

GERMAN FORTY-EIGHTERS IN DAVENPORT

In 1900 Joseph Eiboek, editor and publisher of German language newspapers for forty-one years, published a book about the Germans in Iowa, in which he called the city of Davenport "the most German city, not only in the State, but in all the Middle West, the center of all German activities in the State".¹ This statement deserves the attention of the historian. What made Davenport, with about 45,000 inhabitants at the turn of the century, different from other cities of similar size in the Mid West? The answer goes back almost a hundred years to conditions then existing in Europe.²

The German revolutionists of 1848-1849, who left their fatherland after the failure of that movement, are often mentioned in the literature on German immigration to this country, usually with favorable comments about their contributions to the United States. Many educated and active

¹ Joseph Eiboek's *Die Deutschen von Iowa und deren Errungenschaften*, p. 385.

² The files of two German newspapers — *Der Demokrat*, published from November, 1851, until September, 1918, and the *Iowa Reform*, published from 1885 until 1943 — contain much information. Complete files of these papers are available in the Davenport Public Library. Dr. August P. Richter, who spent many years collecting data about Davenport and its German population, published, in 1917, a volume entitled *Geschichte der Stadt Davenport und des County Scott*. Joseph Eiboek's book and Harry Downer's *History of Davenport and Scott County* also offer many details. Very important, too, is the manuscript material in the form of many volumes of records preserved by the *Turnverein* of Davenport. In addition, private letters and documents, theater programs, and interviews produced much information. The author wishes to thank Mr. Roy Schmidt, secretary, and Mr. Alfred C. Mueller, a member of the board of the Davenport *Turngemeinde*, for the loan of ten manuscript volumes and a number of books from the Turner library. See also *Die Davenport Turner Turngemeinde Gedenkschrift zu ihrem Goldenenen Jubiläum, 1902*.

men filtered into all kinds of occupations in large cities and in small settlements all over the United States, but documentary material about them is scarce and access to it is difficult. It is well then to single out one settlement for study, and Davenport offers an excellent example of the characteristics of the "forty-eighters".

Immigrants during the nineteenth century were often drawn to a particular region by reading about it in the letters to friends and relatives in their native village or by hearing from agents who advertised a special section of the country. Thus Germans from certain provinces or villages in the fatherland often settled together in America. The German immigration to Davenport and its vicinity began as early as 1836, but the preponderance of Germans from the provinces of Schleswig and Holstein who settled in Scott County, Iowa, goes back to a few Schleswig-Holsteiners who began to arrive in Davenport as early as 1844. Attracted by letters from the early settlers, two hundred and twenty-seven Germans landed in Davenport between April and December, 1847, coming from Schleswig-Holstein to the United States usually by the route from Hamburg to New Orleans and then up the Mississippi River.³

Among these Schleswig-Holsteiners was one of the future leading citizens of Davenport, Mathias J. Rohlf, who was compelled to leave Schleswig because he criticized the policies of the Danish government. He sailed from Hamburg on May 18, 1847, and arrived in Davenport on August 1st. The term "forty-eighter" applies to Rohlf just as much as to those German liberals and revolutionaries who came to the United States after 1848, although Rohlf had to leave the provinces before the outbreak of open rebellion.

³ Richter's *Geschichte der Stadt Davenport und des County Scott*, pp. 362-364. Richter's history of Davenport was continued in English in installments printed in the Sunday edition of the *Davenport Democrat and Leader*, April 15, 1920, to November 12, 1922.

Born in Schleswig in 1816, the son of a teacher, Mathias J. Rohlf attended the teachers' seminary of his native town and Kiel University. Later he became a school superintendent. In Davenport he founded the first private German school based on liberal principles for the children of other free-thinking German parents in the community. He also taught music. He soon found that it was very difficult to secure a livelihood for a family as a German school-teacher in the United States, so he rented a farm in the neighborhood of the city and two years later bought one in Lincoln Township.

In 1866, Rohlf was elected to the Iowa General Assembly as Representative from Scott County on the Republican ticket and was reelected three times in succession. Like many other Germans he had joined the Republican Party in the late fifties but he lost faith in it during the Grant administration. As a member of the new so-called Liberal-Republican Party he was elected treasurer of Scott County and served for fourteen years. Rohlf served on the Iowa Board of Immigration and wrote one of the best immigration pamphlets of the Middle West. Seven thousand copies of this pamphlet were printed in German for distribution in Europe.⁴

Rohlf was a typical forty-eighter in his untiring promotion of liberal and democratic ideas, of educational facilities for youth and adults, and in his wariness of infringements on personal liberties. He exerted great influence in

⁴In April, 1869, the Iowa Board of Immigration authorized its secretary, A. R. Fulton, to prepare an immigration pamphlet published in 1870 under the title *Iowa, the Home for Immigrants*. It was translated into German, Danish, Swedish, and Dutch, but almost the entire Swedish edition, which was being prepared in Chicago, was destroyed by the Chicago fire. M. J. Rohlf was asked to prepare a new German edition based on Fulton's pamphlet. Its title was *Iowa die Heimath für Einwanderer*. A comparison of both pamphlets shows that Rohlf knew better than did Fulton what information was most valuable for prospective German immigrants. Chapter XVI in particular contains much information about former German immigrants to Iowa.

the Davenport *Turnverein*, where he served as "first speaker", or president, and as a member of the committee for mental training for many years. He was president of the *Freier Deutscher Schulverein*, the free German school society, for a long period, and he was a member of the *Schützenverein*, the German rifle club. In 1847, immediately after his arrival, he organized the *Liedertafel*, the first German singing society of Davenport. His interest in the fatherland never waned: he visited it in 1884, in 1890, and in 1891. He died in 1900 at the age of eighty-five.

Mrs. Rohlf's was the daughter of an instructor at Eutin, Schleswig. Representative of her cultural background are the household articles she brought with her — thin china plates and gold-rimmed cups on dainty feet, mahogany furniture in the simple lines of the Biedermeier style of the early nineteenth century, a heavy chest with mother of pearl inlay, and some fine old rococo chairs. Similar examples can still be found in some of the quiet old mansions in Davenport on the ridge above Sixth Street where many German families of the better class built their homes. Sometimes the trousseaus were much richer, such as that of Mrs. Bleik Peters who was educated at the court in Copenhagen. Descendants remember her rosewood furniture and giant-sized napkins bundled into sets of dozens which again were numbered up to eighteen. And they brought their pianos. Mathias Rohlf's set up his instrument in a barn on the edge of town as soon as he arrived. He heard a noise outside after he had cautiously opened the lid, fingered the keys, and plunged into one of his favorite pieces. What may his feelings have been when he looked outside and found a number of Indians standing awestruck listening to his music.⁵

⁵ The data on Rohlf's were obtained from Richter's *Geschichte der Stadt Davenport und des County Scott*, p. 31; Eiboek's *Die Deutschen von Iowa und*

But the most important influx of Schleswig-Holsteiners to Davenport took place early in the fifties. Later, between 1870 and 1900, others came and settled, preferably in northwest Davenport, forming societies of their own.⁶ But their influence on the cultural and social life of the town was not as significant as that of those who came as a result of the Schleswig-Holstein war which lasted from 1848 to 1851.

It would be futile to try to present the history of the so-called Schleswig-Holstein dispute to American readers in all its intricacies. It has been said that only three men really knew it well. One of them died from studying it, the second went insane, and the third was fortunate enough to forget it. It dated back to the Lex Regia of 1665 proclaiming the right of female succession to the Danish throne, although the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein retained the rule of male succession only. The King of Denmark was the Duke of Holstein and as such a member of the German Diet in Frankfurt-am-Main. At the same time he was sovereign Duke of Schleswig. As far back as 1460, the promise had been given that the two duchies must never be separated. This gave rise to the popular Low German slogan "up ewig ungedelt", or "auf ewig ungeteilt", never to be divided.

With the general rise of nationalism during the first half of the nineteenth century Danish officials aspired to the Danification of both provinces (which had been largely Germanized) and their incorporation into Denmark. The

deren Errungenschaften, pp. 429, 430; an article in the *Davenport Democrat and Leader*, October 5, 1924, titled, "Davenport the Director of Iowa's First and Most Important Advertising Campaign". The Turner records contain much information on Rohlf's activities in the *Turnverein*. The author is also indebted to Miss Cora Hetzel, Davenport, for information about the life of her grandfather.

⁶ Such societies included the "Plattdütsche Unterhollungs Club" (the Low German entertainment club), founded in 1892, and the Claus Groth Guild, founded in 1895.

influential Germans resisted this stubbornly in Schleswig where not over a third of the population understood Danish. The province of Holstein had become German in language, customs, and race. In 1846, King Christian VIII of Denmark proclaimed in an "open letter" that Schleswig was bound to accept a female successor, if his son died without a male heir, while Holstein's right to a male ruler was, to some degree, conceded. But when Christian VIII died in January, 1848, nothing was settled.

Singing societies in Germany had, for some time, exhibited revolutionary tendencies, particularly when they gathered for their festivals. The famous song "*Schleswig-Holstein meerumschlungen*", commonly called the "Schleswig-Holstein song", had been sung before the public for the first time at the great *Sängerfest* in Schleswig in 1846. In 1848 this song was hummed in the kitchens of lonely farmhouses in the marshes in the west, on the commons of lovely villages in the forested eastern parts of the provinces, in the halls of the University of Kiel, in the classrooms of rural schools. It was the tune that rang out over Washington Square in Davenport in 1898, when the society of the *Schleswig-Holsteinsche Kampfgenossen* (Schleswig-Holstein comrades-in-arms) dedicated a stone marker of red granite to the memory of the fight of 1848 to 1851.

Concessions made to the provinces by King Frederick VII, who succeeded Christian VIII, were insignificant and the deputies of the provinces, assembled in Kiel, dispatched a delegation to Copenhagen to confer with the monarch and his ministers about the demands of the Schleswig-Holsteiners. One of the five delegates was Hans Reimer Claussen, who was born on February 23, 1804, in Dithmarschen. He graduated as a law student from the University of Kiel in 1830 and in 1848 he was a member of the Schleswig-Holstein *Landstände* (legislature) and a well-to-do lawyer in Kiel.

