

Comment by the Editor

As this number of THE PALIMPSEST goes out to its readers the lotus is lifting its great yellow blossoms above the placid waters of the lake of the Amanas. They are now wide open to the sky, and their long stems reach deep down into the rich soil at the bottom of the lake. But when torn from their roots they close up into the conventional lotus of ancient Egyptian architecture.

Dwelling in contentment in the vine-covered houses of the Amana villages are a people of unusual ways, deeprooted in historical traditions, in religious beliefs, and in love of home and surroundings. The glimpses which Mrs. Shambaugh gives of these people and their home constitute an explanation of the Community of True Inspiration: here there is no attempt to describe the more obvious aspects of this interesting group of Iowa villages and villagers.

These glimpses are taken largely from the author's book on *Amana: The Community of True Inspiration* published by The State Historical Society of Iowa in 1908. For many years Mrs. Shambaugh has been interested in and has written about the Community and its history. It is a noteworthy fact that her first contribution to the literature on

Amana appeared in 1896 in *The Midland Monthly* — the article having been awarded a prize by Mr. Johnson Brigham who was then the editor and publisher of the magazine.

After a brief but noteworthy career *The Midland Monthly* was discontinued, but the stimulating encouragement given by Mr. Brigham to many young writers led in the case of Mrs. Shambaugh not only to her book on Amana but also to a long list of articles on the same subject — the last one of which, entitled *Amana the Church and Christian Metz the Prophet*, appeared in *The Midland* edited and published by Mr. John T. Frederick.

All of which associates these two literary idealists of different generations in a way which seems to us worthy of comment. When the literature of the Middle West comes into its own it is probable that no influence in the history of its development will stand out more clearly than the devoted work of these two Iowa editors — Johnson Brigham of *The Midland Monthly* and John T. Frederick of *The Midland*.

J. C. P.