

State Appropriation for the Historical Society

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three concerts were given, the first two, miscellaneous, respectively, August 18th and September 1st. At these entertainments the people had the rare opportunity of listening to the artistic rendering of several fine selections from the operas, by Mr. Jule E. Perkins. Prof. Otto Schmidt delighted with his brilliant performance upon the violin, and Miss Gibbs's singing was received with great satisfaction. Well may the press of the city remark, "That the principal is entitled to the thanks of our people for bringing such talented teachers and artists into this section of the country to instruct and develop our musical talent, and to delight with their exquisite rendering of musical compositions of a high order." And further, "Should the Academy be discontinued at any time, these 'golden opportunities' will depart with it." The last concert — the crowning work of the Academy — was the performance of that grandest of sacred oratorios, "Elijah," by Mendelssohn. The fact that this master work was studied and successfully rendered at a public concert by the Academy, including solos and choruses, is sufficient to place the Iowa Normal in the very front ranks of such schools.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

STATE APPROPRIATION FOR THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

THE eighth bi-ennial report of the Board of Curators of the State Historical Society to the legislature, was forwarded in December, and received due notice in the message of the retiring governor. We have received from the secretary of state's office many of the printed reports of the public institutions for the bi-ennial period ending December, 1871, but not that of the Historical Society, and take it for granted that, as usual, it has been left to the last

and may not be printed in time to be laid before the legislature till the close of the session. We therefore shall be excused for sending to each member of the general assembly a copy of this number of the ANNALS OF IOWA, referring in brief to some of the points embraced in that report.

Five hundred dollars a year is the meagre appropriation granted by Iowa toward the support of her Historical Society; whereas, Wisconsin, two years her junior as a state, grants hers six thousand three hundred dollars a year, and Minnesota, still younger, gives hers three thousand five hundred dollars a year — this in money. But besides, those young states appropriate to the uses of their Historical Societies spacious rooms, fuel, light, postage stamps, and stationery, and are equally as liberal as Iowa in the gift of public documents. And above all this, Wisconsin and Minnesota extend the hand of encouragement and approbation to their Societies, while on the contrary, Iowa seems to treat hers as an intruder and beggar.

It would seem as if no state had more use for, and did so little to encourage, historical work, as Iowa. No other state in the late war won such a glittering armor, the fabled feats of knight-errantry dwindling before the prowess of her soldiers. None other was complimented as ours by West Point cadetships to her young champions for capturing fortresses. Not another commonwealth has a richer mine of historical wealth. No other has greater renown, among the younger states, for the production of statesmen. Oregon, in the far west, Kentucky, to the east, and Alabama in the south, have honored those who learned their statecraft in Iowa, as Delane Smith, Breckenridge, Chambers, and Spencer, while the federal government has found constitutional advisers in three of her adopted sons— Belknap, Harlan, and Williams.

The report of the Board of Curators asks the restoration of the appropriation made by the twelfth general assembly (which was three thousand dollars a year, in addition to five hundred dollars a year permanent appropriation) and a sum

sufficient to erect a suitable fire-proof building for the society. If the present legislature, in justice to other institutions and the tax-payers, feel unable to do this, let them at least appropriate such a sum as will obviate the necessity for the Society suspending its work.

Out of the five hundred dollars received from the state, two hundred go for rent, one hundred and fifty for the services of a librarian, and one hundred toward the secretary's salary, leaving only fifty dollars for postage, freight, fuel, lights, and the numerous other expenses incidental to such an institution.

Volumes on volumes of Iowa newspapers lie unbound, and therefore useless; hundreds of pictures remain unframed, and so invisible; scores of maps are unmounted, and consequently of no present utility — all for the want of a few hundred dollars, which the legislature from year to year strangely withholds. The Historical Society asks nothing from the legislature as a boon. With the prerogative of giving to the future an impartial history of the present and past, it can afford to be content with a simple presentation of its claims to public encouragement. It will not importune legislators in their seats, leaving the degrading occupation of the lobbyist to the political procurers who are doing more to degrade the public morals than the wine shops and brothels — believing as it does, that there are in both branches of the fourteenth general assembly statesmen and scholars enough to secure a just recognition to so important and valuable a public institution as the State Historical Society.

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