

## THE STATE HISTORICAL CONVENTION AT DETROIT

Three state historical conventions under the auspices of the Minnesota Historical Society have now been held — the first at Duluth in 1922, the second at Redwood Falls in 1923, and the third at Detroit in 1924. Thus the northeastern, southwestern, and northwestern sections of the state have each had a state-wide convention at which Minnesota history and the problems connected with local history organization have been considered and the background of the general region of the meeting has been exploited.

A year ago the "historical tourists" followed the trail of Major Stephen H. Long and drove up the valley of the Minnesota River, the region of the Sioux Outbreak of 1862. This year the western trail of the lumbering Red River carts was followed and the tourists made their way to the most renowned wheat-growing area in the West — the Red River Valley. The convention was held on Friday and Saturday, June 20 and 21, at Detroit, — the heart of Minnesota's picturesque western "lake country," — upon the invitation of the mayor, the Becker County Historical Society, and members and friends of the state historical society in that city. The annual convention of the League of Minnesota Municipalities was held in Detroit on June 19, 20, and 21, and the two organizations coöperated in the making of arrangements.

Preparations for the historical convention were made by two committees. A general committee of the society with Mr. Frederick G. Ingersoll of St. Paul, first vice president of the society as chairman, and Mr. Theodore C. Blegen, the assistant superintendent, as secretary, was appointed to plan for the convention. The other members of this committee

were: Dr. William Anderson, Mrs. Marshall H. Coolidge, Edward C. Gale, Herschel V. Jones, Cecil W. Shirk, and Andrew A. Stomberg of Minneapolis; Mrs. Charles E. Furness, James M. McConnell, and Dr. Clarence W. Rife of St. Paul; Conrad G. Selvig and Halvor Steenerson of Crookston; Dr. Leonard C. Weeks and John K. West of Detroit; Ray B. MacLean and Herman C. Nordlie of Moorhead; Elmer E. Adams of Fergus Falls; Horace B. Ayres of Kimberly; William Bottineau of Plummer; Roe Chase of Anoka; Dr. Edwin B. Dean of Northfield; Otis B. De Laurier of Long Prairie; Mrs. Julia B. Friday of Hawley; Mrs. Frank A. Hancock of Morris; Constant Larson of Alexandria; William B. Mitchell of St. Cloud; Asher Murray of Wadena; Richard D. Musser of Little Falls; Oscar A. Naplin of Thief River Falls; Dr. Charles L. Scofield of Benson; Halvor Shirley of Breckenridge; and Charles W. Stanton of Bemidji.

The local arrangements at Detroit were made by a committee of which Mr. John K. West was chairman, and Dr. Leonard C. Weeks, secretary; the other members being Alexander Cherry, Mrs. Lillie E. Dix, Henry N. Jenson, Mrs. C. W. Mee, Gustav J. Norby, Mrs. Mina Peoples, and Leonard U. Towle of Detroit; Marx Jess, Mrs. W. F. Just, Mrs. E. W. F. Sharp, and Arthur D. White of Frazee; L. C. McKinstry and Peter Sathre of Audubon; John Beggin and Henry O. Bjorge of Lake Park; and Mrs. George McKinley and Arthur W. Sanderson of Osage.

The convention was preceded by an automobile tour on June 19 from the Twin Cities. The cars assembled at 8:30 a.m. in Anoka, where the party was greeted by Mr. Roe Chase, the editor of the *Anoka Herald*. The first stop was made at the Minnesota State Reformatory at St. Cloud where the tourists were served refreshments through the courtesy of the superintendent of the institution, Mr. Charles E. Vasaly. When the party stopped at Little Falls it included approximately twenty-five persons in five cars. A complimentary

luncheon was given at Little Falls, in the dining hall of the Elks' Home, by Mr. and Mrs. R. D. Musser. An official welcome was extended by the mayor, Mr. Nels Bergheim, who directed attention to an interesting local problem in historical marking. The site of the fort built by Lieutenant Zebulon M. Pike on his famous trip of exploration in 1805-06 four miles below the present city of Little Falls was marked in 1919 with a monument and a bronze tablet. Mr. Bergheim announced that this marker, unless it is moved, will be submerged by the river as a result of a new water power project. After a brief talk by Mr. L. B. Tanner, president of the Little Falls Board of Commerce, and a response on behalf of the visitors by Dr. Solon J. Buck, superintendent of the Minnesota Historical Society, the entire party motored to the site of the Pike fort, on the west side of the river. The general opinion seemed to be that the wisest plan would be to remove the monument to the opposite side of the river, near the main highway, where thousands of passing tourists would be able to see it.<sup>1</sup> After this excursion the journey was resumed to Detroit, where most of the members of the party arrived in the evening.