Another member of this delegation was Theodor Olshausen, a radical and courageous fighter for the independence of the provinces. He came from a distinguished family of clergymen and professors at renowned German universities. When he studied in Jena he was a member of the radical *Burschenschaft* and was imprisoned. After he was pardoned he returned to Kiel where he was admitted to the bar in 1830, the same year as Claussen. He founded the *Kieler Correspondenz Blatt*, the only opposition newspaper in Schleswig-Holstein. Although Olshausen was neither permitted to accept advertisements for the support of his paper nor to publish any political news he carried on the fight against the Danish decrees in his political essays. For this he was sentenced to prison but was freed by the efforts of his friend, Claussen.

In Copenhagen, the delegation was threatened by a mob which tried to kill the five men on their way to the castle. The King refused their petition. When they returned to Kiel, open rebellion had broken out and a troop of riflemen, Turners, and students had stormed the fortress of Rendsburg. Claussen was sent on another important mission to Berlin where he obtained military help from the Prussian government which at that time was willing to support the revolution in Schleswig-Holstein. In May, 1848, Claussen was again on his way, this time to Frankfurt-am-Main as a delegate to the German *Parlament* which then consisted of six hundred delegates from all parts of Germany. The *Parlament* broke up and in May, 1849, the remaining members adjourned to Stuttgart in Wuerttemberg and formed the so-called "Rump Parliament". Claussen went with them, still accompanied by his wife, Anna Claussen, the daughter of a high official in the Danish war department.

For more than a year the Claussens lived in the midst of significant activities. In March, 1849, he voted for the

proposition of a hereditary monarchy for Germany in the close vote of 267 to 263. The King of Prussia was offered the crown of Emperor of the German Reich, but the refusal of Frederick William IV to accept helped to complete the disintegration of the remnants of the assembly. Claussen was one of the few who shared its forced suppression on June 18, 1849, when the delegates on their march to the meeting place were dispersed by military force in the streets of Stuttgart.

Meanwhile the Schleswig-Holstein war approached an ignoble end. In the beginning success had been with the bravely fighting volunteers. Two Danish ships had been sunk in the harbor of Eckernförde. One of them was named *Christian VIII* and from the planks of this man-of-war a table was made which found its way to Davenport where it served at the first celebration of the *Schleswig-Holstein Kampfgenossen* in March, 1873. Frederick William IV of Prussia now desired to end the war in the interest of dynastic relationships and the Prussian troops were used to suppress the volunteers. The struggle became hopeless and in 1851 the Schleswig-Holsteiners had to submit to Danish demands.

Twenty distinguished Schleswig-Holsteiners were exiled by the King of Denmark, among them Claussen and Olshausen. They did not wait for the ban to be published but embarked from Hamburg in 1851, coming to New Orleans. Olshausen and Claussen's only son, Ernest, who had joined the volunteers when not yet sixteen years old, stopped in St. Louis. Claussen, with his wife and daughter, came on to Davenport where Ernest joined them two years later. Olshausen arrived in the spring of 1856 but returned to St. Louis in 1860 as editor of the influential German language newspaper, *Westliche Post*. Although his stay in Davenport was short he exercised considerable influence as

the editor of *Der Demokrat* and as a staunch supporter of Lincoln. Olshausen also tried to encourage German immigration to Iowa by publishing a booklet about the State in the compilation of which he was assisted by Claussen. It was published in Kiel in 1855.⁷

Many forty-eighters came to America in the hope that the German liberal movement could soon be revived and that they could return to Germany. In the meantime they moved about in search of positions as journalists, teachers, authors, and lecturers; many needed several years to settle down in the new country. Hans Reimer Claussen came and stayed. These Schleswig-Holsteiners were sedentary people, persistent, headstrong, occasionally slow, but shrewd. The determination with which they made Davenport their new home and America their new country made them successful in their professions and in their cultural and political ambitions. Claussen succeeded in gaining the respect and friendship of the residents in his community whose life he shared for almost forty years.

Within two years after his arrival, Claussen had mastered English so well that he was admitted to the bar in 1853. Soon he was an authority on the laws of the State and the country, demonstrating his knowledge by his legal essays in *Der Demokrat* during 1852 to 1854 and by the part he played as State Senator from 1869 to 1873. He was also interested in the revision of the *Code of 1873*.⁸ When the Republican Party advocated prohibition and seemed corrupt to Claussen he withdrew from political life. He

⁷ Theodor Olshausen's *Der Staat Iowa geographisch und statistisch*. Olshausen wrote the pamphlet in St. Louis in 1854 and credited H. R. Claussen with the chapter on common law and Iowa State law.

⁸ A series of articles about "Gesetze und Recht in Iowa", by H. R. Claussen, appeared in *Der Demokrat* in August-December, 1853, and January, 1854. Another article was that about "Banken und Bank Privilegien" in *Der Demokrat*, February 23, 1854.

left the law firm to his son Ernest in 1871, visited Europe in 1871 and 1874, and was the honored and respected friend of many distinguished German and American citizens of Davenport. He lectured for the Turners and was the first honorary member of the *Schleswig-Holstein Kampfgenossen Verein*. On the occasion of his golden marriage jubilee in 1882 the Turners flagged their building. He died in 1891 and, according to the records of Fairmount Cemetery, his body was cremated.

Ernest Claussen was taken into his father's lucrative and widespread law practice in 1860. At Lincoln's first call for volunteers he enlisted with the First Iowa Infantry. Like many other German Republicans he deserted this party in 1872 and supported Greeley against Grant as presidential candidate. With Greeley's defeat Ernest Claussen withdrew for some time from political life but fought ardently against prohibition in the Democratic Party in Iowa in the early eighties. From 1883 to 1889 he was elected mayor of Davenport six times in succession — an honor accorded (1945) to no other citizen. Ernest Claussen was more of an extremist in his views than was his father and he was a most enthusiastic member of the *Turnverein* which he served as first speaker from 1862 to 1871.⁹

Hans Reimer Claussen's only daughter, Elfriede, married Christian Mueller, a former leading gymnast official of the *Turnverein* in Kiel. He had participated in the raid on Rendsburg, was wounded, imprisoned, released, and

⁹ The data about the Claussen family were compiled from Richter's *Geschichte der Stadt Davenport und des County Scott*, pp. 495, 551, 604, 606; Eiboeck's *Die Deutschen von Iowa und deren Errungenschaften*, pp. 409-417; *Der Demokrat* (Davenport), February 23, 1889; clippings in H. R. Claussen's scrapbook, kindly loaned by Mr. Alfred C. Mueller, Davenport; Veit Valentin's *Geschichte der Deutschen Revolution*, Vol. II (Berlin, 1931), pp. 34, 372. "First speaker" was equivalent to president. See also Hildegard Binder Johnson's "Hans Reimer Claussen" in *The American-German Review*, Vol. X, No. 5, pp. 30-32.

came directly to Davenport in July, 1852. His friend, Louis Hanssen, welcomed him with the words: "Now we must organize a Turnverein in this town right away." The *Sozialistischer Turnverein* of Davenport was founded on August 3, 1852, and Christian Mueller was probably the most devoted leader the *Turnverein* ever had.

During his successful business career Christian Mueller became owner and manager of a large lumber company and director of the First National Bank in Davenport. He lived in Davenport until his death on September 10, 1901, only the evening before the celebration of the transfer of the Turner Hall to the Turners as their property. In his testament he bequeathed eighty shares, two thousand dollars, to the *Turngemeinde*.

Another Schleswig-Holsteiner who came to Davenport in 1852 and remained was Emil N. J. Geisler from Dithmarschen. He also served as a very active member of the *Turnverein*, particularly on the committee for mental training, was one of the founders of the *Freier Deutscher Schulverein*, and later became a member of the Davenport Academy of Sciences. He held several civil posts in the city administration and, as a contractor and real estate dealer, was particularly interested in furthering German immigration to Iowa and to Scott County.¹⁰

Another founder of the *Freier Deutscher Schulverein*, and its treasurer up to his death in 1899, was Otto Klug, member of five German societies, city treasurer for two years, member of the school board for six years and of the city council for eleven terms. H. H. Andresen, another

¹⁰ Attempts to found a society for the protection of German immigrants in 1854 failed, according to *Der Demokrat*, April 8 and June 17, 1854. In August, 1866, a German immigration society was organized with Geisler as its secretary. It furnished information and secured employment for German immigrants for about ten years according to Richter.—*Democrat and Leader* (Davenport), May 15, 1921, p. 9.

Schleswig-Holstein immigrant, came to Davenport in 1854 after a short stay in Chicago. He founded the German Savings Bank of Davenport in 1869, one of the most prosperous institutions of its kind. For twenty-five years he was president of the *Freier Deutscher Schulverein* and for many years he served on the board of the German-American Teachers' Seminar in Milwaukee, as the speaker of the *Turnverein*, and as president of the *Schützenverein*.

Although some Schleswig-Holsteiners stayed for a few years only, they exerted considerable influence upon their environment. Olshausen has been already mentioned. Theodor Gülich came in 1851 and moved to Burlington, Iowa, ten years later. All his life he kept in close friendship with the Davenport Turners who engaged him as their first speaker when the new hall was dedicated in 1887, and sent a delegation to his funeral in 1893.

Gülich had participated in the Baden Revolution of 1848 to 1849 and in the war against Denmark which led to his imprisonment, a death sentence, and his final escape to America. In Davenport he found, according to his poem in honor of Turnerism and the Schleswig-Holstein war veterans, "the scattered remnants of an army for freedom." He was the first editor of *Der Demokrat*, a particularly talented and genial journalist, a gifted poet, and a relentless free-thinker and liberal.

