

afflictions as has fallen upon them for the last two months. During that time we have been visited, at short intervals, with many of the heaviest storms we have ever experienced. For six or eight weeks it has rained almost without cessation. The consequence has been that all the rivers in the State have been swollen to an extent never before known, producing suffering and devastation all along their borders. The meanest rill has "roaring fled its channel," adding its might to the great aggregation of destruction. Three different times the Des Moines has overflowed its banks at this place, driving our merchants and others on Front street back to the bluffs. No one can estimate the amount of damage that has been done. Along the principal rivers the loss of stock, crops, rails, lumber, &c., has been immense; in some instances houses with all their effects have been swept away. The business of the entire country has suffered a severe shock from this great calamity. But the worst feature in the whole matter is the destruction of crops. We have no disposition to croak, but set it down from reliable data that there cannot be more than half crops of wheat and corn. Many farms have not an acre in cultivation. The continuous rains with which the earth has been drenched, prevented some from planting, whilst much of that put in the ground was washed out or rotted where it lay. There can be no question but that the prospect for crops in this State is gloomy enough; and we venture the prediction, that there will not be corn and wheat enough raised in our State to supply home consumption.

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### AVAILABLE LAW BOOKS IN THE TERRITORY OF IOWA.

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The excellency of the products of manual labor depends as much upon the tools as upon the skill of the workmen. Now since that is equally true of intellectual effort, the work of men who use books as tools ought to be measured by the equipment of their libraries. This truth we should bear in mind when we read the reports of the Supreme Court of the Territory of Iowa. The judges and lawyers of that day must have been greatly handicapped by the lack of many useful volumes. The following memorial, which is here printed for the first time, reveals the embarrassing condition under which the pioneer jurist carried on his work:

Memorial of the Judges of the Supreme Court of Iowa Territory and members of the bar of said Court to the Honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States:

Your petitioners respectfully ask from your honorable body an appro-

priation for the purpose of increasing the library of said Territory, and state to your honorable body that the law portion of said library is extremely deficient—so much so that the Supreme Court are frequently compelled to take causes under advisement from term to term in order to enable them to get access to authorities.

So defective is the library that it embraces very few reports of the states of this Union, and none of the reports of the United States by *Peters*, and many other reports and works of the highest and most frequently cited authorities.

Your honorable body need hardly be reminded that our country is new and young; that our libraries are few and small, and that we cannot hope to increase the Territorial library for some years to come, and that we are suffering very great inconvenience during the sessions of the courts for want of those books of authority which are a part of the law of the land and necessary to allow our judiciary to do justice to themselves and the country, and permanently to settle the law of our Territory and to construe in an enlightened manner the statutory enactments of our own Legislature.

We respectfully suggest that an appropriation of five thousand dollars be made.\*

This memorial is signed by Charles Mason, J. Williams, and T. S. Wilson (Judges of the Supreme Court) and by thirty attorneys.

B. F. S.

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### THE LAWS OF IOWA, 1838-39.

The Historical Department has begun a work for which the people of Iowa are deeply grateful. The recent reprint of "The Statute Laws of the Territory of Iowa" which were "enacted at the first session of the Legislative Assembly of said Territory, held at Burlington, A. D. 1838-'39," is the beginning of a line of reprints that should be continued without interruption until all of the laws of the Territory of Iowa, the journals of the constitutional conventions of 1844 and 1846, and the code of 1851 have been made accessible to the people of the State. The truth is that only a few of the older libraries of the State contain copies of the originals

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\*Taken from the original manuscript copy of the memorial, as preserved in the office of the Clerk of the House of Representatives in the Capitol at Washington, D. C.

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