One of the most interesting features of the convention was a series of historical exhibits planned and assembled by the local committee and placed in store windows along the main street of the city. These exhibits illustrated many sides of the historical development of Becker County and western Minnesota generally. The bringing together of the objects was a practical demonstration of the local museum possibilities in Minnesota counties. The work enlisted the interest and participation of hundreds of Becker County people and thus had a very distinct local value quite apart from the unusual interest which the displays awakened among the people who

<sup>1</sup> It is announced in the *Little Falls Daily Transcript* for September 9 that the Pike monument has now been moved back on higher ground, six hundred feet northwest of its former site.

thronged Detroit during the convention week. The Minnesota Historical Society sent its traveling exhibit to Detroit where it was displayed in the First Congregational Church, which served as the convention headquarters. At the convention 102 persons were registered, 26 of whom were Detroit residents and 77 outsiders. There were 29 members of the society present, only 2 of whom were from Detroit. At some of the sessions there was a considerable attendance of delegates to the convention of the League of Minnesota Municipalities, few of whom were represented in the society's registration.

The program was one of unusual variety and interest. In responding to a speech of welcome by Mr. John K. West at the opening session, Mr. Frederick G. Ingersoll pointed out that "accurate knowledge of the history of a people is the foundation upon which society must build its future progress," and he defined the purposes of the society's summer meetings in these words: "to stimulate local history activity and to emphasize the importance of a broad and comprehensive knowledge of the history of Minnesota and the Northwest." The general program of the convention undoubtedly did tend to carry out these purposes. There were five sessions, and the program included fifteen papers and addresses, not counting a number of talks given at an informal local history conference on the second day. Of these papers and addresses, seven were given by western Minnesota people, two by professors of American history in neighboring state universities, four by staff members or officers of the society, and two by former students in the history department of the University of Minnesota.

Naturally much emphasis was put upon the history of the Red River Valley and of western Minnesota generally. Indeed, no less than seven papers dealt in full or in part with subjects falling within this field. Taken together they constituted an interesting and well-rounded symposium on western Minnesota history. That the story of the Red River Valley

possesses dramatic possibilities was brought out in a paper entitled "Reconstructing the Past of the Red River Valley," by Conrad G. Selvig, superintendent of the Northwest School and Station of the University of Minnesota.<sup>2</sup> He told about the Red River "Pageant of Prosperity" which was given in November, 1923, in connection with the twentieth anniversary of the Red River Valley Dairymen's Association at Crookston. The text of the pageant, which was written by Mr. Selvig, presents a dramatic tableau review of the development of the valley along various lines.

A paper on "The Cadotte Family and the Fur Trade of the Northwest, 1760-1810," by Miss Honora McLachlan of Glenwood, possessed both a general Minnesota and a special Red River Valley interest. She gave particular attention to the careers of Jean Baptiste Cadotte, a French-Canadian, and of his eldest son, Jean Baptiste Cadotte, a half-breed, both prominent fur-traders in the Lake Superior region during the British régime. Miss McLachlan read her paper unaware of the fact that among her auditors sat a great-great-granddaughter of the first Jean Cadotte. The elder Cadotte was in charge of the fort at the Sault de Ste. Marie upon the outbreak of the French and Indian War and there he was visited by Alexander Henry on May 19, 1762. He was the only French trader of importance to remain there after the war. The influence of Cadotte upon the Indians at the Sault, which was very great, according to Miss McLachlan, is best shown by the fact that he prevented them from joining the conspiracy of Pontiac. When the fur trade was resumed in 1765 Cadotte and Alexander Henry formed a partnership licensed for the exclusive fur trade on Lake Superior. They soon pushed their operations into the interior, however, and in 1775, in company with Peter Pond and

