

General exercises, as they were called, were introduced by these peripatetic instructors, which consisted largely in chanting doggerel, touching geography and topography, in which we were supposed to have some interest. Many of the lines that we rendered in unison, and even the swing of the so-called chant, I can today reproduce. These were the words of the overture, all voices in unison, singing the soprano part:

"The Western States are the granary of the universe."

The great benefit of the lyceum was that the whole conduct of it rested solidly on the men who blended in it and habitually attended it. It came right up out of the intellectual force, the convictions, the good neighborhood feeling and intelligence of the community. These debates developed leaders in the various departments of mental effort. These lyceums sent scores of debaters straight into the State legislature. It was like running a magnet over a dust heap, in that it revealed metal, and drew it out, and this was what people were looking for.

Many of the pioneers in Iowa came first into local prominence exactly as Henry Wilson¹⁵ did in New England, who before he was twenty-one, had never had but two dollars, and had never spent more than one dollar. At the end of eleven years' apprenticeship to a farmer he received a yoke of oxen and six sheep, which he sold immediately for eighty-four dollars. The turning point in his life was the lyceum, which he attended, following the lines of argument, but lacking courage to share in the debate. But one evening when the discussion was thrown open to the audience, he engaged in it to the delight of his friends. His pastor called upon him and expressed his gratification and the lyceum increased in popularity as a place to hear him. His pastor urged him to seek an education. The lyceum had awakened his dormant powers.

I never look upon the panorama of the past, where vivid, life-forms have lost little of their original distinctness, without thinking of the great aggregation of striking characters and scenes that would be produced if a symposium were possible on the early lyceums of Iowa.

THE REVIVAL.

The history of a State is more than a catalogue of those that filled its political offices and a record of their acts and terms of service. The history of a State is concerned as well with its institutions and with the forces that influence its people and determine their mental attitudes and sentiments. The annals of Iowa cannot be written and omit a matter that usually has been handed over to religious publications. But annals include occurrences, if they were actual, particularly if they directly affected persons living in the early days of the State. This will be proved, and except for the need of brevity, the evidence supplied would be voluminous, seeing that it exists and is accessible.

¹⁵Henry Wilson, statesman and vice-president with Grant, was the son of a farm laborer in New Hampshire. At the age of ten he was apprenticed to a farmer until twenty-one. During these eleven years he received not more than twelve months' schooling, but read more than a thousand volumes. After becoming of age he earned enough money as a shoemaker to educate himself, and rapidly became prominent as an Abolitionist and politician.

It is not asserted that the state of things which was sometimes produced will ever be repeated. I use great pains not to indicate approval or disapproval of the measures that are considered. They are treated by me simply as history, and the man does not live who, knowing early Iowa, can say that these pages are not dealing with actual affairs, which can be hence treated as positive and vital history. No fear is felt in appealing to the early citizens of Iowa upon these matters of fact.

Still approaching the study on its biographical side, the fourth chapter in the development of Iowa shows that Rev. J. J. Hill (and the same was true of some of those early associated with him) attempted in his work to create a general atmosphere in which individuals would more readily respond to religious influences. The idea was held by him, and it had very practical bearing, that the individual mind is only partly individual; that healthy, private judgment often reflects public sentiment, and to a degree many have not realized, men are moved in the mass more than they think. There are times when men are so associated that they reflect their thoughts and feelings one upon another. The Christian emotions, the devouter sides of men, are very greatly helped by bringing together the forces that are in them. The force may be small in each, but it becomes large when it is joined to that of others.

As Burlington, the largest place in the State, was the chief gateway to Iowa for the Iowa Band in 1843, it was almost inevitable that the foremost preacher among them should be in the distribution of fields among themselves assigned by common consent to that political center. And so the brilliant Horace Hutchinson, whom they themselves called "trumpet-tongued," was designated for that early capital, and we find him, first thing, preparing to have an atmosphere in which to work as well as to have a message. To use his own words:

Evils such as arise naturally from the unsettled state of a new community, educated in different sections, and under different influences, exist. Hence, there is a sad want of union among Christ-

ians which sadly weakens our power to do good. There are some evils here which a revival alone can remove.

He grasped intuitively the psychological fact that in a church all the basic human emotions affect and enkindle an audience obviously more when each member of it feels that he is surrounded by other people who are experiencing the same emotions as his own. If instruments are all unified and brought up to concert pitch, a heightened influence can be exercised on men when taken *en masse*.