Indicative of his temperamental love for liberalism was, for instance, the baptism in 1860 of the son of a friend, whom Gülich named Garibaldi and dedicated to the "Goddess of Liberty". He was one of the founders of the *Freier Deutscher Schulverein* in 1851 and was also one of the thirteen founders of the *Turnverein*. In April, 1856, he sold *Der Demokrat* to Henry Lischer and Theodor Olshausen and became a lawyer. In Burlington he founded the *Iowa Tribüne* which he owned with changing partners until 1893,

occasionally contributing articles to *Der Demokrat*. In the early eighties he was very active in the fight against prohibition in Iowa.

Jens Peter Stibolt, born in Copenhagen in 1813, was the son of an aristocratic Schleswig-Holstein family. Excellent education, wide knowledge, and unflinching convictions were his chief characteristics. From 1847 to 1851 he was a "Latin farmer"¹¹ in Missouri and co-editor of the *Freie Blätter*, a very radical abolitionist weekly in Alton, Illinois. For some time he was editor of *Amerika*, a political monthly of high intellectual character in Galena, Illinois, then editor of the *Deutsche Zeitung* in Peoria which ardently supported Fremont's candidacy.

After a period as editor of the *Amerikanische Geschichtsblätter*, another intellectual accomplishment and financial failure, he took over *Der Demokrat* in Davenport in 1861. Here he finally made his home and represented the guiding spirit of the city's leading German paper for twenty-six years. Like most of the forty-eighters he was an ardent Republican until Grant's administration, then an anti-prohibitionist and supporter of the Democratic President Grover Cleveland. He was also an enthusiastic supporter of the German societies.

Like Mathias J. Rohlf's, Christoph H. Ficke was proud of the piano he brought with him to Davenport. Ficke emigrated from Boitzenburg on the Elbe River to a farm near Davenport in Winfield Township in 1852. He had contemplated emigration for some time on account of the limited economic opportunities for his many children in his native land. His decision was spurred on by two of the most thorough, honest, and informative letters to be encountered in the literature on immigration history. They were writ-

¹¹ "Latin farmers" were similar to the many groups of this period which attempted to combine literary pursuits with agriculture.

ten by a German agriculturist, Wilhelm Fischer, in August, 1851, and January, 1852.¹² One of Christoph H. Ficke's sons was Charles August Ficke, one of the distinguished citizens of Davenport, alderman, mayor, lawyer, lecturer, and author. He was for many years an influential member of the *Turngemeinde* and a member of the distinguished Contemporary Club.¹³ Charles August Ficke was only two years of age when his parents left Germany, but he represented the ideals and aims of the forty-eighters almost as much as any of the older immigrants.

These are only a few of the Germans whose activities made Davenport a distinctive city. There were many others whose names will appear in connection with the discussion of the activities of German societies.

THE TURNVEREIN AND TURNGEMEINDE

The outstanding German society in Davenport was the *Sozialistischer Turnverein* organized in 1852. It dropped the first part of the name in 1858 and changed its name to *Davenport Turngemeinde* in 1882. It ranked second strongest and, in proportion to its size, was financially the best situated Turner society in the North American Turner Bund.¹⁴

¹² These letters are published in their original German version in Richter's *Geschichte der Stadt Davenport und des County Scott*, pp. 443-459, and in English translation in Charles A. Ficke's *Fourscore Years and Ten*, pp. 1-28.

¹³ The Contemporary Club restricted its membership to thirty-three, its annual fees were ten dollars, and it aimed "to discuss such topics as pertain to the welfare, culture and happiness of the people particularly of our own locality, state or nation." The lectures were published in a series of volumes. Henry Vollmer, who was born in Davenport of parents from Bremen and Holstein and served as mayor from 1893 to 1896, and Dr. August P. Richter were also members of this English-speaking club.

¹⁴ A complete history of Turnerism in the United States has not yet been written. An early history of this American-German movement is to be found in the *Jahrbücher der Deutsch-Amerikanischen Turnerei*, published as a bi-monthly journal by Heinrich Metzger in New York from 1890 to 1893. All

In Germany, Turnerism had undergone bitter trials during the reactionary period from 1816 to the middle of the forties. Shortly before and during 1848 the German Turner societies had risen to new heights and many forty-eighters who came to the United States had been active Turners of high ethical and strong political convictions in the fatherland. They were young men aspiring to "a sound mind in a sound body" which was their slogan. Upon their arrival in the new country, they eagerly took issue with nativism, slavery, and the temperance movement for the sake of "freedom, education and welfare for all", their favorite motto, around which the *Sozialistischer Turnverein* of Davenport rallied in 1852.

Of the thirteen founders Christian Mueller, Theodor Gülich, and Louis Hanssen were probably the most distinguished men. Hanssen was still living in Davenport when the *Turngemeinde* celebrated its fiftieth anniversary. The Turners held their gymnastic exercises at first in the attic above a grinding mill on Warren Street close to Front Street. This room was reached only by a ladder. The first Turner Hall was erected in the fall of 1853, mostly through the manual labor of the members. The first great festival, attended by a considerable number of American fellow-citizens, was celebrated in Le Claire's Hall in 1854. Young women of the Turner families donated an embroidered flag in glowing red, one of the colors of the black, red, and golden banners under which German revolutionists had

data on the history of the Davenport *Turngemeinde* are based on ten volumes of records of the board meetings, the proceedings at general meetings, and the meetings of the section for mental training. The folio volumes number between three and six hundred pages each. All are in German writing. See also August P. Richter's *Geschichte der Stadt Davenport und des County Scott*, p. 522. For checking the following were used: August P. Richter's *Die Davenport Turner Turngemeinde* (Davenport, 1902); Wilhelm Reuter's *Davenport Turngemeinde, Seventy-fifth Anniversary* (Davenport, 1927); and files of *Der Demokrat*.

fought in 1848. Theodor Gülich, the "first speaker", thanked Hans Reimer Claussen's daughter, who had presented the flag, saying that red, the traditional color under which mankind had fought for freedom since the days of the French Revolution, now would be the color under which the Davenport Turners were to fight against church domination, nativism, and for "freedom, enlightenment and welfare for all", as well as for women's rights.

The second home of the Turners was also erected mainly through voluntary work by members on their free Sundays and holidays, an affront to the more religious Anglo-Americans in Davenport. The building stood on the bluff on Sixth Street, between Brown and Gaines streets. The expenses incurred were too high for the young society and they sold the building to Bernhard L. Lahrman in 1862. The *Turnverein's* activities took place from then on in Germania Hall, where the German theater gave numerous performances from 1856 to 1862. In 1870, the *Turnverein* acquired the building of this theater society on the corner of Third and Scott streets for ten thousand dollars. An adjoining lot, the site of the present Turner Hall, was purchased and on it a two-story gymnasium of brick was erected. When the conglomeration of different buildings required costly repairs the demand for an adequate edifice was answered by the erection of the finest Turner Hall between Chicago and the West Coast at a cost of ninety thousand dollars. The laying of the foundation on July 3, 1887, was the occasion of a great public celebration in the city.

This formidable financial enterprise was encouraged by the unexpected success of a fair in 1887, the first after eight years, which netted about \$6,400. In 1889, another fair yielded about \$7,500. The bulk of the sum required was raised through the subscription of shares of twenty-five

dollars each. In less than four weeks \$45,000 were subscribed. These successes were due to the enthusiasm of Turners and to the liberal support of American friends who were not members. The contract between the Turner Hall Building Association and the *Turngemeinde* stipulated that the latter should pay one thousand dollars rent annually and five per cent interest to shareholders out of possible profits from festivals. About half of the debt was to be paid off in about fourteen and a half years after which the *Turngemeinde* was to become manager and owner of the property with a mortgage of about \$24,000.

Interest was never paid to shareholders, but otherwise the contract was scrupulously observed. Christian Mueller and Eduard Lischer, "first speaker" or president from 1896 to 1903, guided the society through the difficult period of the transfer arrangements. In September, 1901, the *Turngemeinde* took over the Turner Hall and the Turner Opera House with the reasonable mortgage of \$24,000 held by the German Savings Bank of Davenport. By 1904 the first speaker advised strict economy; in September, 1905, a new mortgage of \$8,400 had to be taken out to pay for necessary repairs. By 1910, the debt amounted to \$48,000, requiring \$2,500 in interest annually to the dismal surprise of newly elected board members who were as unaware of the bad financial situation as were the large number of members.

The financial development had a certain bearing on the public relations of the society. Before 1905 traditional festivities, such as the three "Kränzchen", which combined musical and dancing parties during the winter, the two gymnastic exhibitions in spring and fall, and the memorial celebration of the foundation, had yielded additional income. The fairs, infrequently held and always considered as special money-making enterprises, yielded \$15,500 in 1900, but

only \$4,800 in 1906. Annual masquerades in February usually brought a surplus of about four hundred dollars. In 1911 this surplus suddenly dropped to six dollars.¹⁵ It is obvious that the Turner festivals had lost their appeal to the public, upon whose support the success of these ventures depended to a great extent.

Another factor which contributed to disintegration was the loss in members. In 1865, sixty-five members were listed, in 1876, one hundred and ninety-six, in 1885, two hundred and eighty-three, in 1895, four hundred and twenty-eight, and in April, 1898, the long desired goal of a membership of five hundred had been reached. In 1905 the largest number, eight hundred and five members, was listed. Then the membership started to decrease, dropping to six hundred and ten by September, 1911. As a special incentive the entrance fee of two dollars and fifty cents had been lowered to one dollar in 1895; the dues amounted to thirty-five cents monthly until 1888, then to forty-five cents monthly. The fee was slightly lower for those who paid a year in advance.

Participation in the annual election of officers — first speaker, second speaker, treasurer, first and second secretary, first and second gymnastic warden, etc.— became very low. Only eighty-five of six hundred and fifty-three members voted in 1910. Minutes were kept irregularly. In 1910, for the first time in the society's history, the interest on the mortgage could not be paid.