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Selvig was unable to be present at the session and his paper was read by a member of the staff of the Minnesota Historical Society. His paper is printed in the *Detroit Record* for June 27, 1924.

other traders, they reached Cumberland House in Saskatchewan. Cadotte with four canoes made his way to Fort des Prairies. In addition to carrying on independent fur-trading operations, Cadotte on numerous occasions gave service to the government. In 1785 he participated in the organization "known as the General Company of Lake Superior and the South for the purpose of regulating the trade of Mackinac and its dependencies." Eleven years later, broken in health, he transferred his business interests to his sons, Jean Baptiste and Michel.

Miss McLachlan told of the expedition organized in the summer of 1792 by Jean Baptiste Cadotte, the younger, to the region about the headwaters of the Mississippi with a party of trappers and traders numbering approximately sixty men and including his brother Michel. He left the Sault late in the summer of 1792 and went into the Minnesota interior by way of the St. Louis River and Sandy Lake. Thence the party probably went down the Mississippi to the Crow Wing River and from there to the mouth of the Leaf River, where it wintered. The next spring the party ascended the Leaf River and made its way to the Red River and to Prairie Portage. It returned to Grand Portage late in the summer of 1793. The speaker gave several illustrations of the deftness with which Cadotte dealt with hostile Indians. She attributed much importance to the expedition in connection with the opening of the upper Mississippi country to the fur trade. Cadotte himself, she said, entered the service of the Northwest Company, which soon established posts at Fond du Lac, Sandy Lake, Leech Lake, and other points in the Fond du Lac department. The speaker briefly reviewed the later career of Cadotte. He probably wintered in 1794-95 at Red Cedar or Cass Lake and in 1796-97 at Red Lake. In 1797 he took over the management of the Fond du Lac department on shares. In 1798 he was at Red Lake River, on the site of the present city of Red Lake Falls, where he

was visited by David Thompson. In 1801, upon the organization of the Northwest Company, Cadotte was one of six persons admitted as partners. Two years later he was expelled because of drunkenness. The remaining period of his life was passed in obscurity. He died in 1818. "Both father and son were men of ability, energy, and courage," said Miss McLachlan in conclusion. "The loyalty of both to the British was unquestioned. Their knowledge of the Indians and the Indian language, their sympathetic understanding of Indian character, together with the complete confidence of the Indians themselves, rendered their services invaluable in the rapid extension of the fur trade when British influence was paramount in the Northwest."

A contribution to the history of Norwegian settlement in western Minnesota was made in an interesting paper entitled "Paul Hjelm-Hansen and Western Minnesota Settlement," by Sigurd Melby of Augsburg Seminary, Minneapolis. Hjelm-Hansen was a Norwegian-American newspaper man who was appointed by the governor of Minnesota in the summer of 1869 to act as an agent of the state board of immigration. In a wagon drawn by oxen, Hjelm-Hansen left Alexandria on July 12, 1869, and drove as far west as Fort Abercrombie and Georgetown, everywhere making inquiries of settlers and carefully observing conditions. In a series of well-written letters, published in newspapers both in Norway and in this country, he advertised the resources of the Red River Valley and urged Norwegian immigrants and settlers to go to that fertile region. Mr. Melby read many selections from the Hjelm-Hansen letters and indicated that they constitute a mine of detailed, first-hand information, of value for Minnesota social history. The letters were apparently one not unimportant factor in impelling thousands of Norwegians to seek land in the frontier counties of the state.

