

An Almost Forgotten Contest

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one concern was the law. And he could not and would not make himself think that the adverse opinion of the legislature was necessarily *vox dei*, if the law plainly said the contrary. Nor would he admit that a count of heads gave one the better of an argument, even if the fates decreed his removal.

In his communications answering charges made against him by his belligerent opponents, he expresses his dissent in language that is always notable for its restraint under rather irritating circumstances. His enemies did not always proceed against him openly. Many of their criticisms he refuses to notice because he deems it beneath his dignity to characterize them. His irony is pungent at times when he refers to legislative proceedings taken not with a view to the public welfare, but solely with a view to trapping him.

AN ALMOST FORGOTTEN CONTEST.

Elsewhere in this number, Mr. Tacitus Hussey of Des Moines, relates the history of the effort of Iowa fishermen and sportsmen to secure a fishway in the dam across the Des Moines river at Bentonsport. This fight was a long one and unsuccessful. It was led from beginning to end by Mr. Hussey, who tells the story in his pleasant style. The Bonaparte Dam was one that was built to render the Des Moines river navigable under the old scheme of improvement. It was erected before any special interest was taken in the direction of fishing. When the fishermen discovered that it was an obstacle in the way of the fishes in their spring migration up stream, they were very anxious to have a fishway constructed, or to have the dam removed. The Messrs. Meek, however, had purchased it at an authorized auction sale, and were averse to incurring any expense in the matter of establishing a fishway. They had legal rights in the premises which could not be molested, as Mr. Hussey conclusively shows. The dam, therefore, remained until the high water of 1903 when it was partially swept away. It has never been

reconstructed and will probably never be,—a result which will be entirely satisfactory to the fishermen.

Beginning with pioneer times, several generations of the Meek family have been engaged in large business operations at Bonaparte. Their flouring mill and woolen factory was one of the most important pioneer enterprises ever undertaken in southern Iowa. They always performed excellent work, whether in the manufacture of woolen cloths or bread-stuffs. Their customers came from long distances in northern Missouri and southern Iowa. Scarcely another business enterprise could have been of so much importance to the pioneers. Early settlers always speak of the Meeks in terms of the highest respect, paying just tributes to the importance of their mill and factory. Even the fishermen themselves no longer indulge in any expressions regarding the Meeks except those of highest commendation.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THE JOURNALS OF GOVERNOR ROBERT LUCAS.

The Robert Lucas. Journal of the War of 1812, During the Campaign Under General William Hull. Edited by John C. Parish, p. IX, 103. Published at Iowa City, Iowa, in 1906, by the State Historical Society of Iowa. Edition limited to 400 copies.

Executive Journal of Iowa, 1838-1841. Edited by Benjamin F. Shambaugh, Professor of Political Science in the State University of Iowa, pp. XXV, 341. Published at Iowa City, Iowa, in 1906, by the State Historical Society of Iowa.

The Historical Society at Iowa City is indeed to be congratulated upon the good fortune that has enabled it to publish these Journals of Governor Robert Lucas, and the public is under lasting obligations to Mr. Parish and Dr. Shambaugh for their labors in discovery and preparation for the press. The Journal of the War of 1812 is reprinted from Professor Shambaugh's *Journal of History and Politics*. Both volumes appear in handsome form. The binding is attractive and firm. The paper is "Old Stratford," heavy and compact, hand-made, with deckle edges and gilt tops. The type is large and clear, the lines are leaded and the margins broad. These volumes are in fact *editions de luxe* by far excelling anything heretofore put out by the Historical Society. Certainly, if it is necessary or peremptorily desirable that documentary

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