The same year the national *Turner Bund* was in such financial difficulties that a special tax of twenty-five cents

¹⁵ The masque balls were usually open to the public. In 1880, for instance, it was resolved "to hold a masquerade again because of the doubtful financial situation of the *Turngemeinde* treasury." Net surpluses were noted in the society's records for almost every year. Here are a few at random: \$150 in 1868, \$472 in 1872, \$163 in 1877, \$334 in 1884, \$372 in 1897, \$475 in 1900, and \$620 in 1905.

was imposed on every individual member of each society. The Davenporters had to pay \$167.50 to the national executive committee. Everywhere the societies had run into heavy debts for expensive buildings and what was said of the Davenporters on January 21, 1909 — “that expenses in no way were justified by the income for the last ten years” — also held true for many of the other societies.

Sick insurance was another drain on the finances. The Davenport *Turngemeinde* paid two dollars weekly in support of sick members who had paid their dues for the three months before. Night watches in serious cases were volunteered by members. A total of sixty dollars was paid out in 1890 and twenty-five watchers volunteered; in 1891, one hundred and twenty-three dollars were paid out and there were sixty-eight night watches. After 1895 the sick insurance committee was constantly admonished to be careful. In 1902 night watches were discontinued and in 1909 the society declared itself unable to pay any support to sick members.

The attempt to manage the society as a club failed: too many strangers gained access to the clubroom through the irresponsible sale of keys in 1908. Most of the building was rented so that the Turners themselves lost the right to use the rooms of their own buildings as they saw fit. Afterwards the society was transformed into a holding company. We are not concerned with this later period and the recovery after the last war. The disintegration after 1900 is described only because it illustrates what the passing of the old generation of forty-eighters meant for the spirit and the status of their most representative society.

Like every Turner society in the United States, the *Turnverein* or Davenport *Turngemeinde* consisted of different sections, the most important being the physical section. Its splendid achievements at the general gymnastic festivals

of the all-American *Turner Bund*, the excellent equipment of the gymnasium, and above all the remarkable standing of the Turner school were due to the devotion and knowledge of William Reuter, the salaried teacher of the society from December, 1879, to 1912. Reuter was trained in Milwaukee and kept himself informed about the educational progress in his field by visiting the annual conferences for teachers of physical training. The society usually paid his travelling expenses. It also granted almost every request for new equipment, repairs, improvements, and cleaning of the gymnasium which today is the most impressive heritage of former times in the old Turner Hall at Third and Scott streets in Davenport.

The number of pupils grew at a steady rate from 90 boys in 1867 and 165 boys and 15 girls in 1876 to 345 boys and 227 girls in 1903. Then the decrease set in. In November, 1909, the school numbered 176 boys and 100 girls. Reuter complained that social activities of the churches were a sharp competition to youth instruction by Turners and he also mentioned "dirty agitation against the Turner school" in April, 1910.

Reuter was very influential in getting physical education introduced into the public schools of Davenport. The first gymnastic exhibition was held in November, 1872, upon the urgent recommendation of M. J. Rohlf's. After an interview with members of the city school board he was convinced that the board was not authorized at that time to introduce gymnastics in the public schools. His committee arranged for a public debate in October, 1874, but the public school teachers present kept silent about the issue. In December of the same year a special section for English-speaking boys was formed in the Turner school. Five years later, pamphlets printed in English and issued for propaganda purposes by the National Turner Executive Commit-

tee were distributed among city and county school superintendents.

In 1886 the school board employed Reuter as special instructor in physical education and he taught in the public schools of Davenport until his retirement. In 1894 the Turners ordered one hundred copies of the Turner pamphlet *Mind and Body* to be distributed in the public schools. They invited all English-speaking high schools to participate in their field day in 1896 and later on distributed circulars about their own school among the parents of children who were not yet enrolled in the Turner school. When the school board did not arrange for a field day in 1897 the Turners expressed regret and when a public field day was again arranged in 1899 they published their appreciation. It seems that the closing of all schools during the district Turner festival in 1908 indicated the close coöperation which was finally established. In 1897 the Turner school contributed \$888.00 in fees to the society. One year later the Turner school was attended by 181 children of members and 223 children of non-members.

Originally, the class of active Turners consisted of physically fit men of all ages. After 1871 the group was limited to Turners under forty years and after 1874 to Turners under twenty-five years of age. However, the class soon suffered from the chronic faults of indifference and irregularity. In 1868 when the membership amounted to slightly more than one hundred, fifty-nine were active Turners, but in October, 1910, only twenty-three of six hundred and fifty-three members were listed as active Turners. Attempts to organize a so-called *Bärenriege* section for older members were made in 1890, 1894, and 1899, but they all failed. Men like Rohlf, Claussen, Mueller, and others, were far too old or too busy, and the new generation of middle-aged men lacked interest in active gymnastics.

For these the two other sections — singing and mental training — provided ample opportunity for active participation. The singing section of the *Turnverein* was, however, never very successful and was a constant source of friction. The number of members in this section never exceeded thirty and the attendance at weekly rehearsals was irregular. T. R. Reese was the tireless conductor for many years. He was not too well paid for his services and in spite of his endeavors, he was reproached “for not being another William Reuter”, according to his own words. The society granted altogether one hundred and sixty dollars for music between 1868 and 1878. Several other good singing societies in Davenport which Germans with good voices could join probably contributed to the lack of success of this section.

More interesting and generally more significant was the section for mental training. The North American National *Turner Bund*, reorganized in 1865, after the disunion during the Civil War, outlined the aims of Turnerism as follows: members were to be educated to be men of strong bodies and free minds. The aim was “to induce by all possible means a true understanding of efforts for radical reforms in the social, political, and religious field, and to work for the realization and preservation of the inalienable human rights.” They were to work specially for the introduction of gymnastics in public schools, for the delivery of German-American schools from all religious influences, for the acquisition of American citizenship by every member, and for a truly Republican system of military defense.

The last requirement was clearly a reflection of the clash between American recruiting practices during the Civil War and Turner ideas formed during the Napoleonic wars at which time conscription was introduced into Prussia. The Turners in Davenport took their responsibilities seri-

ously and checked their members to learn whether they had obtained their citizenship. Their successful efforts to introduce gymnastics in public schools have been described. For many years they were the chief support of the *Freie Deutsche Schule* which was strictly non-religious. In other words, the Davenport *Turngemeinde* put into practice the special duties prescribed for Turners.

The section on mental training was supposed to serve as a clearing house for the "isms" of the second half of the nineteenth century — radicalism, anarchism, communism, socialism, atheism, materialism, deism, realism — in which German-American intellectuals and forty-eighters were intensely interested. It is difficult to estimate the influence and scope of the lectures and debates which the *Turner Bund* exhorted its members to hold. Some of the discussions, particularly those dealing with political questions of the day, were public. From a comparative survey of other German Turner and literary societies and of the problems frequently discussed in German-American literature of the period the Davenport Turners appear to have been remarkable for the lecturers whom they engaged and typical for the topics which they discussed.¹⁶

A list of the themes which were chosen for discussion and of the topics presented in the most important lectures given by travelling lecturers, or by members of the *Turngemeinde* is presented following this article, on pages 54-60.

The reflection of contemporary political events is obvious in many themes selected for discussion. The dissatisfaction of German immigrants with some aspects of their

¹⁶ The list of lectures and debates was compiled from newspapers, notices in the Turner records, and a manuscript volume of minutely described proceedings of the section for mental training between 1873 and 1885, a most informative, intimate, and rare source of information about the ideas and opinions among German-American Turners. German titles have been translated. A few items give no information as to the subject discussed.

American environment is reflected in debates on temperance, "praying fever", party bondage, and German language instruction in public schools. Woman suffrage, socialism and labor, and gymnastic education were favorite topics of German-American liberals everywhere. The discussions were of high character when the participants were outstanding; when, for example, Senator Claussen gave a well-prepared talk, M. J. Rohlf's defended his opinions, or C. H. Ficke, who was particularly active in the section for mental training, took the platform. The participation, however, was usually not satisfactory. In 1875, rules were made for the nomination of at least two members who were to represent two opposing opinions on a subject and two more members were to prepare a poem or prose piece for recital. Soon those designated for the task were not prepared or did not appear at all. At that time thirty-seven members belonged to the section for mental training, of whom never more than fourteen appeared at regular sessions.

The outside lecturers who were engaged by the Turners may be divided into three groups. The first consisted of nationally known German-Americans. Among them were freethinkers like Friedrich Schünemann-Pott from San Francisco, Carl Heinzen from Boston, Franz Klepper and Michael Biron from Milwaukee, Robert Reitzel, speaker of the *Freie Gemeinde* in Washington, and Fritz Schütz of Carver County, Minnesota. These men lectured in almost every Turner and freethinkers' society in the country, usually on radical and anti-religious topics. Their modest fees ran from fifteen to twenty-five dollars a lecture. Some well-known German-American politicians were also invited by the *Turngemeinde*, such as Judge J. Bernhard Stallo of Cincinnati, General Franz Sigel of German revolutionary and American Civil War fame, and Friedrich Hecker, at

whose instigation the first *Turnverein* had been founded in Cincinnati in 1848. Their fees ran higher; Friedrich Hecker, for instance, received fifty dollars for his lecture.

A second group consisted of famous European visitors. The materialistic philosopher, Ludwig Büchner, lectured in 1871 and 1873, and received one hundred and twenty-five dollars for one evening. In 1888 Frau Hedwig Henry-Wilhelmi, at one time imprisoned in Germany for her expressions on free thought, lectured before the Turners on four evenings. She received twenty-five dollars for each of her poorly attended lectures which appear to have been of outstanding merit.¹⁷ Alexander Strakosh, dramatic reader and former teacher of the celebrated German actor, Heinrich Laube, one of Germany's greatest elocutionists, gave a recital in 1887.