In a suggestive paper by Dr. Orin G. Libby, professor of American history in the University of North Dakota, an

attempt was made to assess "The Significance of the Red River Valley in American History." He first called attention to the setting of the history of the valley. It is a portion of the drainage basin of Hudson Bay, lying partly in Canada and partly in the United States. It was the battle ground of Dakota and Chippewa for more than a century. Finally the latter expelled their enemies and held the northern part of the valley as far west as the Turtle Mountains. "Because of the friendship of the Chippewas for the French," said Dr. Libby, "the Dakotas never tolerated the presence of the latter west of the Mississippi River." La Vérendrye used the Red River Valley as an important link in his line of trading posts from Lake Superior to the Rocky Mountains. In the conflict of the fur-traders and the Northwest Company against the Hudson's Bay Company in the period from 1763 to 1821, "both contestants had field headquarters in the Red River Valley and carried on the fur trade war with the utmost bitterness." At one time, according to the speaker, three competing companies had posts at Pembina within a short distance of each other. He then spoke of the establishment of Lord Selkirk's colony at the present site of the city of Winnipeg and of the bitter hostility between the settlers and the Northwest Company. When the companies united in 1821 the Hudson's Bay Company was placed in absolute command of the territory and governed despotically. This led to the gradual dispersal of many of the settlers southward into that part of the Red River Valley belonging to the United States. Trade routes to the southward were established and the people under the Hudson's Bay Company began a fight for political and commercial freedom. "The gradual extension of American settlements northward into the Red River Valley had a considerable influence in hastening the granting of full citizenship rights to the Canadians in this valley," Dr. Libby said. The speaker suggested in conclusion that "the fact that the United States and Canada have had a common

interest in the exploration and settlement of the Red River Valley suggests that there are many subjects of historic interest which they must study jointly in order to secure permanent results."

The viewpoint of the pioneer must not be neglected in studying the past of the Red River Valley. A participant's testimony was embodied in a paper by Mrs. George McKinley of Osage, entitled "Aspects of Early Settlement in Becker County."<sup>3</sup> Mrs. McKinley told the story of her father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Way, and claimed for her parents the honor of being Becker County's "first white settlers." A Hoosier by birth, Henry Way was a man with the pioneer's instinct. He joined the Pike's Peak gold rush and took the battle cry of that movement so seriously that he climbed to the top of Pike's Peak. In 1865 he came to Minnesota from Iowa in a caravan of "covered wagons." The party went as far west as Battle Lake, and three years later Way staked a claim on Oak Lake in Becker County. Mrs. McKinley gave the exact date of this event—June 28, 1868. She then told of the settlement of her father in Becker County and of many pioneer hardships borne by her mother. Mrs. McKinley, in her paper, seemed to catch the spirit of pioneer life in a way that is impossible to those who are not themselves a part of that past, who cannot say, as did Aeneas, "*et quorum pars magna fui.*"

A much appreciated feature of the program was an exhibition of colored slides, entitled "Becker County History in Pictures," which was presented by Dr. Leonard C. Weeks, president of the Becker County Historical Society, as the last number on the program of the Friday evening session. Pictures of early settlers, pioneer teachers, and Indians, and views of Detroit and other places in Becker County at differ-

<sup>3</sup> In the absence of Mrs. McKinley this paper was read at the Friday afternoon session by Dr. Weeks. Under the title of "Mr. and Mrs. Henry Way," the paper is printed in the *Detroit Record* for July 14, 1924.

ent periods were included. The pictures shown are part of a much larger collection of slides made by Dr. Weeks.

History is not a static thing. Valuable studies in the field of Red River Valley history have already been written and published, but it was made abundantly clear by Dr. Grace Lee Nute, curator of manuscripts for the Minnesota Historical Society, in an informing paper entitled "New Light on Red River Valley History," that many important manuscript sources for this subject are in existence which have not yet been used by historians. They will doubtless make possible further important contributions to that history, which will throw a flood of "new light" upon it. Dr. Nute's paper is printed in the present number of the BULLETIN.

Two papers on the program related to the teaching of state history in the schools of Minnesota. "The Significance of the Local Approach in Education" was discussed by Mr. Ray B. MacLean, president of the State Teachers College at Moorhead. The local approach, he said, is (1) interesting, (2) practical, and (3) typical of the world in which men live. It is interesting because it is "immediate, concrete, and personal" and possesses elements which "appeal to the thought and imagination." It is practical because it involves an appreciation of the neighborhood life — a vital thing; and it is typical of the world because "the history of the local community is a cross section of the struggle which has gone on for ages in larger units." Mr. MacLean's address furnished a philosophical background for a paper by Mr. Arthur D. White of Frazee on "Minnesota History in the High School Curriculum," in which an earnest plea was made for the teaching of state history to Minnesota high school students. Mr. White's paper is printed in the last number of the BULLETIN (see *ante*, p. 477-484).

