

3-20-A PUBLIC LIBRARY. 1894

Following his usual custom of preaching on practical subjects, Mr. Vittum last Sunday took his text from Luke iv, 16—"And they brought him a book"—and spoke on the needs in Grinnell of a public library. He has had some experience in the establishment of such an institution, and knows it can be done.

He dwelt at some length on the advantages which would accrue to our people if we could have such an institution in our midst, speaking especially of the desirability of placing good reading matter within everybody's reach. There are not ten homes in Grinnell where the family have all the books they want, and all could use and appreciate the advantages of a library. His idea is to have all the churches, civic and social organizations in town contribute something each year to such a project. At first the rent of a room would be all the running expense necessary, for the room need be kept open for a time only in the evening, and good citizens could alternate in having charge of it. After while its advantages would be seen to be so great that people would be glad to contribute to the expense of perfecting it and making it more useful.

In the evening the discussion was continued further, being participated in by Dr. Magoun, Prof. Macy, W. W. Sargent, Dr. McGuin, Hon. Henry Stone, J. H. Lepper, D. S. Morrison, J. C. Vigneaux and others. Dr. Magoun gave his knowledge of several libraries that had been started, speaking of the Fairfield and Ft. Madison, Iowa, libraries, and the hopes he had always entertained for a similar institution in Grinnell.

Others spoke of the possibilities of a public library, and of the Y. M. C. A. library which was. The sentiment seemed to be that to popularize it, it must be distinctively a town institution, free from college or denominational influence—the property of everybody, purchased by all the citizens.

Hon. Henry Stone spoke of Marshalltown experience, and of the work the ladies of that city were trying to do and were accomplishing. He spoke by request of friends present, and all were pleased to hear from him.

Now, what are you going to do about it?

Conaway's withdrawal and will gladly welcome Mr. Robinson to the newspaper fraternity. It is Mr. Robinson's intention to attend the Brooklyn schools for the coming year.

A meeting is called at the city hall Tuesday night, April 17, to get a public library on its feet. One of our best business men recently said that he would be one of fifty to erect a building, and then added that he would be one of twenty-five. The prospect is good. Nineteen men pledged themselves to attend the meeting Tuesday evening, and more will be anxious to come if they only know the date. The scheme is a go. Everybody invited.

4-20 OF LOCAL INTEREST. 1894

Pursuant to announcement a number of citizens met in the city hall Tuesday evening to discuss a public library project. The meeting organized at 7:50, with E. M. Vittum in the chair. Hon. E. Snow was called on to express his opinion. He was in favor not only of a library but also of a library building, and thought the lot north of the Congregational church just the place, if it could be secured. He also favored the appointment of a committee to consider the subject of a lot, and see what could be done about purchasing one. He thought a library on the church lot would be better than Stead's saloon. E. W. Clark and H. W. Spaulding both expressed themselves strongly in favor of a building. E. M. Vittum wanted the library first anyhow, and would get the building afterwards, but was ready for the building now if others were. He also gave some experience in starting a library at Guilford, Conn. Dr. Clark again spoke of the law giving a right to levy a property tax of one mill for library purposes. The discussion became general, and a word was added by nearly everybody present. S. H. Herrick gave his experience in the establishment of a public library at Riverside, which in three years had increased to 8,000 books, and occupies a building 50x100 feet.

A committee was appointed to take charge of the project, with E. M. Vittum as chairman. Other members were H. W. Spaulding, Dr. Clark, J. C. Vigneaux, Mrs. Thomas Brande, Mrs. L. F. Parker and Mrs. W. H. Newman. The committee will probably meet to-night for the first time.

There is every reason to believe that the library project will carry. The character and financial standing of those who are taking an active interest in the matter is such as to promise success. It is unnecessary in Grinnell to enumerate all the advantages to our town of a well conducted library. Everybody knows that not only from a standpoint of public good, but also of individual self-interest, it will prove a good investment. To be sure no cash interest may be expected