Turner societies were usually rather one-sided in the selection of radical lecturers on philosophical and social themes. The Davenporters deserve all the more credit for engaging also outstanding scientists. Robert Schlagintweit, a famous German geologist who had been distinguished with the *grand prix* by the Parisian Geographical Society in 1859, was heard by the *Turngemeinde*. He lectured on the Himalaya Mountains and on Turkestan and was paid two hundred dollars for his lectures. Gerhard Rolfs, geographer and African explorer, gave three lectures in the beginning of 1876. Fritjof Nansen lectured in the Turner Hall on January 19, 1898. Nansen's impresario in Chicago had asked twelve hundred dollars for one lecture, a very high fee to pay even today. The Turners could not guarantee this sum, but they gave their hall free, took care of all technical arrangements, obtained the coöperation of the Academy of Sciences in Davenport for the welcome of the

¹⁷ *Der Demokrat* (Davenport), March 25, 27, 29, December 18, 19, 22, 1888.

celebrated explorer, and realized nine hundred and ninety-two dollars from the sale of tickets.

The third group consisted of local talent, such as Theodor Gülich. One of his favorite topics was the "Status of Women". With growing financial obligations and the gradual passing away of professional travelling German-American lecturers, the Turners invited men of smaller reputation, such as Professor Rosenstengel from the University of Wisconsin, William Kaufmann, a former journalist from Cleveland, Pedro Ilgen, an elocutionist from St. Louis, and the German-American poet, Conrad Nies, and they relied more and more on one man in their midst, Gustav Donald.

Gustav Donald had been trained by one of Germany's best actors and looked back on a diversified and successful stage career before he had to leave Germany on account of difficulties with a superior officer after the war of 1870 and 1871. He became a member of the *Turnverein* in 1880 and was especially active in the section for mental training. Donald lectured at the traditional annual celebrations of Schiller's birthday in November and Thomas Paine's birthday in January. At regular evenings of "intellectual entertainment" when no lecturer could be engaged he was on hand with various topics and usually received ten dollars for a lecture. He also spoke at the funeral of many Turners and their relatives, for instance at Anna Claussen's burial. Turners were not supposed to be church members. After Turner meetings he delivered addresses in memory of deceased members. The section for mental training would doubtless have deteriorated much sooner without Donald's zest for intellectual entertainment and his flair for show.

The *Turngemeinde* usually had to grant additional sums to pay for the expenses incurred by the lectures. At best,

the committee for mental training broke even. In 1885, Theodor Gülich and Nicholas Kuhnen, the latter one of the directors of the German Savings Bank and a Turner, donated one hundred dollars for lectures. In 1892, Kuhnen bequeathed one thousand dollars as a permanent fund, the fifty dollars annual interest to be used for lectures only. In 1929, when the Kuhnen fund had dropped to five hundred and five dollars, the money was almost completely spent for an elaborate banquet at which the society gave medals to those who had been Turners for fifty years. Thus the section for mental training which once was to promote understanding of radical reforms and of the realization of inalienable human rights ended, like most German-American literary societies, as a social club.¹⁸

The history of the library of the *Turngemeinde* also illustrates the slow disintegration of the forty-eighters. In 1869 the German Literary Society of Davenport donated its whole collection to the Turners, whose library at that time consisted of only twenty-three books. This Literary Society had been founded in 1851 at the instigation of Francis Ochs, a liberal and highly educated German from Prague, who came to Davenport in 1849, served as alderman and member of the school board for six years, and contributed generously to all cultural activities. According to the agreement at the time of the donation in November, 1869, the members of the Literary Society became honorary members of the *Turnverein*.¹⁹ Of the 888 books in the catalogue only 600 were in the library and after much searching only 757 were located. For many years the rules set up for the use of the library in 1870 were strictly observed and

¹⁸ A typical German Literary Society is discussed in Hildegard Binder Johnson's "The Carver County German Reading Society" in *Minnesota History*, Vol. XXIV, pp. 214-225.

¹⁹ Honorary members are specially mentioned only for the years from 1882 to 1889, starting with twenty-two members and ending with sixteen.

penalty fees for keeping books longer than two weeks were collected. The library was open from eight to nine o'clock Wednesday evenings and from nine to eleven o'clock Sunday mornings. Women could use the library. After September, 1896, the librarian was paid twenty-five cents an hour for keeping the library open two evenings during the week. Irregular reports of the library committee list 27 readers in 1872, 60 in 1880, and 79 during the first six months of 1883 when the library consisted of 1075 German and 132 English volumes. In 1891, 2450 books were taken out. After 1890 there was a steady decrease; only 275 books were taken out by 32 readers in 1908.

In the ten years from 1868 to 1878 five hundred and fifty dollars were spent for books; from 1882 to 1898, five hundred and seventy-five dollars. During this period the library received many donations. The *Turngemeinde* won a friend in the famous German publisher, Friedrich A. Brockhaus, who gave a set of his encyclopedia to the library in 1898. In 1902 at the fiftieth jubilee of the society Brockhaus sent the catalogues of his publishing house asking the library committee to select whatever books they wished to have. For this "truly noble gift" the *Turngemeinde* made Brockhaus an honorary member of the society.

The selection of books was typical of German free-thinkers' and Turner societies. The standardized collection of fiction is partly explainable by the offers of the "Society for German Literature" through which seven to eight volumes of latest best sellers could be bought for an annual fee of fifteen dollars. All philosophical literature reflected the spirit evident in the lectures and debates. An illustration of the seriousness with which the Turners cultivated their library as an expression of their principles was the decision in July, 1888, to remove all books by Ida Hahn-Hahn, a popular German author who became a Catholic.

After 1903, financial difficulties made it necessary to rent all rooms that could possibly be spared, and the library became homeless. In 1906 further gifts were not accepted because of lack of space. In 1911 the offer to donate the collection to the public library was met with indifference. Today the books are piled in a dusty attic, forgotten and neglected, a sad reminder of the intellectual aspirations of a former generation.

The relations of the *Turngemeinde* to the outside world were characterized by their loyal friendship with the neighboring Turner societies of Rock Island, Moline, Peoria, Dubuque, Burlington, Muscatine, Buffalo, and Coal Valley, by readiness to help German groups everywhere in case of catastrophes,²⁰ and by eagerness to coöperate in German-American enterprises.²¹ In questions of politics they preserved an independent attitude. In 1868 they were critical of the demand of the *Turner Bund* to support the Republican Party. In 1872 they instructed their delegates to protest strongly against the advocacy of woman suffrage by the national *Turner Bund*. In 1874 the members of the board of the Davenport *Turnverein* advocated a strong agitation against the tax exemption of church property, but the general meeting voted the proposal down.

²⁰ The *Davenport Turngemeinde* donated the following amounts: in 1867 and 1878, \$25 to the yellow fever fund in New Orleans; in 1871, \$50 for Chicago fire victims; in 1881, \$65 for victims of the tornado at New Ulm, Minnesota; in 1886, \$25 to help rebuild the Charleston Turner Hall, destroyed by an earthquake; in 1889, \$25 for survivors of the Johnstown flood; in 1895, \$99 for drought sufferers in Sherman County, Nebraska; in 1901, \$100 for victims of a fire in East Davenport; and in 1906, \$25 for survivors of the San Francisco earthquake.

²¹ Among others the following contributions were made: in 1884, \$25 for the Heinzen monument in Boston; in 1890, \$600 for the Bundes-Turner Hall in Milwaukee; in 1892, ten cents per member for Turner participation at the Chicago World's Fair; and in 1903, \$25 for the Franz Sigel monument in St. Louis. By 1906 the *Turngemeinde* held shares to the amount of \$1000 in the German-American Teachers' Seminar.

In 1875 the suggestion of the national executive committee of the *Turner Bund* to contribute toward the centennial exhibition of 1876 was flatly refused. The strongest protest in the society's history was made when the national committee asked the *Turnverein* to tell its members to vote for Tilden in 1876. The *Turnverein* protested publicly in *Der Demokrat*, August 9, 1876, and demanded that the *Zukunft*, at that time the organ of the *Turner Bund*, be discontinued as such. When the Philadelphia *Turnverein* asked the Davenport Turners to join in a protest against the closing of the Philadelphia Exhibition on Sundays the matter was "found outside the sphere of influence" by a specially named committee.

The Davenport *Turngemeinde* took a rather conservative stand on labor questions as could be expected from the character and social position of many leading members. At a general poll, decreed by the National Executive Turner Committee, on the introduction of an eight-hour day, fifty-nine members voted against and six for the reform in 1886. The participation was small, the membership at that time being two hundred and ninety-eight. In 1895 they had only a "declaration of sympathy" when the printers of Davenport asked them to join in a protest against the introduction of the composing machines into the newspaper offices of Davenport because this put many of the printers out of work. The *Turnverein* and the *Turngemeinde* always opposed woman suffrage.

Unwillingness to interfere on special occasions did not mean that the Turners of Davenport were unwilling to help laborers. When a Turner from Bennett, Iowa, asked for their assistance in finding work as a butcher, an employment bureau was set up in 1897. By November 1, 1898, four hundred and sixty postcards had been sent out asking for positions and jobs. By June, 1898, one hundred per-

sons had been listed who wanted employment and work had been found for seventy. Only twenty of them had informed the secretary of their acceptance.

The agitation of the *Turngemeinde* for the introduction of physical education into the public schools of Davenport has already been mentioned. The members were equally interested in seeing German language instruction preserved. Ever since a committee of three, George H. French, James Grant, and Dr. J. J. Olshausen, appointed by the school board in April, 1863, had recommended it German instruction had been given in the public schools. The results of the first year under Henry Lambach as teacher were so good that George L. Davenport's daughter Sarah delivered the salutatory address of her high school in German in June, 1865. In March, 1875, the Turners passed a resolution to make public "their wish to see German instruction in elementary schools continue as heretofore". "They considered the restriction of German instruction in high schools a menace to the German language." It was not until 1918 that the teaching of German in the grades was stopped.