Much has been written about statesmen, soldiers, and missionaries in the history of Minnesota, but few have described the services of engineers to the state. A paper on

"A Minnesota Pioneer, William Crooks," told the story of a prominent engineer in the words of his daughter, Mrs. W. F. Just of Frazee. Crooks was a son of Ramsay Crooks, the famous American Fur Company official. He went to West Point in 1850 but did not complete his course. He resigned to accept a position as an assistant to John B. Jervis, a celebrated engineer of the New York Central Railway. After considerable experience he became, in 1857, assistant engineer for the Minnesota and Pacific Railroad Company; and from 1859 to 1862 he was chief engineer of that road. In 1861 he purchased in New Jersey the first railway locomotive to be used in Minnesota, the "William Crooks." From 1862 to 1865 he served as colonel of the Sixth Minnesota Volunteer Infantry. He resumed his railroad work when he came out of the army. Mrs. Just sketched his later career and stated that he was chief engineer of the St. Paul and Pacific from 1865 to 1869, that he engaged in railway contract work from 1869 to 1890, and that he was president and chief engineer of the Wadena and Park Rapids Railway from 1890 to 1892 and chief engineer of the Minneapolis and St. Louis Railway from 1892 to 1897. From then until his death in 1907 he lived in Oregon. Among the roads the building of which he supervised, according to Mrs. Just, were the Great Northern branches to Breckenridge and St. Cloud, the line to Crookston, — the city was named in his honor, — and lines to Wadena and Grand Rapids. Colonel Crooks was more than an engineer and a soldier; he found time to serve in many official capacities, for example, as state senator and representative, and on numerous important public commissions. Mrs. Just described the career and character of an efficient engineer of the Northwest, who occupies an important place in the history of Minnesota transportation.<sup>4</sup>

Dr. John D. Hicks, professor of American history in the University of Nebraska, read his illuminating paper on "The

<sup>4</sup> Mrs. Just's paper is published in the *Detroit Record* for July 4, 1924.

People's Party in Minnesota" at the Friday evening session, held in the Detroit Lake Pavilion. No evening session was scheduled by the League of Minnesota Municipalities and consequently there was a large attendance of league delegates at this meeting. Much interest was shown in Dr. Hicks's skillful analysis of the Populist movement. His paper is published in the present number of the BULLETIN. "The True Story of the Strange Career of 'Lord Gordon-Gordon' in the Northwest" is the title of a paper by Dr. William W. Folwell, president emeritus of the University of Minnesota and president of the Minnesota Historical Society, which was read by Dr. Solon J. Buck at the same session. The story, which relates to a master swindler who posed as "Lord Gordon-Gordon" and excited Minnesota in the early seventies, was written by Dr. Folwell as an incidental study in connection with the preparation of volume 3 of his *History of Minnesota*.<sup>5</sup>

The main outlines of the "Lord Gordon-Gordon" adventure, as related by Dr. Folwell, are as follows: In 1871 a titled Englishman appeared in Minnesota and announced his intention of buying Minnesota lands for settlement by his poor Scotch tenants. He was taken on an elaborate tour by the Northern Pacific Railroad Company to the region about Detroit and Fergus Falls, where he bargained for a large tract. In December he went to New York where he represented himself as a stockholder controlling a large part of the stock of the Erie Railroad Company. He managed to swindle Jay Gould out of more than two hundred thousand dollars in cash and a large quantity of stocks. Gould recovered the cash and some of the stocks and sued Gordon for the rest, but the latter "jumped bail" and fled to Canada. In the

<sup>5</sup> Illustrated feature stories based upon Dr. Folwell's paper are printed in the *Minneapolis Journal* for August 31, 1924, and in the *St. Paul Pioneer Press* for August 10. It is expected that the paper will be published in full in the appendix of volume 3 of Dr. Folwell's *History of Minnesota*.

