

of their number, who has charge of the work, sends out the libraries, assists new librarians in small towns with advice and in other ways helps the growth of libraries. It makes Nebraska envious to see this sister state ahead of us in the realization that the greatest business of the state is to educate its children. For the last two sessions of our legislature an earnest effort has been made by those who appreciate the system to establish traveling libraries. The effort has both times been defeated. Legislators have not understood the measure and the workers in its favor have been too few. When our awakening comes in library matters we shall have plenty of patterns to follow, but I fear that unless it comes soon we shall find ourselves decidedly in the rear of the procession.

The state library of Iowa ranks high. Aside from the law library there is a very respectable general library of literature, history, biography, art, etc., with completeness of magazine files that reminds one of the unavailing quests made in other libraries for the references given in Poole. Shades of antiquity hover in those galleries, for the makers of the Gentleman's Magazine and other old things now dead are remembered in their works. Mr. Johnson Brigham, the librarian, was formerly the editor of the Midland Monthly. He is a typical book man and loves to make the acquaintance of his books, new and old.

It is expected that all departments except the law library will some day be moved to the new building across the street from the Capitol—the "Hall of History." One small wing of this building has been completed and is occupied by the historical museum. I wanted to call it a historical library, but upon exploration decided that museum was the better term, although a part of the collection is composed of books. Here again the policy of scateration plays its part. Iowa has a historical society, but its headquarters are at Iowa City. I was told that their collection is small. So if I felt envious over the traveling libraries, I was somewhat reassured by comparing the attempt of Iowa to preserve her history, with a similar effort in Nebraska. Mr. Charles Aldrich, the old curator of this museum, started his work years ago with a fine collection of autographs which he presented to the state. The story of the difficulty he experienced in getting the legislature to take any interest in the idea of history preserving is well known in plot and detail to all who have ever tried to win any legislature to any good cause, of unfamiliar purpose. The work has been recognized for only eight years and though the museum collection shows ambitious beginnings, it cannot compare with the collections of our historical library and museum.

Mr. Aldrich mourns over the fact that Wisconsin has better collections for studying Iowa history than Iowa herself possesses, yet he believes this will be remedied. All visitors to the capitol—and their name is legion—troop over to the Hall of History. This slight first acquaintance will bear fruit in time, and perhaps the friendly old curator will have his reward ere he goes. It is impossible to conceive of a people who are uninterested in their forefathers after they once get the clue. So the Iowan Homer may yet be able to sing

the heroic deeds of their ancients, obtaining his material in the Hall of History. He will find good—and poor—portraits of worthy ones now among the gods, stories of their deeds in strange old papers, the stones they saw, the woods they carved, the animals against which they contended and the birds they shot. Iowa can build buildings and never think of the cost. There is a million dollar surplus in their treasury now waiting to be wrangled over, although it may dwindle ere the regular biennial season of wrangling. But the interest in intangible things must needs be cultivated. Iowa, like ordinary western states, and all people who have a greater share of God's earth than they know what to do with, has not yet got to the point of planning for its great-grand children and their children's children. When it does find time for that it will also take greater interest in the great-great-grandfathers of the clan.

The historical museum was crowded out of the main building by the establishment of what amounts to another department of government, occupying four office rooms and covering the whole state outside Iowans learned by experience—the only teacher—that their state institutions of correction and charity, and the schools for the instruction of the afflicted children of the state needed controlling. So as soon as they could get to it they established a "Board of Control" for all these institutions. They are not strikingly original, these Iowans, but are willing to follow patterns from other states. They modelled their law on the law of the Empire State. The board is composed of three members, each receiving a salary of three thousand dollars yearly. The board employs a secretary and several assistants. This crop of workers devote their whole time to the management, and inspection of the state institutions. The whole machinery of the work is interesting, though it outrivals a mergenthaler linotype for complexity. It is claimed that politics is eliminated from the affairs of the institution. The board is appointed for five years, I believe; the superintendents hold commissions for four years; the members of the board are not allowed to engage in any other lucrative work while on the board, nor to hold official position for a year after expiration of their terms; and it is a misdemeanor for any employee in any state institution to pay a political assessment if asked for it. He will lose his job if he pays, instead of if he does not pay. I read the law and the report made by the commission and felt that both were honestly made, an impression confirmed by conversation with the secretary of the commission. Even if a small modicum of politics does creep into the board—it is composed of two republicans and one gold democrat—the blessed fact is that there are three men who are spending all their time investigating, examining and holding the employees to their trusts in a vigilant way. They will save money to the state and enable it to keep its self-respect, while its wards and unfortunates will be better cared for and more intelligently treated. The short trial of this system has shown what can be done. The secretary of the board and the deputy treasurer of the state affirmed that the board, in spite of the uncomfortable salaries, saved money. It seemed to me, over and beyond that, it was a long step towards intelligent and careful government.

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THE KANSAS CITY STAR'S NOVEL FORUM FEATURE.

The Kansas City Star has decided upon a special feature for the presidential campaign which was never undertaken before by any newspaper. At its request the chairman of the two national committees, Messrs. James K. Jones and M. A. Hanna, have selected and appointed two distinguished writers to conduct, in the Star a department to be called "The Campaign Forum." In this department the arguments of each of the two great parties will be presented, side by side, day by day. To conduct the democratic side, Mr. Jones has selected and formally appointed Mr. Willis J. Abbott, chief of the Press Bureau of the Democratic National Committee, and for the Republican side, Mr. Hanna has selected and appointed the famous journalist and literateur, Mr. Murat Halstead. Upon learning the decision of the two chairmen, The Star immediately engaged the two gentlemen and on Sunday, August 19, the Campaign Forum will be inaugurated, to be continued in the regular issue of The Star, daily and Sunday until the end of the campaign. An interesting feature of the Forum will be the answers to questions upon campaign topics, submitted to the Star to be answered by either Mr. Halstead or Mr. Abbott, or both. Under the circumstances, the answers thus given will have the stamp of authority of the National Committees.

On September 10 and 26 the Missouri Pacific will sell tickets to nearly all points in Missouri and to certain points in Illinois at one fare, plus two dollars, for the round trip, good until October 31. This will include such points as Kansas City, Sedalia, Springfield, Joplin, St. Louis, Missouri, and numerous points in Illinois.

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