With all the emphasis on the preservation of the German language, German culture and customs, the forty-eighters nevertheless were intent on proving themselves good citizens of the United States. The Turners did not fail to participate in almost every national American celebration. The *Democrat and Leader* noted that the Fourth of July in 1849 "passed without any demonstration upon the part of our American citizens", while the Germans had a parade, a dinner, an oration, and a ball. The Turners never let the day pass unnoticed. But they preferred to celebrate the national holiday according to their own principles.

The Fourth of July, 1876, was the day of a great centennial celebration for Davenport. The Turners and other

German societies — the *Schützenverein*, the Thalia Society, and the Germania Society for Mutual Support — were invited to participate in the great parade. They accepted on condition that no religious ceremonies would be held, since the Turners felt that these “were not fitting because citizens of all religious denomination were to participate.” On July third, the first speaker informed the Turners at a hurriedly called special meeting that in spite of his protest the program had been changed in the last minute and was to include a prayer. A strong protest was drafted. However, the Turners decided to participate, but only if they could retire immediately after the procession, before the prayers were spoken. The next day, after the procession arrived at the courthouse, the German societies marched off to Turner Hall to complete the celebration as they saw fit.²²

The *Turngemeinde* participated more and more in the social life of the English-speaking population of Davenport during the last decade of the nineteenth century. In 1880, the Davenport Academy of Sciences asked that the section of active Turners and the Turner school give a benefit performance for this institution. In August, 1884, the *Turngemeinde* participated in the parade in honor of the Democratic State Convention held in the city. The Business Men's Association invited the Turners to assist in the arrangement of a river carnival in 1890, and in 1892 the Turners again decorated a float for the carnival parade. A year later, they furnished a float for the Labor Day parade. For the parade on the Fourth of July, 1894, Turners were instructed to carry only the American flag and wear small American flags in their buttonholes.

The first celebration in memory of Pastorius' landing in Philadelphia in 1683 was held in Scott County in October,

²² *Der Demokrat* (Davenport), July 4, 1876; *Davenport Democrat*, July 5, 1876.

1883. It was called "German Forefathers' Day" and the last time that it was observed in Davenport with full participation of the *Turngemeinde* was in 1895. In 1894 the Turners proposed that this German-American Day should be celebrated on the fourth of July or on the twenty-second of February, but when the celebration was suggested again in 1899, the Turners declared themselves against it. Another aspect of the process of Americanization was the decision of the *Turngemeinde* to have its new constitution printed in English in 1895. The edition of 1890 had been printed in German and Gothic letters.

OTHER GERMAN SOCIETIES

The development of the *Turngemeinde* has been described in detail because it was the German society most representative of the attitude of the forty-eighters. Most of its members also supported other German societies.

The *Schützenverein* was organized in 1862. Davenport owed the Schützen Park, twenty-five acres near the bluff by the city limits, to this society. The park was beautified in 1870 and dedicated for public use by H. H. Andresen, M. J. Rohlf, and Ernest Claussen. The Turners always took part in the activities of this society and coöperated with the *Schützenverein* in setting up on its grounds an athletic field, which the Turners frequently used for their open air festivals. During World War I, Schützen Park was renamed Forest Park, but it is no longer kept up.

The *Schleswig-Holstein Kampfgenossen Verein*, the only organization of its kind in the United States, was founded in 1872 by veterans of the Schleswig-Holstein war. Its membership of one hundred and fifty-five soon increased to three hundred. Most of the members were Turners and the *Turngemeinde* participated in the fiftieth jubilee of the society, on which occasion a marker was put up in Wash-

ington Square dedicated to those who fought against Denmark between 1848 and 1851. The marker was removed during World War I, shortly after the last member of the society had died in 1915.

An amazing cultural achievement of the forty-eighters was the German theater of Davenport. *Der Deutsche Liebhaber Theater Verein* was organized in November, 1855; among its founders were the previously mentioned Emil Geisler, Fritz Welcker, a nephew of the famous revolutionary hero of Baden in 1848, and Jacob Strasser, for fifty years Davenport's most widely sought band and orchestra leader. The society grew rapidly. The members created a fund by paying five dollars each. In the winter of 1855-1856 these amateurs acted in a small hall erected for this purpose on Second Street west of Ripley Street.

Henry Lischer, who arrived in 1856, was a valuable addition to the theater society. He had benefited from Börnstein's cultural influence in St. Louis and served the society as stage manager for twelve years. Lahrman's Germania Hall was opened with a ball and concert on October 20, 1856, and a week later the first theater performance, a comedy, was given. As early as May 4, 1858, Schiller's *Räuber* was presented—the ambition of every German-American stage. The regular winter performances were continued during the summer for the first time in 1857 in Weidemann's Garden on the bluffs of the Mississippi. These Sunday performances, advertised as "great sacred concerts" greatly displeased the non-German population of Davenport.

In the summer of 1862, the society issued shares of five dollars each, guaranteed by Otto Klug, Dr. C. Tegeler, and P. B. Harding of Davenport and in December, 1862, the new hall was opened to the public. It measured seventy-five by one hundred feet. This building was purchased in

1870 by the *Turnverein* for \$10,000. As the number of active amateurs became smaller, more professional actors had to be called in, of whom there was no scarcity in the United States after the influx of many revolutionary minded actors who had formerly performed at provincial theaters in Germany. The expenses grew accordingly and the debt of the society amounted to \$8,000 when the theater hall was sold. The society dissolved in August, 1871.²³

As in most American cities which could boast of a German theater, the Turners were the chief promoters of the enterprise after 1871. John Hill, who had come to Davenport in 1854 as a boy of fourteen, was an ardent admirer of the theater. He contributed between five hundred and one thousand dollars annually toward the support of the theater while he conducted the restaurant of the Turner Hall with great success for sixteen years. When the lease had to be renewed, Hill was the lowest bidder, but the Turners preferred his contract to higher bids by others in recognition of his services to the theater and because Hill promised to enlarge the theater at his own expense in 1882. The years between 1880 and 1887, when John Hill was manager and director and Gustav Donald the leading actor of the German theater, are said to have been the best.²⁴

During the construction of the new Turner Hall and Opera House, regular Sunday performances were again given in Lahrman's old hall. The elegant new theater with its practical stage was opened with the *Nachtlager von Granada*, performed partly by amateurs, partly by guest singers, with T. R. Reese as conductor in May, 1888. During the season of 1888 to 1889 the Milwaukee Theater Company

²³ For the early history of the German theater in Davenport see Joseph S. Schick's *The Early Theater in Eastern Iowa* (Chicago, 1939), pp. 74-103.

²⁴ Richter's *Geschichte der Stadt Davenport und des County Scott*, pp. 546, 634.

gave six guest performances in Davenport. A local company could not successfully be established. In 1891 the entire ensemble of the German theater in St. Louis, which had gone bankrupt, was brought to Davenport and played the winter season with great success. Sudermann's *Ehre* was the outstanding performance. But without John Hill's backing the theater did not thrive financially.

English plays were often given during the following winters, and about once a month a German performance by Welb and Wachsner's Milwaukee-Chicago Company. Through special efforts of the *Turngemeinde*, Dellinger's comic opera, *Don Cesare*, with Reese as conductor and singer of the title role, was given in November, 1894. Fritz Singer, a good tenor, became manager from 1899 to 1903, but had to give up, too, because of lack of financial support. The *Turngemeinde* instituted the new German Theater Society in June, 1903, and subscribed three hundred dollars for a guarantee fund. The year 1905, the golden jubilee of the German theater of Davenport, was one of renewed enthusiasm and there were several outstanding performances. The *Turngemeinde* reserved a special room for the *Theater Verein* in their building and permitted the actors to use their library upon a deposit of three dollars, but had to discontinue further financial support in February, 1907. Goetz Ackermann, assisted by a wealthy German woman of Davenport, whom he later married, tried once more to revive the theater with the arrangement for good guest performances. In 1910 the German theater was finally closed. The absence of an enthusiastic theater-loving third generation and the growth of other types of popular entertainment brought about its end.

A number of singing societies provided ample occasion for musical activity and entertainment. M. J. Rohlf's had organized the *Liedertafel* in 1848 which was dissolved when

the leader moved to a farm two years later. A number of the members of this society and other singers founded the *Männerchor* in June, 1851. Almost all twenty-eight members joined the *Turnverein* later on and this led to the proposal of merging both societies. This, however, was not realized and the *Männerchor* existed independently until after World War I. In September, 1851, the first concert was given for the benefit of the German Lutheran Church, the second concert was given at the courthouse in January, 1852, for the benefit of the poor, and the third in March, 1853, for the benefit of the German Free School.

The *Männerchor* arranged the first masque ball in Davenport in 1856 and always assisted readily in the performances of the German theater when chorus singing was needed. By 1856 the *Männerchor* numbered fifty-six members. The third festival of the northwestern *Sängerbund* was held in Davenport in 1858. According to the newspaper reports it probably was the greatest musical event in the history of Davenport until 1898, when the all-American organization of German singing societies gathered here for a week of singing and celebration.

A Swiss glee club, the *Grütli Verein*, and the *Deutscher Sängerbund* under the leadership of H. Bräunlich also existed in Davenport in the late fifties and in the sixties. In 1877 *Harmonie* was founded with Jacob Strasser, the best known band and orchestra leader in Davenport, as president. It was transformed into a mixed chorus in 1880, into a female chorus three years later, died, and was revived several times later on.