spring of 1871 his bondsman located him near Winnipeg and persuaded the mayor of Minneapolis, George W. Brackett, to come to his assistance. Brackett sent Michael Hoy, his chief of police, and a man named Owen Keegan to Winnipeg where, with the help of Loren Fletcher, they succeeded in kidnaping Gordon. Just before they reached the border they were arrested by provincial authorities and were escorted back to Winnipeg. After two and a half months in jail, the kidnapers were tried, pleaded guilty, and were given light sentences. When they finally came home they were greeted as returning heroes. "Lord Gordon-Gordon" was a bogus noble whose estate in Scotland was a fiction. In 1874 he was arrested again, this time on a Toronto warrant, and rather than stand trial, he committed suicide.

On Friday at 12:30 P.M. at the Detroit Lake Pavilion a joint luncheon of the society and the League of Minnesota Municipalities was served by the ladies' aid societies of the Protestant Episcopal, the First Baptist, the Detroit Lutheran, and the First Congregational churches. Following this luncheon Dr. Solon J. Buck spoke on "Community Memory," and Professor John M. Gaus of the University of Minnesota on "Community Planning."

The correlation of the two ideas was strikingly brought out in the two speeches. Professor Gaus presented the main general features of scientific city planning as it is conceived today. Dr. Buck pointed out that history serves the community in the same way as memory does the individual, that the characteristics of the community are determined wholly by its past, and that only through a knowledge of that past is it possible to understand the present and plan wisely for the future. He called attention also to the added richness of life which comes to the individual from a knowledge of the history of his environment and the added charm of the community which is interested in its past and preserves the records and other survivals of that past. It was pointed out, more-

over, that attention to local history has a very real and direct commercial value, in attracting tourists for example, and that this value is successfully capitalized in Europe and in the East. In the West, however, there has been comparatively little interest in local history until very recently; few works of a scholarly sort have been written in the field, and the subject has not been taught in the schools. What is needed is a sustained and concentrated effort to preserve the records of the past—local archives, records of organizations and of industrial establishments, personal papers, files of newspapers, and museum objects. Historic sites should be marked, local history should be introduced in the schools, and in general the idea should be cultivated that the history of a community is a vital matter which merits the concern of all its citizens. The best way to accomplish these things, the speaker said, is through the organization of local historical societies made up not primarily of antiquarians and old settlers but rather of vigorous and active men and women who appreciate the civic, cultural, and practical values of the cultivation of community memory.

Dr. Buck's address struck the keynote for the local history conference which was held on the following day. The discussion at this conference was opened by Mr. Theodore C. Blegen, who called attention to the fact that the various Minnesota communities, although similar in many ways, have individualities of their own—personalities, as it were. It is important, he said, for citizens to know about the background which explains these original, as well as the ordinary, features of the community life. To get as much as possible out of the common heritage it is necessary to organize. Fortunately, in Minnesota and the Middle West generally, the lesson of local history organization is being learned. Encouraging signs of the new interest in local history are the recent organization of three county historical societies in Minnesota, the well-directed activity of the St. Louis County Historical Society,

and the passage by the state legislature of a law authorizing the commissioners of one Minnesota county to make an appropriation for a county historical society. The speaker suggested the possibility of an amendment to this law which would authorize counties generally to support organized local history activity. Attention was then called to the proposed constitution for a county historical society published not long ago in the MINNESOTA HISTORY BULLETIN and to the definition of aims embodied in its first clause (see *ante*, 4:252-256). Three questions were then raised: What has the Becker County Historical Society accomplished? What are the prospects for further local history organization in western Minnesota? What is the situation in North Dakota?

Mr. John K. West spoke briefly of the work being done by the Becker County Historical Society, commenting especially upon the value of energetic and enthusiastic leadership for the successful carrying on of such an enterprise. Dr. L. C. Weeks, who is the president of the Becker County society, gave numerous illustrations of the collecting activity of the organization. More than eight hundred pictures and relics had been collected for the window exhibits, he said. The local society has a valuable collection of Becker County newspapers, most of which are bound and carefully preserved. He gave several illustrations of the historical value of these local files. The materials assembled by the society, he said, are placed in a basement room of the Detroit Public Library, but there is a possibility that a room may be secured eventually in the county courthouse.

