

## Comment and News

With the present number, the *Indiana Magazine of History* passes into the hands of a new Editor, who fully understands that he assumes a task which has been well performed for many years by Dr. Logan Esarey. The present Editor undertakes his new responsibility in a proper spirit of humility. He indulges a hope that the standard of the Magazine may not be lowered. If he shall succeed in maintaining the level of the past, it must be through the coöperation and generous aid of all who are interested in the study of the sources of Indiana history, and in the writing of papers in that field.



The work of an editor is neither a simple nor an easy task. He must read critically such papers as are submitted for publication, in order to discover as far as possible errors of fact, of composition, and of form. He must assume the responsibility of deciding whether the quality of articles submitted is such as to justify publication. He must reject papers that are not up to a fair level of merit, or that are not adapted to the purpose of the Magazine. He should, at times, advise those willing to prepare articles, and point out to them ways in which their work may be improved. He must somehow discover unpublished documents of value, and persons who have the capacity to write. At the best, he may, occasionally, find his barrel as barren of matter suitable for publication, as Mother Hubbard found her cupboard of bones for her dog. The Magazine will be due, nevertheless, in March, June, September and December of each year.

The following from the "Introduction" of the ably edited first volume of the *John Askin Papers* (see review in this Magazine for June, 1928), is from the pen of Dr. M. M. Quaife, and it should prove suggestive to those who may prepare documents for publication and to those who may quote from sources when preparing historical papers :

To some extent every piece of historical editing presents problems peculiar to itself, to whose solution the editor devotes whatever measure of scholarly skill and judgment he may command. A statement of certain problems encountered in the editing of the *Askin Papers*, together with the solution hit upon, may prove advantageous to the reader who shall have occasion to consult the volumes. In general the printed document aims to present a scrupulously accurate copy of the original manuscript. But since it is impossible to represent in print numerous idiosyncracies of longhand manuscripts, the Editor has steadily endeavored to reproduce the evident intent of the writer, but to escape a slavish adherence to mere pedanticism. In the matter of punctuation, for example, it becomes frequently a matter for editorial interpretation whether a given mark of the penman shall be printed as a comma or as a period. Such interpretation we have not hesitated to supply. Of similar import, the penman of a century ago often distributed dashes in liberal measure across his page in a fashion which finds no precise equivalent in modern typography. We have made no pretense of reproducing these except in cases where their representation has some discoverable significance; and where the penman's dash has seemed to signify the equivalent of the comma or period as employed in modern printing, we have reproduced it as such. So too with words underscored in the manuscripts. The equivalent in print of this usage is the employment of italics, and all publishing houses have established rules governing the resort to such usage. But the underscoring of the penman, like his employment of dashes, commonly possesses no discoverable significance, and when such significance has seemed lacking we have not transferred the underscoring into print.

Documents that are printed and passages that are quoted from the sources often refer to individuals about whom most readers can not be expected to have a knowledge. Doctor Quaife believes in a policy of footnote annotation that furnishes biographical information concerning the personages who figure in the documents. In regard to this practice, he writes :

Probably few readers will ever realize how greatly this conception of the editorial task has served to increase its arduousness. A footnote that may be read in the fraction of a minute may have cost (and frequently has) many hours of toil to prepare. Frequently too, with the acquirement of additional pertinent information, it has been revised again and again before reaching the form it finally assumes in print.

The *Indiana Magazine of History* has had a loyal group of supporters in the past. Many of these have contributed to its columns a number of times, and may be counted on for articles in the future. Undoubtedly, there are many others who have ability to prepare historical papers, who have as yet submitted nothing. Some of these possible contributors have lived through important experiences, witnessed important events, or have access to valuable documents. It is hoped that such persons will acquire an interest in the work of the Magazine, and that they will become contributors of reminiscences, articles based on research, or documents, in order that the history of Indiana may be enriched and preserved.

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The doctoral dissertation of Miss Floy Ruth Painter, associate professor of history at the Ball Teachers College, will be published by Indiana University as one of the series of *Historical Studies*. The subject of the thesis is *Eugene V. Debs*.

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Prof. Glen A. Blackburn of Indiana Central College is preparing the *Papers of John Tipton* for publication by the Indiana Historical Society. A biographical sketch of Tipton will accompany the documents.

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Wendell Holmes Stephenson, associate professor of history at the Louisiana State University, has completed a study of the *Political Career of General James H. Lane*, of Indiana and Kansas, which will be published by the State Historical Society of Kansas in the near future.

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The Trustees of the Public Library at Oxford, Indiana, are planning to publish a volume of stories and sketches of pioneer life pertaining to Oxford and vicinity which were written by the late Jesse Birch. The material for the volume was collected by Mr. Birch during his long period as editor of the *Oxford Tribune*.

The American Historical Association will meet in Indianapolis on December 28-31 of this year. The Mississippi Valley Historical Association will meet in the spring of 1929 at Vincennes. These two meetings will bring to persons of Indiana

who are vitally interested in historical scholarship a fine opportunity to attend the sessions. The State is highly honored in the opportunity to entertain both of these associations within the space of a few months. Membership in either Association is open to any individual who may be recommended by one who is already a member. The fee in each association is five dollars a year. The membership from Indiana in both of these Associations should show a decided increase during the next half-year.

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### Correction

Mrs. A. V. Danner, author of the paper, "Mary Wright, Pioneer Musician of Switzerland County," which was published in the March, 1928, number of this magazine, has sent in the following correction:

The footnote on p. 29 of Volume XXIV (March, 1928) locates incorrectly the parcels of land described. In the first line, "Pleasant tp." should read "Craig tp." In the second line, "Jefferson co." should be followed by "Craig tp." All the land described is located in Jefferson county, Craig township, according to present boundaries.

### Wanted

Dr. R. Carlyle Buley, Business Manager of the *Indiana Magazine of History*, desires to obtain several copies of certain numbers of the *Magazine*. Any subscriber who will mail or express to him copies of the following numbers will receive promptly the prices indicated: The double-number for June-September, 1925, each copy, \$1.00. The number for March, 1926, each copy, 50 cents.