

ANNALS OF IOWA.

EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT.

A FITTING SOLDIERS' MONUMENT.

It is our judgment, and we have contended for the carrying out of the idea, often singly and alone, that the preservation and publication of records and other historical data should take precedence of works of mere sentiment. Records and recollections are daily perishing, while works like monuments do not suffer by reasonable delay. Such was the position the writer and two or three friends, among whom we may mention Hon. Messrs. B. F. Gue and J. M. Shaffer, took at the time the question of erecting the Iowa Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument on the site of the old capitol building in Des Moines, was pending before the twenty-fourth general assembly. But some of the persons who were interested in the effort to erect the monument, and determined that it should succeed, were in the habit of asking hesitating legislators this very ugly question, "Are you opposed to the soldiers?" While few attempted to answer, it still seemed to win votes, and one might have supposed that the soldiers were everywhere clamoring for its erection. The influences in favor of the monument won the day. Whether it was the better policy to build the monument at that time, or erect a historical and memorial building, we may leave wholly to the judgment of the reader.

Our thoughts have been turned to this subject upon an examination of two volumes which have reached the Historical Department. We refer to the Revised Registers or Rosters of the Soldiers and Sailors who served in the civil war from the States of New Hampshire and Vermont. These books were prepared and published under State authority. They are so much alike that we need not stop to point out

any minor points of difference. Each regiment is dealt with separately and very fully. There is first given a history of the organization, with a list of the battles in which it participated, followed by a full roster of the command, showing the date of enlistment and muster into service, the date and place of discharge, casualties, or death, of every officer and man. The same course is pursued in regard to service in the navy, or in the smaller organizations, as batteries, separate companies, the Veteran Reserve Corps, etc. Every fact required to be set down in the records of his State, showing the military history of the volunteer soldier, is here set forth. The histories which preface each regimental register or roster, while necessarily brief, were evidently prepared with the utmost care. Many of them embody facts which would otherwise soon have passed into oblivion. Each is a beautifully printed, large quarto volume, one making 863 and the other 1347 pages.

These splendid volumes seem to us to come near perfection as "soldiers' monuments." Every soldier gets full credit for his service, and the books are certain to have as long a life as the State or Nation. Others of the Eastern States have either published similar volumes or have them in preparation. While this, like all other historical work, has been most unaccountably delayed in Iowa, we are confident that it will be undertaken and carried out at no distant day. We cannot for a moment entertain the idea that any intelligent person will long oppose it. Pride in the heroism displayed by the soldiers of Iowa on so many bloody fields, will yet manifest itself in the completion and perpetuation of their records.

FORTY YEARS AGO.

Capt. W. H. Ingham, of Algona, Iowa, presents in our leading article his recollections of the Northern Border Brigade, in which he commanded a company, recruited and mustered into the service of the State, for the purpose of

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