

## THE CHICAGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

[From the Historical Magazine for August.]

A statute meeting of this Society was held (by adjournment) on the 9th of June, at the house of the President, William H. Brown, Esq., to observe the first anniversary of the Society's organization. A considerable number of ladies and gentlemen, invited guests of the Society, were present.

### HON. DANIEL P. COOK OF COOK COUNTY.

Mr. President Brown read an extended memoir of the life, character and public services of the late Hon. Daniel P. Cook, of Illinois, from whom the County of Cook, (to which belongs the City of Chicago) derived its name. Mr. Brown detailed the important agency of Mr. Cook while a Representative in the U. S. Congress, soon after the Organization of the State Government, in determining the policy of the general government in relation to the sale and distribution of the public lands, attributing to him the honor of having originated the plan of national grants of the public domain to aid the construction Canals and Railroads in the West, which in its results has proved so beneficial, besides having effected a substitution of the present cash price for the public lands (one dollar and a quarter per acre) in the place of the system of credit at two dollars per acre, previously established, and found, in its operation, detrimental to the public and individual interests. The connection of Mr. Cook with the early political history of the State and his personal popularity were illustrated with some detail, and his integrity of character was defended against some aspersions, particularly on the occasion of his causing the vote of Illinois to be cast in favor of the younger President Adams, when the election of President devolved upon upon the House of Representatives. His death at an early age was suitably noticed, as well as the warm esteem in which he was held by the people of the State, of all political parties.

### FIRST ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SOCIETY.

The annual report of the Society's operations during the first year of its existence, was then read by the Secretary. It embraced three general topics. First, the aboriginal monuments existing in the State, ascertained to reach many thousands in number, in many cases of gigantic dimensions and including the pyramidal and animal shaped in figure. The report alluded to personal researches made by the Secretary, and arrangements effected for preliminary surveys, besides the origination of steps to bring the subject to the early attention of the State authorities. The rapid progress of settlement and cultivation in Illinois was thought to expose these interesting remains, in many instances, to irreparable injury or entire destruction. The Report touched also upon the history of the Indian Tribes of this region, and particularly of the Illinois proper, known once to have been numerous, but by the hostilities of the tribes from the North and the Iroquois from the East, gradually waste, and finally were exterminated as a people. For several generations their principal chief, of the Tamaroas, had been ascertained to have borne the name of Chicago—the same name having been given to the present site of Chicago, as also to that branch of the Illinois, now known as the Des Plaines.

The second topic treated of, was the modern History of the State, which was divided into three periods—the first extending from the first European discovery by Marquette and Joliet, in 1573, embracing the career of La Salle and of La Foret and Touff, his successors—the wars with the Iroquois, Chickasaws etc.—the French forts, trading posts and settlements—including the commanding post of Fort Chartres, with the civil connection of this region with the colony of Louisiana—the singular characteristics of the noted "coureurs du bois,"—and the brilliant and attractive history of the Catholic missionaries—the principal historians of the West—the period closing with the cession of New France and Louisiana to Great Britain in 1763. The second period extending from the last named to the organization of the Territory in 1809—embracing the civil connection of Illinois successively with Virginia, Ohio and Indiana, the exploits of Geo. Rogers Clark, the revolutionary hero of the West, and the important political consequence of the "ordinance of 1787"—the third and last period extending from the organization of the territory to the present time—among the leading historical points of which were noticed, the attempt in 1824 to incorporate the legalization of African servitude with the organic law of the State—the wars with the British and Indians, especially the Black Hawk war in 1831-2—the troubles with the Mormons in 1843, and their expulsion the succeeding year—and the system of State internal improvements commencing with the projected canal from the Illinois River to Lake Michigan, proposed in 1820, and most signally exemplified in the munificent grant of over two millions of public lands, for the construction of the Illinois Central Railroad, recently completed. The report urged the importance of securing the fullest authentic memorials of the primary modern settlements within the State, as well as the establishment of a legal and systematic plan of Registration by the State Legislature.

The third topic of the report, was the proposed establishment by the Society of a Free Public Library, on the most comprehensive scale—to embrace especially; 1: historical, statistical and itinerary publications—2: as complete a collection as is practicable of the primary documents of each of the States and Territories of the Union, of the United States and of Canada—3: as full an illustration as may be of the history of religion in America, to embrace the periodical, doctrinal and leading controversial publications of the different ecclesiastical organizations in this country, together with the historical development of the modern missionary movement, domestic and foreign—the two latter sections of the library being esteemed of pressing importance, in the rapid progress of settlement in the Northwest, to aid its healthful, political and religious development.

The Report gave details of the prosecution of the Society's objects during the first year of its existence—in aggregate collections for the Library as enumerated in the Book of Donations having reached 8,806. The total number of bound volumes and yearly files of newspapers and periodicals, being 3,577—of unbound public documents, reports of Institutions, political, religious and scientific pamphlets, broadsides, etc., 4,566—of charts in bound volumes or single sheets, 101—besides a considerable collection of manuscript papers and documents not fully enumerated.

The thanks of the Society were voted to the President and Secretary for their communications, and preliminary arrangements were made for their early publication, with such other available documents as were in the Society's possession.

June 16th, the regular meeting of the Society for this month was convened, at which, besides the usual announcement of the Society's correspondence and donations, was read a communication from Lieut. Col. J. D. Graham, of the U. S. Corps of Top. Engineers, detailing the particulars of late observations, made simultaneously by himself at Chicago, and Lieut. Ashe, of the Royal Navy, at Quebec, by means of the electric telegraph, to determine the difference of longitude of the two cities (proved to be 16 deg. 25 min. 22 sec. 6) with a reference to the result of astronomical observations made by the former, in the year 1842, while employed in determining the Northeast Boundary of the United States, for the determination of the longitude of the city of Quebec (so ascertained to be 71 deg. 12 min. 24 sec. 75—making the longitude of Chicago, west of Greenwich 87 deg. 37 min. 47 sec. 4.)—the same paper announcing also proposed observations to be made jointly by Lieut. Col. Graham and Prof. Bond, of the observatory at Cambridge, Mass., with a similar view.

The above communication accompanied a donation of books, and also charts exhibiting the results of official surveys of harbors on Lake Michigan, and of the St. Clair flats, executed during the year 1856, under the superintendence of Lieut. Col. Graham. The thanks of the Society were voted to that gentleman for his communication, which was ordered to be filed, as well as for his numerous obliging services in aid of the Society's objects.

A committee reported that the Society were in possession of material sufficient to make a printed volume of 250 to 350 pages, to constitute the first volume of its published transactions. After an extended discussion of a proposal for the publication of a volume, the meeting adjourned.