

Writers for the Annals

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WRITERS FOR THE ANNALS.

The close of the volume affords an opportunity to say a word concerning those whose pens have given it interest. And first, it is with great pleasure that we introduce to the reader Mrs. Nettie Sanford, of Marshalltown, the accomplished authoress and lecturer, the first chapters of whose spirited "History of Marshall County" will attract attention. With the exception of a few pages contributed to the April number of the third volume by Mrs. C. Ben Darwin, Mrs. Sanford's history forms the first contribution to the ANNALS by a lady writer, setting an example which we hope will be followed by other local historians of her sex.

We regret to be obliged to defer the publication of the conclusion of Mr. William M. Donnel's valuable history, "The Pioneers of Marion County," to the next volume. None except those who have engaged in similar work can form any idea of the amount of labor and patience, as well as money, necessarily expended in the fulfillment of such a task as that which Mr. Donnel has nearly completed in the happiest manner. Scores of letters must be written, hundreds of questions asked, dust and cobwebs invaded to reach musty newspapers, documents, and letters, and a thousand unexpected obstacles overcome, in order to secure the information sometimes contained in a single page. Mr. Donnel's sketches are conceded by old settlers to be exceedingly correct, and entirely untarnished by political or personal prejudice, too often the bane of local history. The strongest evidence of the high estimate in which Mr. Donnel's work is held in his own county, where the best judges of its value necessarily chiefly reside, is that its re-publication is demanded, in book form, in which it will appear in a few months. For our own part, we think we do no one any injustice in saying that "The Pioneers of Marion County" are more fortunate in their historian than those of any county whose history has been published in extended form in the ANNALS.

Hon. Eliphalet Price, of Guttenberg, Clayton county, and Hon. Wm. H. Tuthill, of Tipton, Cedar county, are two of the most highly valued of our correspondents. Their short and sparkling sketches act as foils to the more serious and solid chapters of lengthier histories. Their contributions are ever welcome to reader and editor.

The Hon. Hawkins Taylor, a member from Lee county, of the first territorial legislature, but now a resident of Washington City, is doing for us an acceptable work, in raking from the accumulations of a third of a century those pleasant portrayals of character and events which lent a charm and attraction to Lee county thirty years ago.

The "Early History of Iowa," by Hon. Charles Negus, which has been continued through several volumes of the ANNALS, will do much toward lightening the labors of him, who, in the future, shall undertake to elaborate the pioneer annals of our state. It is a matter of wonder to us how the author has managed to collect such a mass of information relating to the

first settlement of Iowa. We consider Mr. Negus's history among the most valuable and appropriate matter that appears in the ANNALS, and we shall be loth to see it come to an end.

Some portions of the "Recollections of the Early Settlement of Northwestern Iowa," by N. Levering, Esq., formerly of Sioux City, Iowa, but now of Woodville, Mo., particularly those relating to the captivity of white women by the Indians, are of thrilling interest. We hope Mr. Levering will find time to reduce to writing the large stock of facts relative to the northwestern part of Iowa which he has treasured up.

The sketches of Louisa county, by Hon. Wm. L. Toole, have been no less interesting than the others, but would have been more complete and extended had he received the co-operation and assistance of the resident pioneers of his county. We are glad to be able to say that he has promised to continue his contributions.

Some have confounded General Curtis's report of his last campaign in Missouri (which we have now in course of publication) with the history of the same general's "first campaign in Arkansas," written by Captain Samuel Prentis Curtis, and published in volumes 4, 5, 6, and 7. They are entirely distinct; and we hope none will find fault with the publication of this military report, covering, as it does, many of the gallant achievements of Iowa troops, as it will be a sorry day for us when we tire of reading of the heroic exploits of the Union soldiers during the Great Rebellion.

Dr. John Doe, of Iowa City, who is too near home to be spoken of in the flattering terms he deserves for finding time to write a sketch of the *Musquaquas*, will have to settle with Mrs. Sanford as to whether hers or his is the correct way of spelling the name of this Indian tribe. For us, it will be seen that, with our usual chivalry, we have thrown our steel weapon in the scale for the lady.

Several historical papers have been unavoidably crowded over to the next issue.

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