Dr. John C. Holbrook, of Dubuque, had a clear vision of the future of Iowa, and labored with incredible diligence to found a great church, which soon became the largest in the Congregational denomination in Iowa.¹⁰ In his "Recollections of a Nonagenarian" he affirms that he labored for a revival and that a majority of those who united with his church came in this way, and were the most steadfast of its members, and in summarizing he says:

We were favored with several important revivals. As the result there were one hundred conversions, including a body of young men who proved a very valuable acquisition to the church. One remarkable feature of this work was that it included in its subjects a large number of leading members of society here. Among these was the United States district judge and his wife, several prominent lawyers, physicians, merchants, and others. It is to revivals that not a few churches in that region owe their present strength as well as their very existence. In one such season in my own church, a man was converted who was not then a member of my congregation, and he afterwards paid five thousand dollars, and saved the house of worship from sale for debt.

Grinnell is a typical, clean and moral town. While from the beginning its spirit and its intelligence rank it as exemplary, its early history was marked by a revival. The first old wooden church had low eaves and seemed flat, but it had a very large floor area. Rev. Joshua M. Chamberlain, who had been pastor of the Plymouth Church at Des Moines for the whole period of the Civil war, and later was minister at Eddyville, became the treasurer and then the librarian of Grinnell College. He was a model citizen, rendering his greater serv-

¹⁰*Minutes*, General Association, 1850, pages 64-5.

ice without requital, the ideal of the students and graduates, one of whom, in an address in Grinnell at commencement said that he could not set before them ideally anything better than Mr. Chamberlain exemplified. As a revival there advanced, it was borne in on him that he should, to use the expression of the day, "draw the net" and he asked those cherishing a noble purpose that he named, to rise. The church then was not lighted by either electricity or gas. A multitude stood up, and though he was tall, yet many in the front seats on rising were equally tall, so that he could not see those in the back part of the house, and could not be seen by them. Desiring to address them further, he stepped up and stood on the first settee at the front of the church. No offence was given. He did not appear grotesque. The effectiveness of his words was heightened by the genius, naturalness, and the self-forgetful spirit of the man. The feeling toward him was that of kindness and entire respect.

Using to the utmost the revival spirit, atmosphere and method, Rev. J. J. Hill organized a new church on an average once every twelve months during his first five years in Iowa. On May 16, 1858, he officiated at the first service ever held by Plymouth Church, now a large and strong organization in St. Paul, Minnesota, in Concert Hall, on Third Street. In the Congregational Church in Toledo, Iowa, twenty-five years after the death of Rev. Hill, one of his sons, November 24, 1895, observed in the choir, Judge G. R. Struble, a member of a leading firm of lawyers in Tama County, who said to the visitor:

Your father labored in a revival here. By him I was led to make the beginnings of a Christian life and to join the church. Except for his faithful work here, I probably should not have been in that choir this morning.

Under date of April 22, 1911, he wrote from Toledo:

I remember the incidents to which you refer to which I was a party. I also remember your good father, for whom I had the highest esteem. You are at liberty to print my name in connection with the sentiment expressed by me, and to which you make reference. It is only a feeble expression of my appreciation of your father's work here many years ago. There are still a few members

of the church, who united with it as the result of your father's work here, during the special services in 1862. The Toledo church remembers with grateful appreciation his faithful and successful labor here and will never cease to hold him in grateful remembrance.

Salem, Mass.

INTIMATE GLIMPSES OF A PREACHER PIONEER.

[Rev. James L. Hill, author of the preceding sketches, as custodian of the papers of his father, Rev. J. J. Hill, and of other members of the Iowa Band, possesses much matter of personal as well as general interest. The following intimate sketches describe the characteristics of these early pioneers, their adventures, the locality in which they made their first homes and the changes caused by the railroads and other new factors of civilization. They bring very sharply to our attention the conditions that prevailed at the time the forces he has detailed were at work and the remarkable contrast of that past and the present.—Editor.]

Times were primitive. The man who gave the first dollar to Grinnell college had at the time on his table bear meat and wild honey. There was no settled minister between him and the Pacific ocean. He was once lost in a snow storm, and after making a wind break of his wagon, spent the night there. The buffalo robes that kept him warm had been secured at an incredibly low price and from herds in his neighborhood. Daylight discovered his own house in full view. For three days his wife¹⁷ remained alone at home, sleeping in the unfinished second story of their newly built house. When she retired at night she drew the ladder up after her.

* * * * *

A number of her associates paid tribute to the high character of Mrs. Hill and the part she took in these early pioneer experiences. Dr. A. B. Robbins leaves the record that she was "brilliant." He also wrote:

On Friday, June 7, 1844, Brother J. J. Hill arrived in Dubuque. Last week I went up to see him, and was much pleased with the energy, activity and soul of his wife. I hired a buggy and drove him to Clayton county.

