Comment by the Editor

BRONZE MARKS THE SPOT

Go, stranger, and tell the Lacedæmonians
that we here died in obedience to their laws.

At the Pass of Thermopylae a marble column bore
this heroic message of Leonidas and his three hun-
dred Spartans; that whosoever travelled that an-
cient road might be reminded of their brave defense
of Greece against the Persians and spread the story
of their sacrifice.

As the Greeks perpetuated the memory of their
achievements in arms and other exploits, so it has
been customary from time immemorial among civil-
ized people everywhere to mark the sites of splendid
deeds, of national triumphs, and the earthly abodes
of deities and men. It is altogether fitting that they
should do this, for the commemoration of noble lives
is one of the most effective ways of preserving and
cherishing the heritage of the past. Whether by
means of imposing tombs or by simple tablets of
bronze, the motive is the same. Deep-rooted in
human nature is a universal respect for the accom-
plishments of mankind, ancient as well as modern.
Perhaps this devotion to ancestral careers is merely
an expression of the rather materialistic trait of
admiration for success, but the result is none the

351

less desirable on that account. Is there any one who is not thrilled to be where great events transpired or stand where great men stood?

That future generations may know more about the history of Iowa, it is important that the dwelling-places of pioneers, statesmen, and poets, the scenes of memorable events, and the location of historic buildings should be appropriately marked. Visible reminders of the work of our illustrious citizens will tend to cultivate a historical sense and to inspire reverence for the fortitude, energy, and wisdom of the men and women who laid the foundations of this Commonwealth. A true appreciation of the past is essential for a proper evaluation of the present. Since everybody goes motoring now, he who rides may read, if the record is carved in stone or written on bronze by the wayside.

J. E. B.