GERMAN EDUCATION IN DAVENPORT

The singing societies and particularly the German theater benefited greatly from the existence of good private German schools in Davenport which trained a second and

possibly a third generation of German-Americans capable of mastering the German language. There were no less than eighteen German schoolmasters living in Scott County around 1850.²⁵

Johann Heinrich True, who left Hannover, Germany, because he objected to clerical supervision of schools, opened a private school based on liberal principles in September, 1852. Meanwhile German citizens had collected almost one thousand dollars for the organization of a liberal church and school for which they hoped to get a minister from Schleswig-Holstein. Theodor Gülich objected to the combination of church and school in his *Demokrat* and became one of the leaders of the "school party" which sold the lot and the building material that had already been purchased for the purpose in January, 1853. H. R. Claussen, M. J. Rohlf, and others still supported the idea of a "Free Church" but their project did not succeed because the minister from Holstein who came in 1853 left Davenport after a few months. On October 8, 1853, the *Schulverein* opened its school in a small brick building on the northwest corner of Fourth and Warren streets, with True as principal and teacher. A fair held on the same day for the benefit of the school netted two hundred dollars. The school was to be conducted "under rigid exclusion of all clerical influence and according to progressive educational and scientific principles."

Johann Heinrich True spent considerable funds of his own for his school. The fees were small, two dollars for one child for one quarter, three for two children from the same family. The pupils were divided into three classes according to their ages. Few textbooks were used. Much of True's instruction consisted in vivid lecturing and mem-

²⁵ Their names are listed in Richter's *Geschichte der Stadt Davenport und des County Scott*, p. 548.

orizing made easy for the younger ones by the use of rhymes. History and geography were his most successful subjects. When his pupils who came from well-to-do German and American families traveled in Europe later on they were acquainted with the names of most of the rivers, mountains, and towns they saw. English was taught as a separate subject.

When the students were old enough to go to the American high school they were superior in every subject except English. Most of the girls, however, went to St. Catherine's School later on, but only after the nuns had promised to refrain from any religious instruction. In 1860 True inaugurated festivals for children in summer with trap shooting and other games which became a tradition in Davenport for German children and their young American friends during many summers to come.²⁶

Until 1861, the *Freie Deutsche Schule* was attended on an average by sixty children annually. With the increase of students a second teacher was engaged in 1864 and three years later the building was enlarged to twice its size, with two hundred and fifty pupils enrolled. After True's death in 1876, J. S. Kahrman became principal of the school. Like True, he had left Germany because he objected to theological supervision. Kahrman taught from 1866 to 1880 and founded the *Diesterweg Verein* for the teachers and the friends of the school.

With the introduction of German instruction in the public schools the number of students in the German school decreased. An evening school had been connected with it in 1866, and some American children, among them Nathaniel French, later Judge French, were students. Carl Suks-

²⁶ For information about True's school, the author is indebted to Miss Lina Roddewig, a former pupil in the school, whose father, Ferdinand Roddewig, had a wholesale wine and liquor business in Davenport in the fifties.

dorf was the last principal of the school. When he was elected superintendent of schools for the county in 1887, regular instruction in the German school was suspended. The unused buildings were used by the Germania Singing Society and other societies. The offer of the buildings to the Davenport school board upon condition that German instruction would always be given in the public schools of Davenport could not be accepted by the board, but in 1898 the buildings were sold to the school board.

In 1897, the lack of liberal education according to the principles of German freethinkers was again felt and the *Freie Deutsche Schulgemeinde* was founded which conducted a Sunday school for several years. It was liberally supported by many free-thinking German citizens and attended by about fifty students. In 1902, the Turners were asked to furnish a room where instruction could be given. They also granted one hundred dollars in March, 1906, to support the work of the *Schulgemeinde*.²⁷ The interest from a legacy of ten thousand dollars by Matthias Frahm netted an additional yearly income. Later on the funds were used to conduct Americanization classes in Friendly House, the former Claus Groth Hall, on the corner of Taylor and Third streets. This work has continued down to the present. When the old building burned down in 1926 the *Freie Deutsche Schulgemeinde* surrendered all its money, eighteen thousand dollars, to Friendly House. All the new equipment was bought from this sum. One room was reserved for a Sunday school and lectures arranged by the *Schulgemeinde*.

A number of liberal-minded German families sent their

²⁷ Other instances of direct support by the Turners were Ficke's lecture in February, 1898, which yielded 60 dollars and H. C. Dietze's lecture on the West Indies in the Turner Opera House in 1901. The students of the German Free School also were often invited to the children's Christmas parties and to the celebrations of Schiller's birthday arranged by the Turners.

children to the private German school of Wilhelm Riepe, who was the first to introduce gymnastics for girls into his curriculum and to establish a kindergarten in Davenport in 1860. A special kindergarten society existed for some time to support his enterprise. Riepe was a Westphalian, who forfeited his rights to teach in the schools of Prussia by his participation in the revolution. He worked for the introduction of German instruction in the public schools of Davenport and was instructor as well as supervisor of German instruction in these schools for twelve years. He also was the leader of a small group of nature lovers who met regularly beginning in 1868, and organized the Academy of Sciences in Davenport. Riepe served as vice president of this organization until his death.

THE GERMANS AS CITIZENS

The political influence of the forty-eighters made itself felt in Davenport chiefly on three issues: abolition of slavery, prohibition, and Sunday laws, usually labelled "puritanism". Personal interests were hardly involved in the first issue; the other two, these German immigrants claimed, meant unpleasant infringement of their personal liberties and preferences.

Der Demokrat represented the sentiment and opinions of the German liberals of Davenport. While Gülich was editor of the paper from 1851 to 1856, it discussed the party system, the right of immigrants to vote, and socialism. Of great significance as to the editor's attitude toward Americanization are his critical articles on the Wheeling Congress of 1852 and on the activities of the "Executive of German Revolutionaries" of 1853.²⁸ The "German Revolutionaries" desired close coöperation of all German liberals in America for the purpose of influencing American

²⁸ *Der Demokrat*, October 23, 1852, November 3, 1853.

politics with respect to intervention in European revolutionary movements. At Wheeling in 1852 a small number of delegates from German-American revolutionary societies had drafted fantastic resolutions as to reforms in the United States and the establishment of a world state in which the United States was to be the leading country.²⁹ Gülich's attitude toward all those who desired to use their sojourn in the United States merely as a means toward an un-American end was well expressed: "We are against the idea that the German immigrant to the United States should give up all contacts with Germany; but we protest as resolutely against the idea that he should see his future in Germany only and look upon his life here as something temporary."

Gülich's attitude on the matter of a *Freie Deutsche Schule* was responsible for the establishment of the institution. He desired that such a school should be free of all "Bible nativism" and considered it necessary for the cultivation of the German language and for general education as long as American training of public school teachers seemed insufficient according to German standards.

In April, 1856, Henry Lischer and Theodor Olshausen bought *Der Demokrat*, which had become a daily in January of the same year. In 1860 Lischer became sole owner of the paper until 1880, when Jens P. Stibolt became editor, continuing until his death in June, 1887. *Der Demokrat* was called the "Low German Bible" during these decades. Its opinions were authoritative for the numerous German farmers in Scott County who spoke Low German. Under Lischer's and Olshausen's management the paper devoted much space to European news, a fact that was partly due to better trans-Atlantic news facilities. In 1856 the paper

²⁹ Albert Bernhard Faust's *The German Element in the United States* (New York, 1927), Vol. II, pp. 185-187.

also turned away from the Democratic Party and supported Fremont's candidacy, giving rise to a short-lived and unsuccessful German Democratic newspaper in Davenport.³⁰ Olshausen promised to fight Know-nothingism and slavery and otherwise to preserve an independent attitude.³¹ He and his successors kept this promise.

In the unrelenting fight against slavery *Der Demokrat* could boast of a singularly courageous act. On December 2, 1859, a black-rimmed article was published with the title "Der zweite Dezember". Some excerpts from this editorial ran as follows: "This day is for us, for the whole population of the town and of the State and the Union as well a day of grief. The conflict between true freedom and its fighters and between the rule of force is most tragical . . . Brown fell a victim to the preservation of slavery in this 'land of liberty'; a victim to the obstinacy of a handful of aristocrats who did not want to give in one inch in the struggle between liberty and slavery; a victim to the system which, dissatisfied with what it has, even dares to stretch out its hand toward the land that is dedicated to liberty, to a system which can only govern through blood and chains . . . As such a victim John Brown will gain an outstanding place in the history of this Republic. If dead to-day he will live in the memory of his contemporaries and of posterity."

The comments of the two English papers of Davenport are very informative. The *Gazette* had this to say: "Our German friends have not only felt but yesterday took occa-

³⁰ The *Anzeiger am Mississippi* with Magnus Müller as publisher and Ernst Goeders as editor was established on October 25, 1856, to support James Buchanan. A few weeks later a new editor changed the name to *Beobachter am Mississippi*. The paper was moved to Rock Island in January, 1857, rechristened the *Rock Island Beobachter* and was discontinued after a few weeks. No file is extant. See the *Democrat and Leader* (Davenport), August 22, 1920.

³¹ *Der Demokrat* (Davenport), April 26, 1856.

sion to exhibit a warm sympathy for John Brown. We admire their boldness. Right or wrong in their opinions our German citizens never fear to give their bold expressions, and in this we think they should find more imitators among native-born citizens." The *Democrat and News*, however, headlined its answer "Disgusting". "These outward signs of inward hostility", said the *Democrat*, "are unmistakable proof that there exists in this country a class of men who are anxiously awaiting a state of things which will warrant revolution and subversion to the government . . . Many of them brought from Europe the wildest theories and the most dangerous political as well as religious principles." The "impudent assumption of *Der Demokrat* could almost make us know-nothings." The editor of the *Democratic Register* in Le Claire did not know the social and economic standing of the Germans in Davenport when he wrote: "Would it not be proper for them to wait at least until the filth and dirt of the ship and their smell of garlic should have been worn off before they undertake to dictate to Americans how to make and administer laws?"

Der Demokrat had supported Fremont³² "as the lesser evil" in 1856, and he received a majority in Scott County. In 1860 the paper supported the Republican cause but again preferred Fremont in 1864 against a second nomination of Lincoln because the Germans expected stronger action against the Confederacy from Fremont. In 1872 they opposed Grant, in 1884 they supported Cleveland, and in 1896 McKinley, but only in order to help him defeat Bryan. After Stibolt's death Gustav Donald and August P. Richter were for many years editors of *Der Demokrat*. The *Iowa Reform* published as a weekly for the first time on July 12,

³² *Davenport Gazette*, December 3, 1859; *Democrat and News* (Davenport), December 3, 1859. For the *Le Claire Register*, see Richter in the *Democrat and Leader*, December 12, 1920.

