Available Law Books in the Territory of Iowa
EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT.

afflictions as has fallen upon them for the last two months. During that
time we have been visited, at short intervals, with many of the heaviest
storms we have ever experienced. For six or eight weeks it has rained al-
most without cessation. The consequence has been that all the rivers in
the State have been swollen to an extent never before known, producing
suffering and devastation all along their borders. The meanest rill has
"roaring fled its channel," adding its might to the great aggregation of
destruction. Three different times the Des Moines has overflowed its
banks at this place, driving our merchants and others on Front street back
to the bluffs. No one can estimate the amount of damage that has been
done. Along the principal rivers the loss of stock, crops, rails, lumber,
&c., has been immense; in some instances houses with all their effects have
been swept away. The business of the entire country has suffered a severe
shock from this great calamity. But the worst feature in the whole mat-
ter is the destruction of crops. We have no disposition to croak, but set
it down from reliable data that there cannot be more than half crops of
wheat and corn. Many farms have not an acre in cultivation. The con-
tinuous rains with which the earth has been drenched, prevented some
from planting, whilst much of that put in the ground was washed out or
rotted where it lay. There can be no question but that the prospect for
crops in this State is gloomy enough; and we venture the prediction, that
there will not be corn and wheat enough raised in our State to supply
home consumption.

AVAILABLE LAW BOOKS IN THE TERRITORY
OF IOWA.

The excellency of the products of manual labor depends
as much upon the tools as upon the skill of the workmen.
Now since that is equally true of intellectual effort, the work
of men who use books as tools ought to be measured by the
equipment of their libraries. This truth we should bear in
mind when we read the reports of the Supreme Court of the
Territory of Iowa. The judges and lawyers of that day must
have been greatly handicapped by the lack of many useful
volumes. The following memorial, which is here printed for
the first time, reveals the embarrassing condition under
which the pioneer jurist carried on his work:

Memorial of the Judges of the Supreme Court of Iowa Territory and mem-
bers of the bar of said Court to the Honorable the Senate and House of
Representatives of the United States:

Your petitioners respectfully ask from your honorable body an appro-
priation for the purpose of increasing the library of said Territory, and
state to your honorable body that the law portion of said library is ex-
tremely deficient—so much so that the Supreme Court are frequently com-
pelled to take causes under advisement from term to term in order to ena-
ble them to get access to authorities.

So defective is the library that it embraces very few reports of the
states of this Union, and none of the reports of the United States by Peters,
and many other reports and works of the highest and most frequently
cited authorities.

Your honorable body need hardly be reminded that our country is new-
and young; that our libraries are few and small, and that we cannot hope-
to increase the Territorial library for some years to come, and that we are
suffering very great inconvenience during the sessions of the courts for
want of those books of authority which are a part of the law of the land
and necessary to allow our judiciary to do justice to themselves and the
country, and permanently to settle the law of our Territory and to construe,
in an enlightened manner the statutory enactments of our own Legisla-
ture.

We respectfully suggest that an appropriation of five thousand dollars
be made.*

This memorial is signed by Charles Mason, J. Williams,
and T. S. Wilson (Judges of the Supreme Court) and by
thirty attorneys.

B. F. S.


The Historical Department has begun a work for which
the people of Iowa are deeply grateful. The recent reprint
of "The Statute Laws of the Territory of Iowa" which were
"enacted at the first session of the Legislative Assembly of
said Territory, held at Burlington, A. D. 1838-'39," is the
beginning of a line of reprints that should be continued,
without interruption until all of the laws of the Territory of
Iowa, the journals of the constitutional conventions of 1844
and 1846, and the code of 1851 have been made accessible
to the people of the State. The truth is that only a few of
the older libraries of the State contain copies of the originals

*Taken from the original manuscript copy of the memorial, as preserved in the
office of the Clerk of the House of Representatives in the Capitol at Washington,
D. C.