

Editorial notes and Comment. Donation of circus materials

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Editorial Notes and Comment

The Iowa Monument to the soldiers and sailors of the Civil War, standing in a commanding position on the grounds of the state capitol, became the subject of some controversy last year. The rather carelessly-worded plea of army officers for metal scrap to supplement the ores and ingots of the great foundries referred to "monuments" and "without regard to historic or sentimental value." This stirred the interest of various representatives of patriotic societies and a protest was made against the entirely indiscriminate tearing down of the monuments that really do have historic value and contribute to the morale of the people. The discussion served to arouse greater activity for collection of waste metals, and state officials and employees of the Historical Department made a large contribution to the scrap heaps headed for war. The attitude of the Department, of insistence upon great care and wise discrimination in metal collection, was upheld by the public and by the committees in charge.

Circus days of old will be recalled to visitors at the State Historical museum by the gift of the late J. A. Wagner, of Des Moines, Iowa, who, by bequest, presented to the Department his rather unusual collection of material relating to circuses. He was engaged all his life in railroad work and was for a long time the manager of the Des Moines Union railway and union station. His hobby was the circus. He organized the Circus Fans of America and was its active president. He collected or had made an interesting exhibit showing a circus parade in miniature, with the band wagon, the menagerie wagons, and animals of many kinds. This collection has been placed on display in the State Historical building where it will be a reminder to coming generations of the circus scenes familiar to their forefathers.

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