

The Building Stones of Iowa

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These books were to be printed in limited editions and the contract required a high class of work in the points of printing, paper and binding. In another Iowa town a large number of splendid books are constantly in process of manufacture and appearing at frequent intervals. This should be a matter of great pride to our people who are interested in artistic work. The subject appeals to us more especially from the fact that most of the printing to which we refer is in the direction of historical publications. Of course, these books bear high prices and very justly, when the quality of the work and the limited number issued are considered. We always rejoice to see such books, and more especially when they bear the imprint of an Iowa publishing house. Again, in the direction of calendar printing, it has long been widely understood that some of the finest in the United States emanate from an enterprising Iowa town, where the establishment has grown, through the high quality of its work, to simply immense proportions. Its "traveling men" now visit every state in the Union. Some of the pamphlets issued by our county auditors are especially fine. The quality of general newspaper printing shows equal improvement. Some special editions that come to the Historical Department are not surpassed in the points of printing and illustration, aside from the fact they are precious epitomes of the history of their several localities. All this emphasizes the well known expression that, "In all that is good, Iowa affords the best." We need hardly add that it gives us great pleasure to place these twentieth century facts upon record.

THE BUILDING STONES OF IOWA.

It has been very much the custom heretofore whenever a public building has been erected to send out of the State for the principal part of the materials. In doing this our people have patronized the states of Indiana and Minnesota. As a

matter of course these materials are excellent, else our builders would not have chosen them. But the writer of this item has long been of the impression that there are just as good building stones in our State as can be found anywhere in the United States, in the direction of sedimentary rocks. We have, however, few crystalline rocks which are used in building, but the sedimentary material is excellent. An example of this can be seen in the Historical Building which is now close on to completion. Certainly no more beautiful stone can be found anywhere. Its whiteness is that of marble, and its appearance seems to improve with age, while many other stones suffer from discoloration due to atmospheric agencies. We need not particularize more definitely, for samples of both kinds of material are in distinct evidence to whomsoever visits the capitol at Des Moines. This building material exists in many of our counties. Some of our northeastern counties are "full of it." While we have no especially definite information, we believe that in twenty Iowa counties excellent building stone should be readily obtained. Why there should be a prejudice against this one of our important resources we will not undertake to set forth. That it exists is palpable to every observer. That it is ill-founded, we believe to be equally true.

Again, it is a well known fact that in the direction of brick Iowa produces some of the very best. Some of the lighter colored specimens seem to be equal to the famed brick of Milwaukee. Our deposits of clay are absolutely inexhaustible, and as competition results in demonstrating their excellence we may expect that in a few years Iowa bricks will be in demand wherever the best class of building (and paving) material is required.

This item is not intended as an advertisement for any particular quarry, but simply to place on record the fact that there is no need of going abroad for the best building material in the United States.

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