It is evident that there is effective organization of activity along local history lines in Becker County and that the movement is gathering momentum. The situation in Clay County is none too good, according to Mrs. Julia B. Friday of Hawley, who spoke next. She indicated that there are not a few places of historic interest in the county and that the essential thing is to interest people in the history of the region.

Mr. Willoughby M. Babcock, Jr., curator of the museum of the Minnesota Historical Society, called special attention to the window displays on the Detroit main street and said that they would form an excellent nucleus for a county museum. Such collections of material could and should be made in every county. The educational value of such exhibits for the public school children was suggested as one argument for the establishment of a museum.

Mr. Dana C. Wright of Jamestown, North Dakota, said that two or three counties in that state have organized their local history work. In Jamestown, for example, he said, there is a local society which is active and has a room in which its materials are on display. The historical objects gathered by this society are advertised by placing a few of them in store windows. Dr. Libby indicated that there is a growing interest in North Dakota in the marking of historic sites. An attempt has been made to organize county war history commissions in every county of the state, he said, and in some cases these organizations have assembled World War objects which are displayed in special war history rooms. North Dakota is still in the pioneering stage and this means that historical workers have the advantage of being near the source. The speaker gave an instance of the destruction through ignorance of a valuable file of county newspapers. A certain amount of such destruction seems to be inevitable, — in the older as well as in the younger states, — but a powerful aid in the preservation of records will be the organization of active and well-directed county historical societies.

The convention was so crowded with sessions that little time was left for social affairs. The amenities of life were not forgotten, however. On Friday afternoon at 4:30 P.M., through the courtesy of the people of Detroit, an informal automobile trip was made around some of the lakes in the vicinity of the city. At 6:30 P.M., on the same day, an informal joint dinner with the League of Minnesota Muni-

palities was served at the lake pavilion by the Ladies' Aid Society of the Holy Rosary Church. A trip to the White Earth Indian Reservation, scheduled for Saturday afternoon, was unavoidably canceled. After the convention some of the visitors returned to the Twin Cities by way of Itasca State Park and others took advantage of the opportunities for trips to other parts of western Minnesota.

The following resolution, which was proposed by a committee consisting of Mrs. Elizabeth H. Buck, chairman, Dr. John D. Hicks, and Dr. William E. Leonard, was unanimously adopted by the convention at its last session, on Saturday morning, June 21:

RESOLVED, That we, the members and friends of the Minnesota Historical Society assembled at its third annual convention in Detroit, Minnesota, do hereby express our thanks and appreciation to the following persons:

To the committee on general arrangements of the historical society who brought us to this delightful city and arranged an interesting and stimulating program for our entertainment,

To the officers of the League of Minnesota Municipalities, who have coöperated with our society in joint sessions,

To the persons who have prepared and read the papers and speeches to which we have been privileged to listen,

To the committee on local arrangements and especially to Dr. L. C. Weeks, who have extended to us the hospitality of the city of Detroit and have made arrangements for our lodging in the face of the crowded conditions caused by the presence of another convention in the city at this time,

To the members of the First Congregational Church for their courtesy in permitting our convention to hold so many of its sessions in the church,

To the ladies' aid societies of the Protestant Episcopal, the First Baptist, the Detroit Lutheran, the First Congregational, and the Holy Rosary churches who served the joint luncheon and dinner on the first day of the convention, and

To the merchants and citizens of Detroit, who have coöperated in assembling for our entertainment the notable window displays of historic objects and who have extended to us many other courtesies during our visit in their city.

The valley of the Red River of the North — the Nile of the Northwest — has an important and fascinating history and the people of western Minnesota are beginning to show their interest in that history by conserving its records in organized fashion. Interest in state history generally is waxing in Minnesota. Those who attended the Detroit convention came away with the impression that there is something vital in historical work in the state today. Carefully prepared papers on subjects of enduring importance, earnest discussions, intelligent interest — all indicate that the new conception of history is gaining ground. Here was no fruitless antiquarianism; here, rather, was a serious attempt to arrive at an understanding of some of the forces which lie back of and explain present conditions — here was history definitely tied to present-day life.



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