¹⁷Sarah E. Hyde was born in Bath, Maine, August 6, 1823, and died May 21, 1852. She was the daughter of Deacon Gershom Hyde. Her marriage ceremony was performed by Dr. Ray Palmer, author of the hymn, "My Faith Looks Up to Thee." When she was received into the church, Dr. Palmer wrote another of his immortal hymns for the use of the choir.—Editor.

Dr. Salter states in his diary:

Brother Hill has made a good start, secured the affections and confidence of the community and has encouraging prospects, for all of which due credit must be given to his amiable, cheerful, happy and happy-making wife. A Congregational church was formed September 1st. Watson and Gay were elected deacons.

Mrs. Adams, wife of Dr. Ephraim Adams, has left us a plat showing the floor of Rev. Hill's house at a time Mrs. Hill was entertaining an unexpectedly large meeting of the Garnavillo Association. It shows that to the dining room were assigned Rev. A. Wright and wife; to the parlor, Rev. E. B. Turner and wife, and Rev. J. C. Holbrook and wife; to the bedroom, Father Windsor and wife, and Dr. E. Adams and wife and son Theodore. It indicates where beds were placed on the floor and clothes-horses with sheets stretched over them served for partitions. The Hill family, father, mother and two boys, and an elderly woman who acted as helper, retired in the unfinished attic. The house which is still standing on land now worth two hundred dollars an acre, then dominated a forty-acre field, for which Mr. Hill gave but one dollar and a quarter per acre.

* * * * *

The church where the Association held its meetings was 22 by 26 feet in size, and cost four hundred dollars. Of this Mr. Hill gave one-fourth. The settlement in which this church was built is in Clayton county, and was originally called Jacksonville. It was often confused with Jacksonville, Illinois, and a change of name was petitioned for. The space in the petition in which the name was to be written was left blank. In a discussion, Judge Murdock, who used to sing the song, "Kate of Garnavilla," suggested the name "Garnavillo." The name was so written in the petition. Both Robert Burns and Edward Lysaght wrote verses for the popular melody of "Roy's Wife." Burns was not quite as happy as usual in his "Canst thou leave me thus, my Katie?," which sounds rather harsh and sibilant compared with Lysaght's "Have you been

at Garnavilla?" which is very happy in the choice of musical words:

"Oh! she's pure as virgin snows
Ere they light on woodland hill; O
Sweet as dew-drop on wild rose
Is lovely Kate of Garnavilla!

"As a noble ship I've seen
Sailing o'er the swelling billow
So I've marked the graceful mien
Of lovely Kate of Garnavilla."

When Judge Murdock sang:

"And dove-like peace perch on her pillow,
Charming maid of Garnavilla!"

himself being a poet, and singing from memory, it was inevitable that he should pronounce the word Garnavillo to rhyme with the earlier words "pillow" and "billow," although the residence of lovely Kate was the historical Garnavilla, and hence "Garnavillo" instead of "Garnavilla" came to be written in the petition.

In March, 1845, Mr. Hill writes:

There has been no other preaching in Clayton county for the last three months. I have preached at the courthouse nearly every Sabbath. We expect to maintain two meetings upon the Sabbath through the winter.

* * * * *

The Association of Ministers was called the Garnavillo Association, taking its name from the Garnavillo church, the first in the county. After the church became one of the smallest in the Association the name was changed to Northeastern Association. The advent of the railroad into Iowa, with the new alignment of towns, makes it hard for the present generation to appreciate the importance and conspicuousness of certain early communities that have since been totally or partially eclipsed. The Congregational church, which is now discontinued, had fourteen members in Mr. Hill's day, when the

church at Davenport, organized five years earlier, had but eighteen.¹⁸ In 1848, the church in Garnavillo had the same number in the Sunday school as Davenport.¹⁹

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Mr. Hill organized churches not only at Garnavillo, but also at Guttenberg, Yankee Settlement, Sodom and Gomorrah. Speaking of Elkader, Rev. T. O. Douglass writes:

The leaven of Congregationalism was introduced into this community and others of the region at an early day by Rev. J. J. Hill, one of the members of the Iowa Band.

Rev. Oscar E. Maurer, pastor of Center Church, New Haven, successor of Dr. Leonard Bacon and a long line of illustrious divines, was born in Garnavillo, and writes:

The eastern border of Clayton county is pretty thoroughly German. The Congregational churches founded by the Iowa Band have had the greatest influence upon this German population. The Protestant Germans were all Lutherans, who brought their system of parochial schools over with them. In many cases this would have produced a rather narrow and provincial type of citizenship and Christianity, except for the influence of these Congregational churches. I claim that I am in the "Apostolic succession" of the Iowa Band, and have always had the greatest interest in your father's history. My father often spoke to me of him when I was a boy.

