

Iowa Library Legislation of 1894

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changed. It is from Geo. H. Yewell's fine oil painting in the Capitol Building. It is seldom that two portraits of the same man show such great changes in his personal appearance.

We reproduce a good photograph of Gen. Ed Wright as Major of the 24th Iowa Infantry.

The portrait of Hon. John A. Kasson is from one of his latest photographs, and is a very fine likeness of that distinguished statesman.

IOWA LIBRARY LEGISLATION OF 1894.

The last General Assembly did some very good work for the public libraries of the State. To begin with, the standing committees, the duties of which had before been limited to the State Library, were made committees on public libraries generally, and the presiding officers of the two houses in appointing them evidently did so in view of the increased importance of the duties devolving upon them, as they were noticeably strong in their membership.

Acts were passed which will greatly stimulate the establishment of new libraries and promote the growth and usefulness of those already established. One of the acts referred to provides for the creation in all cities and incorporated towns, of boards of library trustees to consist of nine members, to be appointed by the mayor with the approval of the council; the first appointees to hold office, three for two years, three for four years and three for six years, from the first day of July, 1894, and their respective successors for the term of six years; males and females alike being eligible; services to be gratuitous; to have authority to employ a librarian and assistants, fix their compensation, to remove them for specified causes by a two-thirds vote, and generally to control and have the management in all respects of their respective libraries, including the exclusive control of the expenditure of all taxes levied for the maintenance of the same and of all moneys belonging to the library fund; to fix the rate of appropriation for the maintenance of the library, not exceeding one mill on the dollar annually, and certify the same to the city council to be certified with other city taxes to the

county auditor, together with such further sum as may be deemed necessary to create a sinking fund to pay the interest under the provisions of Chapter 18, Acts 22d General Assembly, and acts amendatory thereof. The board is required each year to make report to the council for the year ending June 30 of the number of books in the library, the number circulated, the number not returned or lost, the amount of funds collected and of money expended in the maintenance of the library during the year, together with such other information as the board may deem important. Heretofore it has been left to the city council to determine within the limit of one mill on the dollar what amount should be appropriated for library purposes, and in many instances the appropriations were so meager as greatly to cripple and embarrass the libraries.

Another act confers upon all cities of the first class power to levy a tax of not exceeding three mills on the dollar to pay any existing indebtedness or that may hereafter be contracted for the purchase of real estate and the erection thereon of a public library building or buildings, and to create a sinking fund for the extinguishment of and paying the interest upon such indebtedness. Heretofore this authority had only been conferred upon cities of the first class, organized subsequently to 1885.

This most commendable legislation, which places it within the power of cities and incorporated towns to secure libraries, and manage and protect them, was largely due to the timely efforts of Col. C. H. Gatch, of Des Moines. His experience in connection with the Public Library of the Capital enabled him to determine what was needed in this direction. This legislation is a great step in advance of the mixed condition of things which it supercedes.

AN IOWA DOCTOR "IN THE FIFTIES."

The Historical Department has frequently been placed under great obligations by Dr. J. W. Shaffer, of Keokuk, for valuable contributions. This gentleman has himself been highly dis-

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