1884, and soon after as a bi-weekly under the management of the two brothers Adolph and Gerhard Petersen, also Schleswig-Holsteiners, took essentially the same stand in politics as *Der Demokrat*. However, after the Civil War representatives of German liberalism never equalled the influence on national politics that they exerted in 1859 and 1860.

The consideration paid to the German vote by both parties in the late fifties was investigated by F. I. Herriott.³³ In Iowa, the Democrats and Republicans ran a close race at the three gubernatorial campaigns of 1854, 1857, and 1859. After the Massachusetts amendment of 1858 limiting the rights of the foreign-born to hold office, the Republicans had to make special efforts to reconcile the foreign-born population of the Middle Western States. This was done by special declaration against the amendment in State platforms and by the nomination of German-born candidates on State tickets. The Holsteiner, Nicholas J. Rusch, a successful farmer in Scott County, served as State Senator for two terms and then was nominated as Lieutenant Governor on the Republican ticket in 1859. In Scott County he won by a majority of 468 votes, slightly less than the majority of Governor Kirkwood which was 483. The explanation is that while the popular German liberal was able to gain a great number of German votes, in spite of the main reproach against the Republicans as former "know-nothings", a number of American Republicans were antagonized by the "foreigner" who spoke English with an extremely strong German accent.

In 1860 the Germans favored William H. Seward for President, but realized that he would probably not be suc-

³³ F. I. Herriott's "The Germans of Iowa and the 'Two-Year' Amendment of Massachusetts" in the *Deutsch-Amerikanische Geschichtsblätter*, Vol. XIII, pp. 202-308, and "The Germans in the Gubernatorial Campaign of Iowa in 1859", in the same publication, Vol. XIV, pp. 451-622.

cessful at the forthcoming Republican Convention in Chicago. Their main object was to prevent the nomination of Edward Bates of Missouri. On March 7, 1860, the German Republican Club, organized in 1857, called a special German mass meeting in the German Theater at H. R. Claussen's instigation. A resolution was adopted in which Bates was strongly repudiated as having strong nativistic tendencies and as being desirous of enforcing the fugitive slave law. Claussen proved his political mettle by communicating the resolution to German papers in Milwaukee and St. Louis, asking them to publish notices about this German meeting. It had already found repercussions in Iowa newspapers.

The Republican Convention at Chicago, to which the Turners of Davenport sent five delegates, could not afford to overlook this disapproval of the Germans of Davenport, supported by German liberals on a nation-wide scale. The rôle played by Carl Schurz at the Chicago Convention on May 18, 1860, has become famous. He secured the adoption of what has been called the "Dutch plank" containing declarations for the liberal and just treatment of the immigrant, and economy and equity in the disposition of public lands. But it also should be emphasized that the cancellation of any intention to nominate Bates, who had reached the zenith of national favor as presidential candidate around March 1, 1860, was due to the preliminary action of less well-known German-American politicians. Bates was dropped, but the Germans could not nominate Seward. Abraham Lincoln, the second choice of all, was nominated. Thus their influence was indirect and negative rather than positive, but important. For once the forty-eighters of Davenport exerted more than local influence.³⁴

The Germans were forever wary of the "Temperance

³⁴ See Chapter XXX in Harry E. Downer's *History of Davenport and Scott County*, Vol. I, pp. 839-848.

Question". A Temperance Society had been organized in Davenport with eighty members as early as August, 1839.³⁵ The first organized anti-temperance meeting was held in Davenport on February 18, 1852, at which Augustus F. Mast, one of the founders of the *Männerchor*, presided and Hans Reimer Claussen gave a fiery speech. In spite of opposition, the first State law forbidding the sale and production of wine, beer, and hard liquor in Iowa was passed in 1855 at a time when many of the recent German immigrants could not yet vote.³⁶

In 1856 it became clear that no Republican majority could be secured for the election without German support, which, in turn, was out of the question under existing liquor laws. As a result, the legislature, in 1858, passed a law permitting the sale of beer and wines if they were manufactured within the State itself and if the majority of the population in a community wished it. Davenport, of course, was such a community.

The adherents of the temperance movement, however, complained of noisy German amusements on Sundays and in October, 1859, induced the city marshal of Davenport to close all gardens, dancing saloons, and places of amusement on Sundays. The Germans protested against this closing regulation and the Sunday ordinance was repealed after having been in effect for only two weeks.³⁷

Prohibition became more and more an issue in State politics. The Republican State conventions adopted open prohibition principles in 1877, 1878, and 1879. The Demo-

³⁵ Notice in the *Iowa Sun and Rock Island News*, August 6, 1839.

³⁶ The drastic bill, usually referred to as the "Maine Liquor Law", was submitted to a general vote on April 3, 1855. The Scott County vote was 669 votes for and 515 votes against the bill. But in Davenport, 265 votes were cast for and 306 against it.— See Richter's *Geschichte der Stadt Davenport und des County Scott*, pp. 662, 663.

³⁷ Joseph Schick's *The Early Theater in Eastern Iowa*, pp. 86-89.

crats wished to introduce moderate license rules; but on account of old prejudices dating back to the days of the Civil War they were unable to secure majorities. Even the Germans still voted for the Republican ticket in considerable numbers. In the early eighties the election campaigns were the most violent that the State ever experienced. The most important anti-prohibition meeting, mostly of German-Americans, took place in Iowa City on November 22, 1881, where resolutions were passed against a new prohibition amendment proposed by the Republicans. Jens P. Stibolt, who reluctantly abandoned the Republican Party, Ferdinand Roddewig, J. J. Schnaufel, and Matthias French were the delegates for Scott County. Theodor Gülich was elected chairman of the committee for the election campaign. In spite of their efforts, the old Republican affiliation of many German voters could not be broken. The prohibition amendment was adopted at a popular election on June 27, 1882. Scott County with 5,197 votes against and 1,467 votes for the amendment cast by far the highest numerical and proportional vote against it of all counties in the State.

The enactment of this prohibitory amendment led to many hardships for brewers, whose businesses were closed, and for farmers, who could not sell their products. It was never enforced in Davenport. Agitation for temperance directed particularly toward the Turners and freethinkers had little result. In 1874 the Germans of the second and third ward protested so strongly against the undue interference by German ministers that even Anglo-Americans, who largely supported the small German congregations, threatened to withhold their support unless the preachers changed their mode of missionary work among their countrymen.³⁸

Davenport's oldest brewery, the largest of the State, was

³⁸ August P. Richter in the *Davenport Democrat and Leader*, October 2, 1921.

the "City Brewery" founded by Matthias Frahm, a true forty-eighter from Schleswig whose attitude is sufficiently characterized by his legacy of ten thousand dollars to the *Freie Deutsche Schulgemeinde* and his testamentary provision that his grandson was to be his heir only if he were educated as a liberal free from religious influence. Another brewery that weathered the days of prohibition in Davenport was that of Kohler and Lange, both Turners, who sold out to the Davenport Malting Company in 1896.

In 1893 the Republicans found it necessary to declare that "prohibition was not a party demand" with them and they passed the so-called "Mullet Law" which did not repeal but greatly modified the prohibition amendment. According to Davenport's German historian, it also was "a dead letter" in Davenport.

While the Germans were not in the majority in Davenport, their reputation among their American fellow-citizens was very good. Unnecessary friction could be avoided with the exercise of a little tact. In May, 1878, for example, the Turners transferred gymnastics for adults, which had for a short period been held on Sunday mornings, to Monday evenings. According to a tacit agreement, Turner parades and other processions on Sundays did not cross Brady Street which divided the town into an "English" and a "German" section. Unpleasant occurrences happened, usually small scandals caused by the unskillful handling of minor offenses by petty officials. They present anecdotal rather than historical material and do not impair the general impression of harmony and coöperation between the German and American population of the community.

The German population of Davenport did not consist exclusively of Schleswig-Holsteiners and forty-eighters. The Germans of northwest and east Davenport developed certain characteristics and organized various societies of their

own. But there was a coördinating force at work which went back to the forty-eighters and merged diverse influences into a homogeneous group spirit. The second generation carried on, assisted greatly by the education available under good German teachers. The German spoken by grandchildren of the immigrants whose names appear in these pages is amazingly good, and is free from dialectic German or American accents. Their English is equally faultless. Most of them have made a success of their lives from the economic point of view. They also made a success of their Americanization.

It would be shortsighted to blame the old generation for their pride in German language and culture, for their subscription to German magazines, their purchase of German books, their continued interest in the fatherland, which was by no means uncritical, for their campaigning for free-thinking and enlightenment as they saw it. These preferences proceeded from the background which gave Davenport singing societies and good music, a long-lived theater, early kindergartens, gymnastic education, just to mention a few.

The same men who taught German or supported lectures by freethinkers were also members of what became the Davenport Academy of Natural Sciences and founded and supported the Cremation Society.³⁹ No American would consider either institution to be particularly "German" in character. If the Germans are to be reproached for the love of beergardens and their fight against prohibition, it is well to remember that many Anglo-Americans have come to love outdoor picnics and Sunday afternoon concerts and have questioned whether prohibition is the answer to the problem of drunkenness and vice.

³⁹ The Northwestern Cremation Society was founded on February 11, 1885, by thirty-six Germans. Later a number of Americans joined them.

Certain names appear again and again in these pages. It is obvious that a rather small group of men served as leaders in almost every society and in politics as well. We might well ponder what the loss of these leaders must have meant to the fatherland. The question has often been raised whether Germany's history would not have been different if these men of courage and initiative — young, active, and talented — had been allowed to participate in the shaping of the political destiny of their native land.

HILDEGARD BINDER JOHNSON

MINNEAPOLIS MINNESOTA