Rev. Irving Maurer, brother of Oscar, pastor of a large church at Utica, New York, was born at Garnavillo. In twelve years twenty-five young people from Garnavillo have been swept into the academies and colleges.

* * * * *

Rev. Newell Dwight Hillis, pastor of Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, New York, a successor of Henry Ward Beecher, was born at Magnolia, Iowa, a place that illustrates again the new alignment of towns with the advent of the railway. He was for a time a student at Grinnell. He writes:

I think my father has entertained almost every member of the Iowa Band, and in my childhood the Sundays when Dr. Adams, Robbins, Todd, Turner, Prof. Parker and President Magoun came

¹⁸*Minutes*, 1845, page 28.

¹⁹*Minutes*, 1845, page 51.

were the great Sundays. The names of the men in the Iowa Band, their sermons at the Iowa State Association, and the events in connection with the college at Grinnell and the academy at Denmark and Tabor are interwoven with my earliest associations. There is a window in Plymouth Church on the Overflow of Puritanism and the movement to take the new land for the higher education. My father and mother were the first members of the Congregational church in Anamosa, and the charter members of another Congregational church in some village near by, which they helped to organize about 1852. In 1855, under the influence of Rev. John Todd of Tabor, they moved to Magnolia. At that time Magnolia had as many people as Council Bluffs. Mr. Todd's idea was that the church in Magnolia could build an academy that could feed the Tabor college as the academy at Denmark was to prepare students for the college at Grinnell. But when the war came on, these plans were disturbed, and when in 1866, the Northwestern Railroad left Magnolia at one side, the three towns, Woodbine, Logan and Missouri Valley, killed Magnolia, and ruined all the plans for the academy. My three sisters were all educated at Grinnell and my one brother at Tabor and Iowa State University. The era of the Iowa Band was the heroic era in the history of Iowa.

* * * * *

Rev. John C. Holbrook who settled in Dubuque in 1842, in a letter to the Home Missionary Society at New York, touching the need of a missionary for Clayton County, says:

It is a delightful section of the Territory, and affords a fine opportunity for settlers to make farms in a healthful climate on rich soil and will eventually be a very populous county.

While we plume ourselves on the facts stated by Dr. Holbrook, still there is a reverse truth that has never received its deserved attention. The general excellencies of Iowa made the early religious work there doubly difficult. There were no barren and forbidding wastes nor sterile localities compelling men to congregate in fertile, luxuriant valleys, and there were no common dangers that constrained them to assemble and unite for mutual protection in compact communities. But the country was so uniformly fruitful with soil so slightly varied in surface and productiveness that the pioneers made homes on their own separate farms and did not concentrate. Privileges were about evenly spread from river to river.

The writer was born in Clayton County and his pride has been inflamed by the fact, among many other reasons, that it was the first spot in Iowa ever seen by a white man. That particular locality is situated about three miles south of McGregor and is a part of the high bluffs opposite the Wisconsin river. Down this in 1673, Father Marquette and Louis Joliet were sailing on a voyage of exploration. The river at the base of the bluffs is about a mile wide. The summit of the peak is about three hundred feet high. The colors of the various layers of sandstone are as perfectly blended as if by some inspired artist. On the one hand is the view and on the other the approach. It was curiously brought about that the initial scene should be of the "pictured rocks," thought by many travelers to be one of the most engaging spectacles in the whole course of the Father of Waters. On the summit, one finds himself in the center of a vast panorama stretching to the horizon's outmost rim. The grandeur of the scene meandered by the King of Rivers silences all comment. It is a beautiful call to read from the book of nature lying open before one and from its suggestive pages to receive inspiration.

Colesburg, May 13, 1853.

Mr. Editor.—At your request I cheerfully furnish a brief account of the meeting of the Dubuque Congregational Association, recently held in Garnavillo. This Association is composed of the ministers and churches of this denomination that are north of Maquoketa River, in this state. Its object is not to legislate for the churches, but the promotion of mutual improvement, and to devise ways and means for promoting the general welfare of the cause. Owing to the bad state of the roads the attendance was much smaller than usual, but it was an occasion of interest. There were literary, exegetical, and hermeneutical exercises, and many instructing reports from the churches which afforded gratifying evidence of progress.—E. B. Turner, *Clayton County Herald*, June 17, 1853.

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