

# INDIANA QUARTERLY MAGAZINE OF HISTORY

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## EDITORIAL

### AN ACTIVE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

The twenty-second annual meeting of the Henry County Historical Society, of which an account is given elsewhere, was held the last of April. This meeting sustained the reputation of the society as one of the most active and progressive historical organizations of the State. If any comment other than eulogistic were to be made upon the work of the society, it would be by way of warning that its membership ought to be extended more largely among the younger element of the county. Historical societies frequently grow out of old settlers' organizations, but they should not be turned into old settlers' reunions, nor should interest center chiefly in matters of antiquarian concern. The value of history is the light it throws upon institutional development and racial progress or degeneration. These can not be studied by way of reminiscence and antiquities alone, but demand observation and analysis by men whose powers are developing, whose prime lies in the future rather than in the past. Any community makes a mistake when it conceives of the study of its institutions as a matter to be left to those who have retired from active life and have leisure for things of little importance. Of course, there is no money for any individual in the study of local history, but the progress of a community involves many things of this sort. The point is not that the older men should not be honored members of historical societies, but that the younger men, especially those interested in teaching and in public welfare, should take an active part in supporting such organizations.

The Henry County Historical Society is a good example of what can be accomplished under the present State law. The law providing for appropriations by counties for historical societies is

printed in full in this number. Under its provisions it is possible for even a few men interested in local history, continuing that interest for a period of only five years, in which time it will naturally enlarge, to receive permanent quarters for meetings and for the preservation and exhibition of books and other objects of historical interest. At Newcastle a fine old residence has been bought and a valuable collection of books and relics brought together. The collection is especially complete in the field of pioneer tools and implements. With a little more search and careful repair of machinery now on hand, which ought to be done at once, the society would have a very adequate apparatus for illustrating pioneer industry, from the raising of flax and hemp to the production of cloth. A fine specimen of early looms belonging to the society, formerly belonging to William Dawson, of Spiceland, would in itself make a good nucleus for such a collection.

We commend the success of the Henry County Historical Society in its collection and in its annual meetings, largely attended and interesting as they are, as an object-lesson to all who are interested in Indiana history.

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## NOTES.

### MISSISSIPPI VALLEY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION.

The second annual meeting of the Mississippi Valley Historical Association was held in St. Louis, June 17-19 of this year. The program, as announced, was taken up by addresses and papers on a great variety of themes, including the Ethnology of the Mississippi Valley, Physiography and History, Archaeology of the Mississippi Valley, "The Second Missouri Compromise," Coronado, the British Attack on St. Louis in 1780. One afternoon was given over to a conference of historical societies.